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FROM CRIMINALS TO CARETAKERS:
The Salvation Army in India, 1882-1914

A dissertation presented

by

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Abstract

The British Empire of the late-nineteenth century represents the pinnacle of European imperialism. The nature of British colonialism was complicated, however, and nowhere more so than in India, England's most prized colony. My dissertation examines the role of Protestant missionaries within this British imperial endeavor. Through a case study of the Salvation Army's work in India, I illustrate the complexity of the relationship between missionaries and the colonial government. I address connections between the metropole and the peripheries of the Empire, while exploring the nature and influence of Protestant Christianity both at home and abroad. In England as well as India, the Salvation Army both reflected nineteenth-century British culture and challenged its norms of propriety, religious worship, and service.

The Salvationists in India had a particularly complex and dynamic relationship with imperial authorities. Initially perceived as a threat to the peace of the Empire, the first missionaries in India faced legal persecutions, but over time the Salvationists actually became agents of empire. Through a variety of social service projects the organization proved its utility to imperial authorities and became the recipient of government subsidies. Most notably, the Salvationists collaborated with colonial police to create settlements for members of the so-called criminal tribes of India. My work emphasizes the influence of Commissioner Frederick Booth-Tucker on the Salvation Army's complex interaction with the Indian Raj. He alternately led the Salvationists to both defy and support the British Empire, while continually focusing on the group's primary goal of converting people to Christianity.

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INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century witnessed the growth of British imperialism, and with the extension of Britain's global empire came Christian missionaries. But exactly what role these preachers played in the colonial venture remains unclear. My dissertation contributes to the vast literature on British imperialism by addressing the question of the relationship between Protestant missionaries and the colonial government, thereby illuminating the ambiguous practices that made up British colonialism. My research focuses on the work of the Salvation Army in India during the period between 1882 and 1914, a location and time period which represent the pinnacle of the British Empire. The Salvation Army embodied nineteenth-century evangelical Protestantism, while at the same time displaying several unique aspects to its ministry both at home and abroad. Through a study of Salvationist missionary work, I examine the relationship between religion and imperial state power, as well as the interaction between Indian people and the European colonists, exploring the intersecting interests of religion, state policy, and indigenous culture. Ultimately, I aim to understand how the relationship between the Salvation Army and the British colonial government changed over time, as the Salvationists went from being viewed as disruptive and even threatening to the Empire to eventually collaborating with the imperial government on police projects.

The context for this research is found in the large body of literature that has been published on the British Empire and India, which I will address in more detail in Chapters I and II. Works such as Bernard Porter's *The Lion's Share*, for example, have illustrated the complexity of the British imperial endeavor.¹ And books such as Nicholas Dirks'

¹ Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism 1850-2004*, 4th edition (Harlow, England: Pearson, 2004).

Castes of Mind, have examined the intersections of race, gender and social structure, paying particular attention to the nature and function of the caste system within Indian society. Dirks draws connections between colonialism and the rise of modernity.² These and other similar works provided valuable context for my study, as I explore the Salvation Army's work within the British Empire and their specific interactions with the Indian caste system.

British imperial historiography also includes a significant number of texts on missionaries upon which my dissertation draws, while working to offer a new, unique contribution to this field. Jeffrey Cox's work *Imperial Fault Lines* presents an examination of Christian missionaries in India during the period 1818-1940, focusing on the records of the largest British missionary group—the Church Missionary Society (CMS).³ More recently, Cox's 2008 book *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* offers one of the most detailed discussions of the efforts of Christian missionaries throughout the British Empire. Crucial to Cox's analysis is his contention that, "Despite the centrality of Protestantism to British national and imperial identity, the historical relationship between religion and empire has been complicated and unpredictable."⁴ My case study of the Salvation Army provides evidence to support Cox's thesis, highlighting the complex role of Christianity in the British Empire and the manner in which the relationship between this particular church and the colonial state changed over time.

Although a great deal has been written about British missionaries in general, with many focusing specifically on India, little has been said about the work of the Salvation

² Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

³ Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power, 1818-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 1.

⁴ Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 9.

Army in this regard. Peter van der Veer's *Imperial Encounters* and Jeffrey Cox's *Imperial Fault Lines* both refer to the Salvationists, but each includes only very brief examinations of the Salvation Army's work in India. Van der Veer places great emphasis on the Salvationists' connection to people defined as criminals, while Cox raises questions about the Salvation Army's relation to imperial power. Cox argues that the Salvationists in India were "seduced by the lure of imperial power," and their involvement with the British government actually detracted from the original intentions of their work, but he does not fully examine the issue in his book.⁵ My research offers a more thorough understanding of the relationship between the Salvationists and the imperial government. I argue that within the space of colonial India, the Salvation Army pursued their agenda of winning converts, even when the British authorities disapproved of the Salvationists' activities. Yet, over time the SA missionaries in India developed a mutually beneficial relationship with the colonial government, playing a new role as agents of empire even as they sought to fulfill their own religious goals.

At the same time my case study of the Salvation Army in India represents a new contribution to understanding the role of gender within the SA. Recent histories of the Salvation Army, Andrew Mark Eason's *Women in God's Army* and Pamela Walker's *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down*, focus on the Salvation Army's relationship to Victorian culture and discuss women's instrumental role within the Army.⁶ Indeed, the Salvation Army has received much attention for the leadership opportunities it offered to

⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 242. Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

⁶ Andrew M. Eason, *Women in God's Army: gender and equality in the early Salvation Army* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003). Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

women in the nineteenth century. Eason, however, makes a fairly convincing case that the early Salvation Army's treatment of women was not as egalitarian as many believe. While it is true that the nineteenth-century Salvationists may not have practiced complete gender equality, my research reveals a number of examples of female preachers and officers in leadership positions unheard of in other denominations—both in Britain and India.

My research fits clearly into the recent historical discourse on missionaries and empire, highlighting the complexity of the imperial endeavor. This complicated relationship is exemplified by an Englishman named Frederick Tucker (later known as Booth-Tucker following his marriage to Emma Booth, daughter of the Salvation Army's founder William Booth) who was largely responsible for both initiating and shaping the Salvationists' missionary efforts in India. My research uses the figure of Booth-Tucker as a focal point. He was instrumental in establishing the Army in India in the late nineteenth century and wrote several works that provided a foundation for this project. A unique colonial figure, he represented both the imperial authorities and the religious fervor of Protestant evangelicals throughout different periods of his life, sometimes both simultaneously. The combination of his early career in the Indian Civil Service, with his later work as an evangelical missionary are uniquely representative of the intersecting ideals of religion and empire in the nineteenth century; his experience as a colonial official was later useful in helping develop the work of the SA. Under his leadership the Salvation Army was both a subversive organization and an agent of empire. The Army provided valuable services to colonial authorities, but, above all, maintained its own religious agenda.

There have been some limited publications on Frederick Booth-Tucker and the Salvation Army in India, most notably Solveig Smith's 1981 book *By Love Compelled*.⁷ These works certainly provide a foundation for my research, but they represent somewhat dated scholarship. Smith's book was actually published by the Salvation Army, and as such cannot be regarded as an unbiased, critical study. More recently Andrew Mark Eason's dissertation on the Salvation Army in India and South Africa offers solid analysis of the Salvationists' techniques and cultural adaptation, exploring their role as imperialists.⁸ Eason does not, however, properly credit Frederick Booth-Tucker for his role in the Salvation Army's development in India, nor does he examine the relevant government documents. Thus, my work provides a significant new addition to the limited scholarship on the SA in India, by including a new examination of Frederick Booth-Tucker and his relationship with the British imperial government, while utilizing the India Office Records.

India, the so-called 'crown jewel' of the British Empire, represents not only the quintessential British colonial state, but also a clear site of interaction between Asian and Western cultures. The dramatic intersection of church, state, and race provides the analytical framework of my research. My dissertation begins in Chapter I with an overview of the British Empire, focusing in particular on the Indian Raj. Chapter II continues exploring the Indian colony, highlighting the role of Christian missionaries and the example of the Salvation Army as one missionary organization. I demonstrate the

⁷ Solveig Smith, *By Love Compelled: The Salvation Army's One Hundred Years in India and Adjacent Lands* (London: Salvationist Pub. and Supplies, 1981).

⁸ Andrew M. Eason. "Christianity in a Colonial Age: Salvation Army Foreign Missions from Britain to India and South Africa, 1882-1929." (Ph.D. diss., University of Calgary, 2005).

complex nature of the relationships both between Britain and its colonial subjects, and between British missionaries and the imperial government.

Working within this colonial context, the Salvation Army makes an excellent subject for several reasons. First, the development of the Salvation Army fits neatly into the religious history of Victorian Britain. The organization is the quintessential example of the so-called Social Gospel movement of the nineteenth century. Founder William Booth was a former Methodist preacher seeking to minister to the poor, drunk, and hungry people in the streets of London's East End. Booth began preaching on street corners and setting up soup kitchens in the 1860s, modeling his ministry on the concept of "soup, soap, and salvation."⁹ From the beginning, Booth's work was predicated on the idea that social service work was connected to saving souls; before preachers could effectively win converts, the congregation needed to be sober and well-fed. While the Salvation Army was representative of Victorian religion, it was also a distinct organization with some unusual practices which challenged English tradition.

Chapters III and IV of my dissertation offer a more detailed examination of Victorian Christianity, and more specifically, the creation of the Salvation Army. As his ministry developed, William Booth determined that his church was truly in the midst of a spiritual war and in 1878 began using the title "The Salvation Army," developing its organization based on a military model.¹⁰ The group required that its members wear uniforms, and Booth became the first "General." Ministers took the title "Officers" with

⁹ Robert A. Watson and Ben Brown, *The Most Effective Organization in the U.S.* (New York: Crown Business, 2001), 3.

¹⁰ "The Salvation Army Timeline." *The Salvation Army: International Heritage Centre* Online. Available: www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/flashTimeline.

a series of ranks, church members were “Soldiers,” and a local church was a “Corps.”¹¹ Booth’s group received increased state validation with a “Deed Pole” that established the church as an institution officially recognized by the state. This arrangement insured that future changes to the structure of their sect would require an act of Parliament.¹² Thus, even in its formative years, an interesting relationship existed between the Salvation Army and the British government. Furthermore, their adoption of a military structure and terminology draws significant parallels to British imperial activity, a theme which is further explored in this dissertation.

In the 1870s and 80s, the Salvation Army took its distinctive mission outside the boundaries of London to America, the European continent, and beyond, embarking upon missionary work in many under-developed nations, including British colonial possessions. By 1920, Salvation Army personnel worked in 63 countries and colonies around the globe and preached in 40 languages.¹³ India was the Salvation Army’s first mission field, and their work on the subcontinent is particularly relevant to an examination of missionaries within the nineteenth-century British Empire. As Peter van der Veer describes it, “The Salvation Army’s “war cry” suited this particular moment in Britain and, in a peculiar way, was also relevant to the colonial project in India.”¹⁴ Led by Salvationist convert and future son-in-law of the founder Frederick Tucker, the Salvation Army sent its first mission to win souls into India in the fall of 1882.

The early activities of Tucker and his colleagues in India, however, did not always meet with government approval. Salvationist parades and proselytizing led to

¹¹ Walker, 62.

¹² Ibid., 61.

¹³ Evangeline Booth, “Around the World with the Salvation Army,” *The National Geographic Magazine*, April 1920, 347.

¹⁴ Van der Veer, 151.

some altercations with the colonial authorities, who condemned the Salvation Army for its breach of the rules of religious neutrality. On several occasions Tucker and his associates actually found themselves in Indian jails. The British felt the Salvationists' style of proselytizing with its outdoor processions and brass instruments was disruptive and embarrassing. Not only did the colonial authorities fear uprisings among the Indian Hindu and Muslim communities when faced with such aggressive missionizing, but British officials were also concerned that the antics of the Salvationists would weaken the public image of British people in India. The missionaries meanwhile, appeared disdainful of colonial police and determined to pursue their religious agenda. These events raise questions about the relationship between the British government and non-governmental agents such as the Salvation Army; were the two groups indeed working in opposition to one another? Chapter V addresses such questions while exploring the incidents of arrests and persecution that the Salvationists endured in colonial India as they challenged the authority of the Raj.

Despite their initial altercations with the law, the Salvationists managed to continue proselytizing in India. Chapters V and VI discuss the strategies employed by the Salvationists as they created a viable, lasting mission in India. One of the most significant aspects of their ministry was its adoption and adaptation of native customs, music, and dress to further their goal of winning souls to Christ. Booth-Tucker used the name of 'Fakir Singh' and the title Salvation Army was translated as 'Muktifauj.' Uniforms were modified to incorporate not only the traditional Salvation Army insignia and military style, but also native turbans and saris.¹⁵ Such an amalgamation of culture

¹⁵Rachel J. Tolen, "Colonizing and Transforming the Criminal Tribesmen: The Salvation Army in British India," *American Ethnologist* 18, no. 1(February 1991) 116.

and customs provides another area in which to explore the nature of colonial interaction. My work demonstrates how, throughout their missionizing project, the Salvationists challenged the colonial authorities not only through their disruptive proselytizing, but also by abandoning the British ideology of difference in embracing Indian culture, and in the cultivation of native agency among the Indian people whom they converted.

Along with spreading their religion, the Salvationists in India developed a number of social service projects including schools, hospitals, and famine relief bureaus. Through their charitable work the Salvation Army proved the utility of its organization not only to the people of India, but also to the colonial government. In providing valuable services the missionaries were able to improve their relationship with British authorities. While other missionary groups certainly pursued similar projects, the Salvation Army as an organization was particularly focused on developing its social gospel activities.

Ultimately, my research reveals a further transition around the turn of the twentieth century in the status of the Salvation Army within the Raj. The relationship between the Salvationists and the colonial government was not only complicated, but dynamic, as the missionaries now found themselves collaborating with imperial authorities. Chapter VII examines the Salvation Army's activities on behalf of the so-called 'criminal tribes' and the Salvationists' subsequent connection to the British imperial government. In 1908, in a remarkable turn of events, the British government sanctioned the Salvation Army's rehabilitation efforts with these groups who had been designated as 'criminals' by the local authorities. The Salvationists opened their first settlement at Gorakhpur for a group known as the Doms. The colonial government

provided land and funding, while the Salvation Army took over administrative duties and attempted to rehabilitate these so-called criminals. The establishment of similar settlements followed, and within a few years thousands of these people were living under the Salvation Army's care.¹⁶ Serious questions surround the designations and treatment of these groups, however. Why was the Salvation Army given the task of rehabilitating them and how was religion involved in the subjugation of these Indians? I contend that the Salvationists offered the colonial police devoted personnel who were willing to take on the burden of the criminal tribes' settlements at a lower cost to the state. Through its work with these tribes, the Salvation Army demonstrated its ability to provide a useful service to the colonial government. In so doing, they further developed a mutually beneficial relationship with imperial authorities. At the same time, however, the Salvation Army remained loyal to its religious agenda, focusing on spreading Christianity, even among the so-called criminal tribes.

My research relies heavily on sources from both the British Colonial Government and the Salvation Army. The India Office Records provide a wealth of documents detailing the colonial administration of the Raj. In particular I utilize police memoranda and directives to explore the government's reaction to the Salvation Army, as well as its treatment of the so-called criminal tribes. The Salvationists were equally prolific in documenting and promoting the activities of their church abroad. The organization produced numerous periodicals—both in England and in India, as well as other pamphlets, books, and unpublished memoirs. A close examination of these materials reveals the nature of the Salvationists' early work in India, providing deeper insight into their motivations and the nature of their activities within the context of the Empire.

¹⁶ "To the Governor of Madras," *All the World*, February 1916, 80.

Contemporary newspapers including the *Bombay Guardian* and the *Times of India* provide an additional perspective of the missionaries' work and their tensions with colonial authorities. Unfortunately, in researching the complex relationship between the Salvation Army and the British Empire in India, there is a third major party involved who remain largely absent from my sources—the Indians themselves. Other than a few quotes or publications from Indian converts, there is little material available from the colonized people in the Salvation Army archives. Undoubtedly, more accounts from the perspective of the Indians would further illuminate the complexity of the British imperial endeavor and its impact on the indigenous population. Despite this limitation, my dissertation is able to provide a close study of the relations between this group of Protestant missionaries and the British colonial government, thereby revealing much about the role of Christianity in colonization.

As a denomination the Salvation Army embodied a unique blend of Protestant Christian theology and nineteenth-century British culture. Their rowdy proselytizing and targeting of the lower classes generated apprehension among colonial authorities upon the Salvationists' initial foray into colonial India in 1882. The experience of the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny lingered, and the British were anxious that the Salvation Army would provoke the local Hindus and Muslims. This set the stage for a period of tension and discord between the missionaries and the colonial government. But over time, the relationships between these two groups changed; the Salvationists developed a lasting mission which carried out numerous charitable projects that were beneficial to the government. Eventually the missionaries found themselves directly collaborating with the police and acting as agents of empire in working with the so-called criminal tribes.

At the same time however, the Salvationists were not always fully in line with British colonial perspectives; they remained focused on their own aim of winning converts. The complicated and dynamic nature of the relationship between the Salvation Army missionaries and the British imperial government is more fully examined in the following chapters.

CHAPTER I: INDIA AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE

In 1922 the Salvation Army Year Book explicitly acknowledged the intimate connection between the work of the Salvation Army and the British Empire, “Few people . . . realize that the work which the Salvation Army does is of measureless importance to England as an Empire builder.”¹⁷ But just as the late British Empire was a vast and complex entity, the relationship between religious organizations such as the Salvation Army and the British government was equally complex. Many British politicians and scholars saw imperialism as the pursuit of a high-minded ideal; a humanitarian endeavor designed to spread Western culture, education, and technology throughout the world. From the earliest attempts at colonization, religious personnel were involved, toiling to share their faith with the ‘unsaved’ of foreign lands. Because nineteenth-century evangelicals often associated the world’s social and economic problems with the presence of sin, saving the globe meant saving people’s bodies *and* souls.¹⁸ While in many ways missionary groups such as the Salvation Army promoted the growth of the Empire, the personal agendas of these religious figures did not always directly coincide with British imperial motivations and structures. Both the collaboration and tension between religion and colonialism played themselves out in England’s most treasured colony—India.

The complexity of the British imperial endeavor was revealed not only in the far-flung peripheries of the Empire such as India, but also in the metropole and in the interaction between metropole and colony. The religious interests of groups in metropolitan England had a significant impact on the colonies and vice versa. Some

¹⁷ Quoted in Tolen, 121.

¹⁸ D.W. Bebbington, “Atonement, Sin, and Empire, 1880-1914” in *The Imperial Horizons of Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, Andrew Porter, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 20.

religious leaders viewed foreign missionary activity as a means of defending the institution of the church.¹⁹ The chronological scope of missions is as large as the life of the Empire. The first permanent British missionary societies began around the turn of the eighteenth century with the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in 1701.²⁰ The SPG represented a direct connection between empire and missionaries; it was developed specifically to spread Anglicanism to Britain's colonies, focusing on the English settlers in North America.²¹ A large-scale British Protestant missionary movement dates from the late-1700s with the creation of groups such as the London Missionary Society (LMS), Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). These groups varied in their associations with British churches. The LMS was ostensibly non-denominational, while the BMS and the CMS were connected to the Baptists and Anglicans, respectively.²² As part of the Protestant evangelical movement of the nineteenth century, the outreach of organizations such as these grew dramatically. By the turn of the twentieth century British missionary efforts throughout the Empire included over nine thousand missionaries, sixty missionary societies and annual expenditures of approximately £2 million.²³ In India during the early twentieth century Jeffrey Cox identifies more than thirty societies including the Salvation Army working in addition to numerous private individuals and small groups of locally

¹⁹ Steven Maughan, "Imperial Christianity? Bishop Montgomery and the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1895-1915" in *The Imperial Horizons of Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* Andrew Porter, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 41.

²⁰ Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 8.

²¹ Andrew Porter, *Religion versus empire?: British Protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 17.

²² James G. Greenlee and Charles M. Johnston, *Good Citizens: British Missionaries and Imperial States, 1870-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), xvii-xviii.

²³ Maughan, 34.

based missionaries.²⁴ These facts indicate that although they may have represented a small percentage of the total numbers of missionaries in India, the efforts of the Salvationists were part of a larger phenomenon, and further examination of their work can shed light on this imperial development.

Protestant missions came to represent a key element of the Empire, and the Salvation Army was involved in this practice. The evangelical belief in the concept of divine providence became an important motivation for imperial growth.²⁵ Faith in a divine purpose offered justification for the expansion of the Empire. Nineteenth-century British Christians felt that the size and power of their nation indicated that “Britain had been uniquely commissioned by God to bring the gospel to the world.”²⁶ As such, missionaries traveled throughout the Empire to locations such as China, Africa, and, of course, India. They participated in a variety of activities including creating schools, hospitals, and churches. Although the Salvation Army was not the largest missionary group of the late-nineteenth century, they have been recognized by historians as an influential organization, whose new style of worship and focus on charitable endeavors inspired others.²⁷ Indeed, Andrew Porter suggests that long-standing missionary organizations like the CMS risked losing enthusiastic new volunteers in the late-nineteenth century to groups such as the Salvation Army, unless they changed their image and appeal.²⁸ Many Britons found the Salvationists dynamic and exciting.

²⁴ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 3.

²⁵ Bebbington, “Atonement, Sin, and Empire, 1880-1914,” 18.

²⁶ Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions & British Imperialism in the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 68.

²⁷ Steven Maughan, “‘Mighty England do Good’: The Major English Denominations and Organisation for the Support of Foreign Missions in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues*, Robert A. Bickers and Rosemary Seton, eds. (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996), 30.

²⁸ A. Porter, *Religion versus empire?*, 250.

While winning converts remained of paramount importance, the ideologies of Christian missionaries were often influenced by imperial motivations and justifications. Many British efforts to save the souls and educate colonial peoples in Western concepts were related to the racist Social Darwinism of the nineteenth century, a philosophy which justified imperialism through its human ‘survival-of-the-fittest’ theory. This fueled the so-called ‘white man’s burden’ of responsibility for people viewed as inferior by their British counterparts. But religious concerns, whether tainted by such racialized paternalism or not, were not the only motivation for imperial activities. As Bernard Porter suggests, “In India as in every other colony the room for humanitarian manoeuvre was strictly limited by economic and social realities.”²⁹ That is, the British were willing to undertake projects of aid and reform in the colonies, so long as they served their own self-interests and were economically viable.

Naturally, there were major economic motivations for pursuing colonies, although historians do disagree as to the exact nature of these economic impulses and relationships. Colonies provided new markets, raw materials, and inexpensive labor, which was particularly significant during the industrialization of the nineteenth century. For example, India became a valuable colony for its agricultural production of crops such as opium and cotton, as well as its numerous markets for English manufactured goods. However, in their work *British Imperialism* Cain and Hopkins suggest that,

Although the chronology of Britain’s advance into India provides an approximate match with the timing of the Industrial Revolution, it has proved difficult, despite numerous heroic attempts, to demonstrate that the growth of empire in India was either a cause or a result of the rise of modern manufactures in England.³⁰

²⁹ B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 33.

³⁰ P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688-1914* (London: Longman, 1993), 321.

These authors argue that industrial products did not become large-scale Indian imports until later in the nineteenth century, and that initial expansion was based more on the emphasis on land as the basis for wealth and power, as witnessed at home in the metropole. Cain and Hopkins thus present the concept of “gentlemanly capitalism” within the imperial endeavor, a phenomenon involving a group of wealthy upper-class English businessmen who drove the growth of empire through their financial and social connections. The Cain/Hopkins theory of imperialism has sparked a great deal of debate on the true nature of empire and the people who brought it about.³¹

While further exploration of the debate on the importance of industrialization may lead to a more detailed understanding of the economics of empire building, the mere presence of this colonial discourse emphasizes the degree to which financial motives helped to generate the growth of imperialism. As the above quote acknowledges, many have argued about the role of industrialization in the growth of empire. These inquiries and unresolved debates are but further evidence of the complex nature of empire. On an individual level, many late-nineteenth century Britons were apt to favor the existence of the Empire not merely for its contributions to the national economy, but for the career opportunities created by the need for civilian and military personnel around the world.³² The debate over the connections between imperialism and the industrial revolution represents just one portion of the complex historical debate on the nature and global impact of empire.

³¹ For critiques of the Cain/Hopkins analysis see: Raymond E. Dumett, ed., *Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Imperialism: The New Debate on Empire* (London: Longman, 1999) and Anthony Webster, *The Debate on the Rise of the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

³² Martin Kitchen, *The British Empire and Commonwealth: A Short History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 17.

Historians have also emphasized that the expansion of empire was clearly connected to the balance of power among the dominant European nations. Empire building, and the acquisition of territory, became a matter of political, military, and economic strategy and competition. As Dane Kennedy suggests, “the most aggressively expansionist periods in British history occurred when British power confronted serious challenges from rival states, not when it stood supreme in world affairs.”³³ In many instances the growth of empire was reactionary, responding to competition and threats from foreign powers. An unidentified contemporary writing in the *Manchester Guardian* described such expansion in this manner, “It is not the habit of the English people to set out with their eyes open on a career of conquest and annexation. The conquests which we make are forced upon us.”³⁴ This comment indicates that England’s imperial activities were merely carried out in response to a variety of factors that were out of the British government’s control.

In his lectures on the British Empire and India, nineteenth-century academic J.R. Seeley acknowledged the somewhat haphazard nature of British colonial expansion in the subcontinent, much in the same manner of the writer in the *Manchester Guardian*. Seeley wrote, “Nothing great that has ever been done by Englishmen was done so unintentionally, so accidentally, as the conquest of India.”³⁵ According to Seeley, the British did not set out specifically to subdue and control India, but through economic opportunities, and threats both foreign and domestic, they gradually created one of the largest and most significant colonial holdings in history. One might question the importance of organized motivation in the incorporation of India into the British Empire.

³³ Dane Kennedy, *Britain and Empire, 1880-1945* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), 4.

³⁴ Quoted in B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 116.

³⁵ J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of India (1883)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 143.

That is, does it matter whether the British were chaotic and reactionary in their efforts at colonization rather than systematic and clearly goal-oriented? The answer is yes. By understanding the mode and manner of British colonization, we can better hope to understand its effect on society, both in the colonies themselves and at home in the metropole. A haphazard approach to the undertaking of empire building might suggest a lack of interest on the part of the British. However, by the late-nineteenth century the Empire had become a source and symbol of British strength and pride, however ill-defined and unintended its creation may have been. As imperial historian Denis Judd describes it, in the late-Victorian era, “The Empire had become respectable; imperialism a sanctified philosophy.”³⁶ British citizens, both at home and abroad, felt justified in their imperial endeavor.

Led by Joseph Chamberlain, British politicians of the 1890s championed the growth and development of Her Majesty’s Empire. There were attempts by the British government to organize and unify the Empire. Several colonial conferences were held in the early years of the twentieth century.³⁷ Likewise, the British Colonial Office was developed as an apparatus of the government, which came to dominate management of imperial affairs, although the administration of India was not within their jurisdiction. India actually required the creation of its own administrative arm of the British government in the form of the India Office and the Indian Civil Service.

Seeley’s lectures on the expansion of the Empire were published as a book in 1883, coinciding with that late-nineteenth century push for imperial growth. His work is often quoted and analyzed by scholars of the British Empire. Even those who are critical

³⁶ Denis Judd, *The Victorian Empire, 1837-1901: A Pictorial History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970), 11.

³⁷ Kitchen, 50.

of his work, acknowledge that it was widely read and did much to popularize imperialism. Thus, the status of the Empire was further defined by the existence of contemporary scholars and politicians who promoted its growth. In his book *Propaganda and Empire* John MacKenzie examines the extent to which the Empire influenced the culture of the home country. His analysis of print advertisements, as well as popular literature, music, and theater reveals that imperialism was quite pervasive, even among the working classes. Industrialization had greatly increased the prevalence of print culture and help to disseminate imperialist imagery.³⁸

Not every Briton wholeheartedly endorsed the existence of the Empire, however. Within the halls of Parliament, and publicly displayed in the press, there were many debates as to the desirability or potential for success in developing the Empire during the mid-nineteenth century. Some argued that imperial expansion was not compatible with British values, nor was it economically beneficial.³⁹ While the extent to which an anti-Empire lobby held sway in the mid-Victorian years may be debated, there was obviously some opposition to the spread of the British Empire. Whether it was from fear of overextending the nation's power or a desire to focus more attention on the home country or from some other motivation, not everyone saw the growth of the Empire as beneficial, or even relevant. Bernard Porter has recently gone so far as to argue in *The Absent Minded Imperialist* that the extent of the Empire's influence in Britain has in fact been vastly exaggerated. He writes, "Most Britons were certainly not bound to be imperialists, therefore, or to be interested in the empire, or even to be very much aware of it for most

³⁸ John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 17.

³⁹ For more on this discourse see: Douglas M. Peers, "Britain and Empire" in *A Companion to Nineteenth Century Britain* Chris Williams, ed. (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

of the nineteenth century.”⁴⁰ While Porter’s book makes a fairly convincing argument that many in Britain were not as obsessed with imperialism as we may have believed, even he does not fully discount the strength and significance of the British Empire in this period, even admitting to an increasing public interest in the late-nineteenth century. What seems clear is that historians disagree about the motives for the founding and duration of the Empire. Throughout its lifespan there were British citizens and statesmen who cheered and championed its growth, while others felt such expansion unnecessary and unproductive. For the subject peoples, there were those who rallied against British leadership and supported their own nationalist movements. Yet there were other colonial subjects who wholeheartedly embraced the culture and material benefits offered by the metropole. But nowhere was the complex nature of the British Empire more evident and more significant than in the sub-continent of India.

Conquering India

For most of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, India was arguably the most vital part of the British Empire. India was a key source of markets, manpower, and materials. The relationship between the colony and the metropole had a lasting impact on both the colonizer and the colonized, and indeed, the rest of the world as well. As early as the 1600s, English sailors and merchants of the East India Company (EIC) had made inroads into India, establishing outposts and exerting influence over the natives who were under the governance of the waning Mughal Empire. These initial British forays were largely economic, carried out by traders, and not officially sanctioned

⁴⁰ Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 37.

by the home government. Thus, there can be no doubt that much of the early motivation for conquest in India was financial, the goal of competitive businessmen.

Naturally, the East Asian markets and access to the spice trade were of interest not only to the English, but to other European powers as well. The Portuguese and the Dutch were the leaders in this area of exploration and economic conquest. And by the mid-eighteenth century a series of conflicts had taken place between the British and the French, with colonial possessions, particularly in India, as the chief prize. Success in the Seven Years' War, one of the first global imperial conflicts, and a favorable settlement in the Treaty of Paris (1763) placed the English in a position of supremacy with regard to the colonization of India. But as many historians of imperialism are quick to point out, the British crown as yet had no systematic plan of conquest and acquisition. At this phase of its development Michael Edwardes describes the Indian Empire as, "Unformed, casual, but hardly accidental, it was constructed with mixed motives and powered by personal and commercial profit."⁴¹ The businessmen of the East India Company were largely left alone to administer their holdings on the subcontinent, with Parliament renewing their charter every twenty years and gladly receiving an annual tribute.⁴² Yet as the decades passed, the EIC would gradually give way to the royal Raj and one of the most noteworthy examples of European colonialism.

One of the most significant steps in this transition from Company rule to crown control was Pitt's India Act of 1784. This bill set up a parliamentary Board of Control to oversee activities in India. There was concern by Parliament over the military conquests

⁴¹ Michael Edwardes, *British India, 1772-1947: A survey of the nature and effects of alien rule* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1967), 25.

⁴² Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, 4th Edition (London: Routledge, 2004), 44.

of the EIC and a feeling among British MPs that such behavior needed to be regulated. Stanley Wolpert describes Pitt's India Act as a "compromise formula" between the desire for complete government control of the colony and the power of the Company.⁴³ Again, we see a tension between fear of the unchecked behavior of this non-governmental agency, and a fundamental British aspiration to obtain the potential economic and strategic benefits of established trading posts within India. It would seem that so long as the EIC representatives were making gains in India, it would have been counterproductive for the Crown to regulate their activities too strongly. There were also the practical considerations of attempting to conquer and govern a foreign territory nearly half a world away. The limitations of transportation and communication in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries made it nearly impossible to effectively direct activities in India from the British homeland. Therefore, from a utilitarian standpoint, it was simpler for those Company men on the subcontinent to make their own decisions, without waiting for a consultation from the metropole.

From the mid-eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries the EIC built up its authority and economy within India under the direction of famous Governor-Generals like Warren Hastings, Lord Cornwallis, and Richard Wellesley. The sentiments of this conquest can be effectively summarized by the following quotation from Wellesley, "I can declare my conscientious conviction, that no greater blessing can be conferred on the native inhabitants of India than the extension of British authority, influence and power."⁴⁴ This statement reveals the belief in an inherent British superiority which helped to fuel

⁴³ Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 7th Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 194.

⁴⁴ Quoted in R.P. Masani., *Britain in India: An Account of British Rule in the Indian Subcontinent* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 14.

the growth of the Empire. Many imperialists such as Wellesley truly felt that their nation and culture deserved to be spread throughout the world.

The evangelical Christians of Britain were particularly eager to share their culture with the people of the subcontinent. During the early decades of Company rule, however, missionary work was strictly limited in India. The British settlers in these decades were largely soldiers and businessmen, with little concern for activities which might disrupt the profitability of their enterprise. Missionaries were forbidden from residing within Company territory. To circumvent this policy Baptist missionary William Carey, often considered the father of British missions in India, and two of his colleagues lived at Serampore and began missionizing outside of the EIC's restrictions.⁴⁵

In 1808 the President of the Board of Control of India Robert Dundas wrote to the Governor-General on this subject,

We are very far from being adverse to the introduction of Christianity into India . . . but nothing could be more unwise than any imprudent or injudicious attempt to induce it by means which should irritate and alarm their religious prejudices . . . It is desirable that the knowledge of Christianity should be imparted to the native, but the means to be used for that end shall only be such as shall be free from any political danger or alarm.⁴⁶

Thus, the official policy was one of avoiding conflict and protecting a peaceful status quo. Missionary work was simply seen as too disruptive to be encouraged; Indians might resent the aggressive imposition of Christianity and interfere with the EIC's economic activities. But when the East India Company's charter came up for renewal in 1813, evangelicals throughout England pushed to allow missionary activity in India, submitting

⁴⁵ Kenneth W. Jones, *The New Cambridge History of India, Vol. III-1: Socio-religious reform movements in British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 26.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Niall Ferguson, *Em pire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 137-38.

to Parliament some 837 petitions bearing nearly half a million signatures, supporting an end to the restriction of missionaries in India.⁴⁷ In response, the new East India Act opened the doors to Christian missions.

The missionaries of the early-nineteenth century still faced quite a challenge. As Philip Lawson writes in his history of the East India Company, “Up to 1857 British missions made few converts, but they wished to interfere at all levels of society in order to civilize and raise the morality of a people lost to what they viewed as antiquated religious sophistry.”⁴⁸ The goal of transforming Indian society was present in the hearts and minds of the missionaries, but achieving this end often proved difficult. Largely because converting to Christianity meant changing not only one’s religious beliefs but also established societal patterns and traditions; many natives were reluctant to abandon local customs and alienate themselves from their fellow countrymen. “But for this very reason where he [a missionary] did make progress—usually amongst minority groups, outcasts and animists—his impact on a society was the more disruptive.”⁴⁹ Upsetting social hierarchies could interfere with peacefully functioning economies, or, in extreme cases, even lead to violence. This potential for civic unrest must surely have continued to dampen some of the British zeal to convert the natives, particularly for Company men more concerned with economic gains than religious endeavors.

Even during the first half of the nineteenth century, under an EIC administration that did not see religious conversion as a priority, there were some significant efforts to restrict traditional Indian customs which observers viewed as particularly ‘savage’ or ‘uncivilized.’ Most notable were the practices of female infanticide and sati—the act of

⁴⁷ Ibid., 138.

⁴⁸ Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (London: Longman Group, 1993), 154.

⁴⁹ B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 37.

self-immolation by Hindu widows throwing themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres. In 1829 the Governor-General Lord Bentinck published a decree forbidding both widow-burning and female infanticide. This ban was the result of a public campaign within the metropole, fueled by graphic news articles and public speeches which aroused the Victorian conscience. For example, in an 1811 book on Hinduism William Ward highlighted what he viewed as Hinduism's depravity and cruelty, describing sati as an offence against humanity.⁵⁰ Although the British may have viewed their restriction of sati as a genuine protective measure toward Indian women, the reform movement proved to be quite controversial. Many Indians saw such actions as British interference with their religion and feared further encroachment by the Europeans. For instance, following Lord Bentinck's decree, over 30,000 members of the Indian gentry in Calcutta signed a petition complaining against this violation of their religious freedom.⁵¹ This debate over sati was one of the most significant clashes between Indian culture and imperial rule, and religious missionaries found themselves in the midst of the fray. In this case colonial authorities actually supported the interference of Christian missionaries with traditional Indian practices.

While the missionaries and government officials who fought against sati promoted themselves as benevolent protectors of Indian women, Lata Mani has offered a post-colonial critique on the sati debate, highlighting the absence of Indian women's voices in the imperial discourse. Mani argues that "sati became an alibi for the colonial mission," but she continues, "the women who burned were neither subjects nor even the

⁵⁰ Quoted in Paul Landau, "Language," in *Missions and Empire*, Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 204.

⁵¹ Robert Eric Frykenberg, "Christian Missions and the Raj," in *Missions and Empire*, Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 110.

primary objects of concern in the debate on its prohibition.”⁵² According to her analysis, banning sati helped to justify imperialism, yet lacked a real focus on the position of Indian women. Mani’s work draws attention to the complex gender roles within imperial society; the women were often unable to speak for themselves, yet they were a focal point of cultural conflict between British and Indian men. The fact that Christian missionaries played a key role in arguing against this traditional practice made sati not only an issue of gender, but also religion.

To whatever degree such cultural transformations as the ban on sati were actually effective, the British perspective—both religious and secular, saw India as privileged to be the recipient of English influence and innovation. Undoubtedly many Indian nationalists would disagree with this viewpoint, frustrated by foreign interference. But Robert Johnson points out that “It is generally recognized that the extension of British power was dependent on the willing participation of Indians.”⁵³ This question of indigenous accommodation and collaboration is a large and complex one that cannot be fully explored here. But we must acknowledge that for the British to acquire and maintain their tenuous hold on the subcontinent, they required the participation of the Indians. Douglas M. Peers cites recent arguments that the British conquest of India was based on “raising armies in which most of the troops were Indian, funded with Indian revenues or loans from Indian financiers that were underwritten by Indian revenues, and reliant upon Indian allies and Indian sources of information.”⁵⁴ However, the questions of whether this native participation was ‘willing,’ or what the foundation of this

⁵² Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 2.

⁵³ Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 24.

⁵⁴ Peers, 53.

‘willingness’ might be (i.e. military intimidation or economic coercion) must also be addressed. Whatever their motivations, the fact remains that the British were able to subdue, recruit, and/or utilize the Indians on a variety of levels; from local princes with whom they forged alliances, to local merchants with whom they traded, to sepoys whom they recruited to fight in their military. These Indians played a key role in the establishment and continuation of British rule in India.

The Mutiny

Through intimidation, finesse, and a variety of other skills the East India Company controlled British India into the mid-nineteenth century. But the year 1857 marked a turning point in Anglo-Indian relations, with the Sepoy Mutiny or Sepoy Rebellion. This series of uprisings against British authority in India dramatically affected the nature of their rule, and ultimately ushered in an era which saw the height of British power on the subcontinent. By the mid-nineteenth century the Indian Army had grown into a significant entity and instrument of power. In fact, in his history of the British East India Company Philip Lawson suggests that the army had become independent of the Company and its government. He writes, “It existed as the Company’s force in name only, being ruled by military men with no connection at all to mercantile endeavors.”⁵⁵ Lawson suggests that this separation between the EIC and the army left the British quite vulnerable to rebellion from the sepoys, native Indian soldiers who served under the direction of British officers. Within the army, the sepoys vastly outnumbered the white soldiers to whom they were subordinate. Approximately 40,000 British troops had

⁵⁵ Lawson, 160.

command of 232,000 sepoys, working to control a nation of 200 million Indians.⁵⁶ These numbers clearly reinforce the assertion that British control of India was dependent on the Indians. They also indicate the threat British authorities faced. Should all the natives have decided to rebel, the English had little hope of maintaining control. Thus, the prospect of a large-scale mutiny in 1857 shook the foundations of the British Empire. This was not the first uprising against English colonial power. The British had suppressed several rebellions including the Bareilly Revolt of 1816, Muslim uprisings on the Malabar Coast in the 1850s, and the Santal tribal rebellion in 1855.⁵⁷ But the uprising of 1857 was certainly the largest and most significant in terms of its impact on British rule in India.

There has been much debate on the nature of the 1857 rebellion, reflected in the changing historiography on the subject. Earlier colonial historians believed that the rebellion stemmed chiefly from Indian resentment toward British imperial control, and more specifically, British indifference to native cultural practices. Michael Edwardes effectively summed up the situation when he stated, “Basically, the revolt of 1857 originated in the reaction of a conservative, tradition-loving section of Indian society to the modernizing zeal of their British conquerors.”⁵⁸ There was a growing uneasiness among the native-born Indians concerning the escalation of British power. This tension was exacerbated the year prior to the Mutiny, by the British annexation of the province of Oudh. This event seemed to be a specific example of British aggression, an act which Stanley Wolpert says, “undermined the Bengal Army’s faith in the Raj it served.”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Wolpert, 231.

⁵⁷ D.R. SarDesai, *India: The Definitive History* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2008), 240.

⁵⁸ Edwardes, 149.

⁵⁹ Wolpert, 230.

On a more personal level, among Hindus there was a smoldering resentment toward British elimination of traditional practices such as the prevention of widow remarriage. Hindu society included a complicated caste system, and some Indians were strongly fearful of what they saw as British efforts to force them to break caste. Likewise, sepoys were alarmed at the prospect of having to travel overseas for military service, an act which would cause them to lose caste.⁶⁰ Similarly, the most often identified cause of the Mutiny involves the use of greased cartridges in Enfield rifles. The British army introduced the new guns, which required that a cartridge be torn open, usually with the teeth, so that gunpowder could be loaded into the weapon. The paper cartridges were greased to protect them from moisture. Rumor that animal fats were used in this process seems to have been the final straw in starting this rebellion. The use of beef fat was particularly disturbing to the Hindus who held cows to be sacred, while Muslims were horrified by the use of pork fat as they considered pigs to be unclean. Thus, the British managed to offend the two dominant religious groups of Indian society. Particularly when rumors suggested that the British had intentionally violated these taboos in order to convert the soldiers to Christianity after they had been polluted by the contact with animal grease.⁶¹

There has been some debate concerning the extent to which (if at all) animal fats were used. Charles Mullett wrote, “British officials could not convince the sepoys that they were using mutton fat and wax and that their religion was not endangered.”⁶² This language suggests the author’s belief that the British were not actually using beef and pork fat. Other historians have pointed out British responses to the sepoys’ complaints

⁶⁰ Bowle, 215.

⁶¹ Kulke and Rothermund, 258.

⁶² Mullett, 496.

included suggesting a new method of loading whereby the men did not use their mouths to open the cartridges. This advice seems to indicate that the British were in fact using animal fats. Whether or not they were is almost a moot point; the fact remains that sepoys believed the animal fat rumors and this left them uneasy, agitated, and ready to rebel. Although Saul David has suggested that their motivations for rebellion were less religious and more military in nature. For some soldiers the issue of the greased cartridges merely served as the pretext for a mutiny based on their professional grievances.⁶³

Many have claimed the Mutiny was an early example of Indian nationalism. It has even been referred to as a war for independence.⁶⁴ As with any rebellion, the 1857 Mutiny had an element of revolution. The mutinous sepoys were actively trying to defeat their British leaders; certainly this can be viewed as an attempt to gain their freedom. Eric Stokes' work *The Peasant and the Raj* examines the agrarian uprisings associated with the Mutiny, highlighting economic factors including land rights which may have influenced the rebellion.⁶⁵ But the Mutiny's ultimate defeat through its lack of unity—within both the military insurrections and the peasant uprisings, as well as the assistance of Indian troops who remained loyal to the British make it difficult to categorize this event as truly nationalist. As Peter Robb writes, “‘India’ did not rise, nor was a ‘national’ revolt conceivable.”⁶⁶ The incident is more accurately viewed as pockets of discontent, rather than a broader nationalist movement. Sepoys in the Bengal presidency

⁶³ Saul David, “Grease Cartridges and the Great Mutiny of 1857: A Pretext to Rebel or the Final Straw?” in *War and Society in Colonial India 1807-1945*, Kaushik Roy, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 107.

⁶⁴ R. Johnson, 24.

⁶⁵ Eric Stokes, *The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in agrarian society and peasant rebellion in colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 132.

⁶⁶ Peter Robb, *A History of India* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 147.

revolted, but those in Madras and Bombay did not; they actually assisted the British in suppressing the rebels. Furthermore, it seems clear that, “It was the loyalty of these states that turned the scale in favour of the British.”⁶⁷

On the British side, a theory developed which suggested the Mutiny was actually a punishment from God for not having done enough to Christianize the Indians. Supporters of this argument, who included Prime Minister William Gladstone, cited the fact that Indian Christians did not participate in the uprising.⁶⁸ British official John Lawrence spoke on the importance of maintaining God’s favor stating, “if He were to be extreme to mark what we have done, and still do amiss, we should forfeit that protection from on High which alone maintains us in India.”⁶⁹ Not all English authorities felt the pressure of such a holy mandate or saw the Mutiny as an expression of God’s wrath. In fact, official responses to the Mutiny seem to suggest exactly the opposite. Nevertheless, the mere existence of such discussions highlights the complex cultural war that was inherent in European colonialism, and illustrates the manner in which religion was clearly tied to empire.

Whether the Mutiny was indeed a punishment from God, or a proto-nationalist demonstration, there is no denying the presence of fear and resentment toward the British. These emotions turned to violence in May 1857. Mutineers seized Delhi and the revolt spread to other cities such as Cawnpore and Lucknow. The fighting included some prolonged sieges, but the uprising as a whole was largely restricted to northern India and the Bengal army, failing to gain much momentum in other regions. By September Delhi

⁶⁷ Masani, 45.

⁶⁸ Kitchen, 32.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Kathryn Tidrick, *Empire and the English Character* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1990), 32.

had been recaptured, and with the assistance of loyal natives, the whole rebellion was completely put down by July 1858.

The events of the Mutiny and its suppression were significant not only in their representation of colonial tensions, but also in the level of their brutality. Both sides engaged in horrible atrocities. Mutineers were known to attack Europeans indiscriminately, and the British carried out mass executions, often utilizing particularly horrible tactics including tying men to the mouths of cannons and blowing them apart.⁷⁰ The Governor-General Lord Canning wrote to Queen Victoria, “There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad.”⁷¹ When he tried to temper English punishments and retributions toward the mutineers, he earned much criticism and the unfriendly moniker “Clemency” Canning. While a peaceful conclusion was eventually reached, the intense brutality and prejudices of the rebellion left their mark on both sides. Indeed, given the relatively small numbers of the people involved, the horrors of the Mutiny took on an almost disproportionate significance. Christopher Herbert’s recent work *War of No Pity* seeks to examine why this event had such a profound effect on Victorian society. He finds that, “Contemporary accounts of the Mutiny portray it similarly, as an event of almost incomprehensible magnitude and historical importance.”⁷² The viciousness of the Mutiny shook the foundations of the British Empire. The realization that colonial subjects might be so resentful of British rule was shocking to the Britons, and the atrocities committed on both sides deeply wounded relations. Incidents like the massacre at Cawnpore in which Indian rebels killed British women and children and threw their

⁷⁰ Kitchen, 31.

⁷¹ Quoted in Masani, 46.

⁷² Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 2.

remains down a well traumatized British colonists. As Andrew Ward stated, “For the well at Cawnpore was never really covered over, and the women and children never laid to rest. They festered in the minds of every Anglo-Indian, haunted even their loftiest intentions.”⁷³ The indiscriminate violence on both sides of the Mutiny served to generate fear among the colonizers and widen the racial divide between the British and the Indians.

In addition to this increased ethnic gulf, the rebellion had a number of significant consequences for British rule in India. Most notably, this marked the end of the East India Company’s reign on the subcontinent. In 1858 the British crown officially took over rule of India with a proclamation from Queen Victoria. A Secretary of State for India was created in Britain. In India Lord Canning remained in power, but with the new title of Viceroy, and as a servant of the Queen, not the Company. In some respects it is surprising that the British government did not assert such authority sooner. British interests in India were so strong by the mid-nineteenth century it seemed almost inevitable that the crown make its claim official.

Queen Victoria’s proclamation of 1858 was not completely authoritarian however. She promised there would be no further annexation of territory, and announced a policy of religious toleration, stating:

We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in anywise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law.⁷⁴

⁷³ Andrew Ward, *Our Bones Are Scattered: The Cawnpore Massacre and the Indian Mutiny of 1857* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), 552.

⁷⁴ “Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs, and People of India,” in *The Making of British India 1756-1858*, Ramday Muir, ed. (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 1969), 381.

On the surface, democratic policies of equal protection and religious freedom were being extended to the Indian people. Despite the aforementioned views of those who felt the Mutiny was punishment for failure to effectively promote Christianity in India, the British government dramatically reduced any western proselytizing in favor of maintaining the status quo and preventing further rebellions. Following the proclamation, the colonial government became ultra-solicitous of Indian religious views, cutting down its grants to Christian mission schools.⁷⁵ As Thomas Metcalf describes it, “In India, talk of conversion evoked a uniformly hostile response among the senior officials of the government.”⁷⁶ This move away from attempts to convert the natives is a significant one. For many among the British authorities, religious missions were seen as a key element of imperial conquest. Restricting missionaries’ activities meant separating them from the colonial power structure.

In some respects the Queen’s Proclamation illustrated how deeply the British were frightened by the Mutiny; the government emphasized religious toleration largely in hopes of preventing future uprisings. However, at the same time it does suggest a liberal emphasis on the policy of religious toleration for all. The passage of the law might also indicate a waning of the evangelical movement within Britain. Thomas Metcalf has even suggested that Christianity served as a marker of English difference from and superiority over the Indians.⁷⁷ Thus, some Britons may have believed that keeping their religion to themselves served to maintain their cultural dominance over the Indians. Even as the Queen’s Proclamation claimed non-interference with Indian religions, it still identified

⁷⁵ B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 50.

⁷⁶ Thomas Metcalf, *The New Cambridge History of India, Vol. III: Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 47.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

Britain as a Christian nation. She stated: “Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity . . . we disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects.”⁷⁸

There were still Christian missionaries to whom the conversion of all peoples was a matter of great urgency. Jeffrey Cox suggests that the Mutiny had little overall impact on missionary activities. His analysis of missionary literature finds, “the rebellion was generally portrayed as a kind of natural disaster, like flood or famine, which threatened the progress of the church, and the killing of missionaries and Indian Christians alike treated as a huge misunderstanding.”⁷⁹ According to Cox, missionary societies in India quickly rushed to rebuild their enterprises following the Mutiny. But with the Queen’s Proclamation their work was now severely limited and carried out within the context of a colonial policy focused on peacefully maintaining the established order.

The Mutiny precipitated not only political reorganization, but also military reforms. The army was restructured in order to limit the potential for future rebellions. The ratio of Indians to Englishmen was reduced from five to one to two to one, Hindu and Muslim regiments were mixed to ensure disunity, and European soldiers were almost completely in charge of the artillery.⁸⁰ While these measures seem to have given the British more strict control over the Indian army, they also seemed poised to further incur native resentment. Colonial leaders failed to recognize that even as the British tightened their grasp on India, they were increasing the potential for Indian nationalism.

While there is still no real consensus on the nature of the Sepoy Rebellion, there is no doubt it had a major impact on the British rule in India. From the consolidation of

⁷⁸ “Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs, and People of India.”

⁷⁹ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 31.

⁸⁰ SarDesai, 246.

royal authority, to the restructuring of the military, to the abandonment of expansionist policies, to the restriction of religious missionaries, to the growth of racial divisions, 1858 marked the start of a new era in India. This year saw the beginning of the Raj and the height of British imperial power.

The Height of the Raj

Thus, the late-Victorian era saw India emerge as the ‘jewel in the crown’ of the British Empire. Political control was consolidated under the Raj, and the extensive bureaucracy of the Indian Civil Service was established. The British Empire in India came under the rule of the British monarchy. Inherent in a discussion of this empire is an analysis of the titles and terminology utilized in its management. In 1876 a Royal Titles Bill was introduced in Parliament which would ultimately give Queen Victoria the title “Empress of India.” In their examination of imperialism, Richard Koebner and Helmut Dan Schmidt identify a great deal of popular opposition to this decision. “The debates in Parliament and in the press that followed the announcement, however, showed that all Empire enthusiasm could not obliterate all the evil associations which that noble name evoked in the British mind.”⁸¹ Clearly, there was a connotation of empire with despotism, which the British people were eager to avoid. Ultimately, the bill was passed, most likely out of respect for the queen herself. But it is difficult to gauge the significance of this measure. She took the title of Empress, but only with respect to India. Did this serve to isolate India as the most important, or even the only, principality of the British Empire? Or did it imply that the Indians were the most subjugated of England’s

⁸¹ Richard Koebner and Helmut Dan Schmidt, *Imperialism: The Story and Significance of a Political World, 1840-1960* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 119.

subjects? Benedict Anderson writes, “Actually her title is more interesting than her person, for it represents emblematically the thickened metal of a weld between nation and empire.”⁸² Perhaps the decision reflects an element of each of these sentiments. Historian David Gilmour acknowledges the benefits of the imperial title, “[It] revived the popularity of the monarchy . . . It also helped turn British attention towards India and provide a stimulus for the new imperialism of the 1880s, reflected in the establishment of the Imperial Federation League and in the astonishing popularity of Sir John Seeley’s book, *The Expansion of England*.”⁸³ Perhaps the new title is most indicative of Queen Victoria’s own personal fascination with India. Above all, however, the adoption of the term Empress seems to be another small aspect of the growing pomp and ceremony of the Empire.

The British did not quietly announce the news of the Queen’s title as Empress; the new Viceroy proclaimed it at an imperial durbar, a large honorific ceremony filled with parades and other fanfare.⁸⁴ Durbars such as this were elaborate displays designed to reinforce the strength of the Empire and yet pay homage to Indian culture. The most notable of these events was the great Delhi Durbar of 1903, organized by the Viceroy Lord Curzon. It was rife with spectacle including huge crowds and elephant processions. Yet Niall Ferguson suggests that, “The Durbar was splendid theatre, no doubt; but it was a façade of power, not the real thing.”⁸⁵ This raises a question that we must consider in examining the entirety of British rule in India. How much of their administration was

⁸² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 88.

⁸³ David Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste: Imperial Lives in the Victorian Raj* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005), 3.

⁸⁴ David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 46.

⁸⁵ Ferguson, 210.

merely a “façade of power”? The Raj was indeed a fundamentally fragile institution. Somehow a tiny number of Englishmen managed to rule a nation of millions of Indians.

The imperial hierarchy of the late-Victorian and early-Edwardian Indian Empire was further emphasized through the confirmation of titles and British awards upon selected Indians. For example, in 1861 the Star of India was established as the first Indian order of knighthood, and in 1877 the Order of the Indian Empire was instituted.⁸⁶ While such honors and awards may have ostensibly served to placate the natives and reinforce their status as an official part of the British Empire, it seems more likely that the institution of such specifically designated Indian titles only emphasized the ever-present distinction between the European colonizers and their Asian subjects. The British authorities continued to promote an image of a powerful empire, embracing Indian traditions, perhaps hoping to placate the Indians and thus maintain peace within the colony.

The British success in controlling such a vast colony relied at least partially on the collaboration of local princes and elites. Many states and territories on the subcontinent never came directly under British authority, but were administered by Indian princes with whom the British managed to develop a successful relationship. After the Mutiny the Brits took care to maintain the loyalty of the Indian elite. Those who had remained loyal during the violence of the uprising were rewarded.⁸⁷ Under the Raj, the princes were safe from further British expansion as long as they agreed to support the Empire’s dominance, and this arrangement worked. R.P. Masani describes relationship writing, “The ties of

⁸⁶ Metcalf, 194.

⁸⁷ Ward, 539.

friendship thus formed lasted until the withdrawal of the British in 1947.”⁸⁸ The imperial durbars were used as an opportunity not only to publicly demonstrate the strength of the Empire overall, but more specifically to reaffirm the relationships between the British monarchy and their Indian supporters. In a speech at the 1911 durbar marking his coronation, King George V said, “By my presence with the Queen-Empress I am also anxious to show our affection for the loyal Princes and faithful peoples of India.”⁸⁹ The King emphatically worked to promote a public image of “harmonious co-operation between Europeans and Indians.”⁹⁰

While it is true that these local princes never disrupted the system established by the British government, Thomas Metcalf suggests that their leadership was also something of an artificially constructed façade. The British benefited from the acquiescence of the princes, and were pleased that the presence of the princes gave their empire an image of diversity and cooperation. “Yet the British were never content to leave the princes to exercise their loudly trumpeted ‘traditional’ authority as they saw fit.”⁹¹

British authority in India still rested largely in the hands of the English-run Indian Army. By 1900 half the British population in India was made up of the Army and its dependents, including about 61,000 soldiers, 5,000 officers, and 10,000 women and children.⁹² Likewise, by the end of the nineteenth century military expenditures accounted for nearly half the total of all government income.⁹³ These statistics clearly

⁸⁸ Masani, 48.

⁸⁹ *The Historical Record of the Imperial Visit to India 1911: Compiled from the Official Records Under the Orders of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India* (London: John Murray, 1914), 160.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 180.

⁹¹ Metcalf, 198.

⁹² Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste*, 11.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 109.

indicate the role of force (or the threat of force) in maintaining the Raj. Much of India was originally conquered by the British use of their military strength, and in the decades following the Sepoy Rebellion there was an increased concern for the security of the Empire, as evidenced by the adjustment of the ratio of Anglo soldiers to Indian recruits in the post-Mutiny era to help provide greater English authority within the army.

Meanwhile, there was some crossover between the military and the civil service, although this was more common earlier in the nineteenth century, with army officers often occupying administrative posts. In 1835 acting Governor-General Sir Charles Metcalf stated, “Our dominion in India is by conquest; it is naturally disgusting to the inhabitants and can only be maintained by force.”⁹⁴ While this militarism dampened somewhat over the course of the nineteenth century, and the numbers of civilian administrators increased, it is clear that the army played a key role in the conquest and control of India.

The bulk of the administration of the Raj relied upon one of the great bureaucratic institutions of history—the Indian Civil Service. This vast system helped to successfully organize and oversee a variety of administrative matters throughout an expansive territory. From its early days the ICS was an institution of the middle class, sometimes providing a good career opportunity for those with limited options. By the 1850s entrance into the Civil Service was made competitive, based on tests and individual merit rather than patronage. The ICS enjoyed a generally impressive reputation throughout the Empire. Albeit somewhat tongue-in-cheek, Denis Judd refers to these men as “god-like” and in the “first rank” of colonial administration.⁹⁵ Bernard Porter draws attention to the

⁹⁴ Quoted in Bowle, 201.

⁹⁵ Judd, 118.

civil servants' dutiful attitudes and feelings of self-sacrifice as they carried out their work on the subcontinent.⁹⁶ The ICS provided a structure through which these men could carry out their 'white man's burden' and enhance their own reputations.

While this system seemed to function quite well administratively speaking and offered opportunities for the Europeans in India, it was never a full meritocracy, particularly not for the Indians. They made up a large percentage of the lower rank and file of the Civil Service, but held none of the higher posts. Despite their lack of authority within the colonial bureaucracy, Hayden Bellenoit reminds us that the ICS was actually dependent upon bilingual Indians to fill the lower-level clerk jobs.⁹⁷ By the 1850s the British had affirmed the rights of all citizens of the Empire to apply for positions and were theoretically pursuing a policy of 'Indianization' within the services. However, it was extremely difficult for native-born Indians to receive the necessary education and transportation to England in order to sit for the ICS entrance exam. Within the first 14 years of competition, only 16 Indians took the examination, and only one of them passed.⁹⁸ By the later years of the Raj there were efforts made to improve this imbalance and give the Indians a larger role in ruling their own country, yet the history of the ICS is indicative of both the British feeling of superiority and their somewhat tenuous hold on the Empire. The ICS played a vital role in the administration of Britain's most important colony, and as such, Anglo control of the bureaucracy was a key aspect of British imperial authority.

⁹⁶ B. Porter, *The Lion's Share*, 55.

⁹⁷ Hayden J.A. Bellenoit, *Missionary Education and Empire in Late Colonial India, 1860-1920* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), 1.

⁹⁸ Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste*, 47.

Division within the ICS also helped to cultivate the society of difference that existed within colonial India. White men kept themselves as separate from the Indians as possible. They formed elect communities and all-white clubs for socializing. Thus they created a social elitism similar to the class structure of the mother country, although the colonial system offered more social mobility. Middleclass Englishmen who could not have broken into the upper crust at home in London society were able to reach the most elite social status in India. But as Bernard Porter points out, “The main difference in India was that it was very much easier than in Britain to gain entry into ‘society’ if you were white, but virtually impossible if you were brown.”⁹⁹ White Britons in India were able to rely on the color of their skin to reinforce their assumed social status. By the late-nineteenth century this racial gap was certainly much larger than it had been during the early days of the East India Company’s rule. One explanation for this estrangement lies in the lingering tensions of the Mutiny. “It was inevitable that the Mutiny, with its sorry tale of massacres and reprisals, should engender bitterness and widen the gulf between Englishmen and Indians.”¹⁰⁰ After the Mutiny, fear persisted amongst many of the British, which lead them to further distance themselves from the Indians, and attempt to reinforce their authority over the Asians.

Historians have also looked to the presence of English women to explain the growing separation between the races. Under the EIC, few European women migrated to India, but by the late-nineteenth century, transportation and communication had improved, and an increasing number of British women made the journey to settle in the colony. Janaki Nair explains the development as follows: “The separate and superior

⁹⁹ B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 56.

¹⁰⁰ Sir Percival Griffiths, *The British Impact on India* (USA: Archon Books, 1965), 274.

nature of the master race began to be emphasized, a separateness that could not be established without replicating the English home, which, therefore, necessitated the presence of Englishwomen.”¹⁰¹ Similarly, Ann Laura Stoler’s work *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* explores the development of racial categories through the introduction of European women into colonial domesticity and family life.¹⁰² Thus, historians like Nair have argued that the presence of English women helped to cultivate the isolated social circles which mimicked the society of the metropole. An Anglo-Indian culture developed in contrast to the lifestyles of the indigenous Indians. In addition, scholars have suggested that concern for the welfare of white women in the presence of allegedly savage natives led British men to encourage the isolation of Anglo communities. Mrinalini Sinha discusses this fear in her work on the issues of gender and race during the debate over the 1883 Ilbert Bill, a law which would allow native-born Indian officials criminal jurisdiction over Anglo colonists. She writes, “The second major theme in the Anglo-Indian argument was the actual physical threat to white women in India if native civilians were allowed jurisdiction over European British subjects.”¹⁰³ Again, such fear can be at least partially traced back to the violence of the Mutiny. But some historians, such as Margaret Strobel remain unconvinced that European women created greater distance between the Indian and Anglo communities. She works to

¹⁰¹ Janaki Nair, “Uncovering the *zenana*: visions of Indian womanhood in Englishwomen’s writings, 1813-1940,” in *Cultures of Empire A Reader: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Catherine Hall, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 225.

¹⁰² Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 2.

¹⁰³ Mrinalini Sinha, “‘Chathams, Pitts, and Gladstones in Petticoats’: The Politics of Gender and race in the Ilbert Bill Controversy, 1883-1884,” in *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*, Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 100.

debunk what she calls the “myth of destructive women,” arguing that European men played just as great a role in creating social distance.¹⁰⁴

Others have maintained, however, that some English women took an active role in cultivating the racial divide. In her book on the history of British feminists in India, *Burdens of History*, Antoinette Burton discusses the manner in which British feminist arguments were preoccupied with “race preservation, racial purity, and racial motherhood.”¹⁰⁵ Even as these women took up the cause of their Indian sisters, they continued to reinforce their racial differences. Female activists like these represent yet another dichotomy inherent in the Empire. Barbara N. Ramusack has also studied several such English women whom she refers to as “maternal imperialists.”¹⁰⁶ In many respects these women functioned as genuine allies of Indian women, but often from a position of authority and condescension. Protecting and defending Indian women from the restrictions and mistreatment of their traditional society became a part of missionary activity. As such, British missionaries used the figure of the persecuted, defenseless Indian woman as a justification for their missionizing.¹⁰⁷

Much has been written on the issue of race within the British Empire, and indeed this topic is far too complex to be thoroughly examined here. But suffice it to say, racial divisions were a key component of the British Raj, and the tensions inherent in the system were an important backdrop for the events of the late-Victorian era. In addition,

¹⁰⁴ Margaret Strobel, *European Women and the Second British Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 6.

¹⁰⁵ Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 48.

¹⁰⁶ Barbara N. Ramusack, “Cultural Missionaries, Maternal Imperialists, Feminist Allies: British Women Activists in India, 1865-1945,” in *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*, Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 133.

¹⁰⁷ Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8.

by the late-nineteenth century, Charles Darwin's theories of natural selection had been widely read and appropriated to support social-Darwinist theories of racism which many used to reinforce British claims of superiority and their right to rule. In his book *Ideologies of the Raj* Thomas R. Metcalf argues that "especially during the years of uncontested British supremacy from 1858 to 1918, the ideas that most powerfully informed British conceptions of India and its people were those of India's 'difference.'"¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Peter van der Veer described the situation by stating, "Racial difference between the British and the colonized and among the colonized themselves became the explanation and legitimation of colonial rule."¹⁰⁹ This so-called 'ideology of difference' was an accepted and perhaps even vital aspect of the Raj. Thus, any Europeans who found themselves working in India whether as part of the ICS or as religious missionaries, had to navigate their way through this divide, or else risk subverting imperial authority by aligning themselves more closely with the Indians.

Colonial Indian society with all its hierarchies was defined not only by its racial distinctions, but also by its use of the traditional Hindu caste system. Early British colonists of the East India Company were not often concerned with the topic of caste; they paid little attention to it, or as Thomas Metcalf points out, they saw caste "as an emblem of India's degradation, and as a barrier to its improvement."¹¹⁰ For many, caste first became a relevant issue in connection with the Mutiny. Many historians agree that British ignorance of, or disregard for, traditional policies of the caste system ultimately caused the uprising. The English soldiers failed to understand how their practices were breaking caste rules, particularly with regard to eating, drinking, and overseas travel.

¹⁰⁸ Metcalf, x.

¹⁰⁹ van der Veer, 49.

¹¹⁰ Metcalf, 116.

Nicholas B. Dirks suggests that at the time, “The most common general explanation for the Great Revolt was the caste system.”¹¹¹ While several factors combined to create the violence of 1857, it seems obvious that the British failure to take into account the inner workings of the caste system had a major impact. Thus, it follows that during the late-Victorian Raj greater attention would be given to this topic.

Late-nineteenth-century attempts by the British to better understand and utilize the caste system were based not only on a desire to prevent further uprisings and improve British control of the Indians; such studies were also influenced by trends in contemporary scholarship. For example, the late-nineteenth century saw the growth of ‘racial science.’ Works like William Z. Ripley’s *Races of Europe*, published in 1899, used skull measurements and other pseudoscientific techniques to differentiate among the peoples of Europe, arguing in favor of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority.¹¹² Likewise, in India projects were undertaken to correlate caste with physical features such as nose and skull shape.¹¹³ The differentiation and order of the caste system appealed to scholars of India. As Thomas Metcalf describes it, “A relentless need to count and classify everything they encountered defined much Victorian intellectual activity.”¹¹⁴ The traditional Hindu caste system was quite complex, with numerous categories and rankings which highlighted an intersection of various criteria including race, religion, and occupation. Ethnographers, anthropologists, and government officials alike were quite happy to study and then utilize this categorization. And indeed the British did co-opt this Indian institution and use it in their own censuses for purposes of classification and to

¹¹¹ Dirks, 130.

¹¹² Jane Samson, *Race and Empire* (Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2005), 72.

¹¹³ Van Der Veer, 149.

¹¹⁴ Metcalf, 113.

reinforce hierarchical structures of authority. For example, in her examination of the Government of India's Public Service Commission appointed in 1886 Mrinalini Sinha highlights how the work of this group "coincided with the massive colonial offensive in the late-nineteenth century aimed at the classification of natives by religion, caste, province, class, and so on."¹¹⁵ Likewise, in *Castes of Mind* Nicholas B. Dirks argues that colonialism shaped the modern caste system. He writes that, "it was under the British that 'caste' became a single term capable of expressing, organizing, and above all 'systematizing' India's diverse forms of social identity, community, and organization."¹¹⁶ Indeed, British census reports of the late-nineteenth century paid great attention to caste designations, and laws such as the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 were clearly specifically based on caste distinctions.¹¹⁷

By the late-nineteenth century the Raj had reached its peak; India was the 'crown jewel' of all British colonies. The Colonial Office, the Indian Army, the Indian Civil Service, and the hierarchy of the caste system worked to maintain British dominance in the subcontinent. But beneath this façade of imperial strength and power there were tensions. The 1857 Sepoy Mutiny brought to light serious cultural conflicts between the Indian Hindus and Muslims and their British colonizers. While this watershed event allowed the British government to increase their control over India, it also left the English nervous and fearful of another violent disruption in their Empire. Meanwhile, from the early days of English colonization in India throughout the tension of the carefully constructed Raj, an important non-governmental group of Europeans was at work in

¹¹⁵ Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 101.

¹¹⁶ Dirks, 5.

¹¹⁷ India Office Records, "Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Act XXVII," 348.

India—Christian missionaries. Thus, the next chapter looks more specifically at the efforts of these missionaries within the context of the British Raj.

CHAPTER II: MISSIONARIES AND THE RAJ

The history of the Salvation Army's work in India is part of a broader history of Christian missions on the subcontinent which fluctuated as the Empire developed. Salvationist missionaries were in many ways representative of nineteenth-century British missionary trends, while in some aspects their work was unique. Although they were merely one of many missionary organizations in India, their military structure, emphasis on social service projects, and policy of training new converts for leadership allowed the Salvation Army to make a distinct contribution to Christian missions and the Empire.

The early years of the East India Company rule witnessed a restriction of missionary efforts as EIC businessmen were reluctant to interfere with local culture and practices. But this policy saw a shift in the early to mid-nineteenth century, with an increase in European attempts to convert the Indians. This growth of efforts abroad was clearly a reflection of sentiments within the metropole; as the evangelical movement gained momentum back in England, churches sent more missionaries to spread the word overseas.¹¹⁸ But the pendulum shifted back again in the tense post-Mutiny period that marked the beginning of the Raj. Britons were now particularly fearful of stirring up religious issues and potentially provoking another uprising. Crown rule of the late-nineteenth century was concerned with keeping the peace. Throughout India, the royal government cut back on its grants to Christian mission schools and abandoned any 'reformist' plans which might upset Indian conservatives. Dedicated religious personnel, however, were not prepared to abandon their calling; thus setting the stage for a clash

¹¹⁸ J.C. Ingleby, *Missionaries, Education and India: Issues in Protestant Missionary Education in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 31.

between the forces of church and state. Upon entering India, the Salvationists found themselves confronted with this issue.

Historians like J.C. Ingleby have attempted to connect missionary work to imperial politics and military power, as well as to the economics of empire. In his book *The Bible and the Flag* Brian Stanley cites data identifying the late-nineteenth century as the height of British missionary efforts throughout the world. Referring to statistics from the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the London Missionary Society (LMS), two of the most well-known British missions organizations, Stanley shows that the groups had their largest numbers of recruits in the 1880s and 1890s.¹¹⁹ Although noting this late-Victorian surge of religious fervor, Stanley questions its relation to the Empire, arguing that missionaries were motivated more by the desire to spread religion than by imperialism. Stanley writes, “Closer analysis of the figures for CMS recruitment in the late Victorian period thus suggests than independent religious and social trends may have been at least as important as specifically imperial developments in producing the massive increase in numbers of missionaries.”¹²⁰ Stanley is likely correct that independent religious trends such as the holiness movement *caused* more individuals to pursue missionary work than simply the general upsurge in imperialist activity; however, his statement does not fully explore the impact of the missionaries on the Empire.¹²¹ For instance, although the work of the Salvation Army was primarily motivated by religious

¹¹⁹Stanley, 80.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 82.

¹²¹ The holiness movement refers to the mid-nineteenth century popularization of the teachings of Methodist founder John Wesley. The idea of holiness is one of a personal religious experience that includes a dramatic conversion, as well as a belief in the doctrine of sanctification--which taught a concept of a perfect love with God.

concerns, over time the Salvationists found themselves collaborating with the imperial state.

Andrew Porter gives little credit for religious developments overseas to the established institutions of church and state. He writes, “Religious expansion, however, was far less the preserve of churches and governments than the responsibility of voluntary lay societies and individual believers or converts.”¹²² Porter is certainly correct to emphasize the role of missionaries on the ground in foreign territory as key players in this situation. At the same time, he alludes to an important question in the study of British imperial missionaries, namely the relationship of churches at home in England with missionary activity abroad. In many respects missionaries represented an extension of British churches into the peripheries of the Empire. The Salvation Army in India, for example, was clearly and directly connected to the SA in Britain.

There was occasionally a distinction between missionary groups and the particular churches they represented. Many missionary activities were carried out through the administration of separate missionary societies like the LMS and CMS. While such groups were aligned with an established church, they were at the same time distinct. As C. Peter Williams reminds us, “The CMS was an arm (albeit a voluntary body outside of the formal structures of authority) of the Church of England.”¹²³ Jeffrey Cox addresses this contradiction in his analysis of the CMS. Although he recognizes the group as a volunteer religious organization, Cox also describes it as, “nonetheless made up of

¹²² Andrew Porter, “The Empire and the World,” in *Short Oxford History of the British Isles: The Nineteenth Century*, Colin Matthew, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 148.

¹²³ C. Peter Williams, “The Church Missionary Society and the Indigenous Church in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century: The Defense and Destruction of the Venn Ideals,” in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*, Dana L. Robert, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 101.

members of a church established by law in both England and India . . . committed to an elitist view of religious influence emanating from the superior members of society.”¹²⁴ In this regard, the Salvation Army was different from other missionary groups. Although the Salvationists had ties to a church in the metropole, it was not an established church, but rather a dissenting organization which allowed members of all social classes to play an equal role.

Imperial historians have not only drawn connections between missionary work and the political and military aspects of the Empire, but with the economic issues as well. Bernard Porter writes, “The British churches exploded into missionary activity abroad at about the same time as British industry exploded into the world market.”¹²⁵ While again there is no strong evidence of a cause and effect relationship between the two endeavors, he does draw an interesting correlation—one that appears to have had some contemporary reinforcement. Sir John Bowring, Governor of Hong Kong in the 1850s, is quoted as saying, “Jesus Christ is Free Trade and Free Trade is Jesus Christ.”¹²⁶ This catch phrase seems to be a rather flippant oversimplification, but it clearly speaks to contemporary British sentiment and the role of both religion and economics in the British Empire. For Porter, the growth of missions and the growth of the British economy are all connected to a larger sense of British global superiority inherent in the imperialism of the late-nineteenth century. All churches may not have been specifically focused on the economic expansion of the Empire, but in some instances they were actually contributing to its development.

¹²⁴ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 31.

¹²⁵ B. Porter, *The Lion’s Share*, 37.

¹²⁶ Quoted in Ronald Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion*, 2nd Edition (Lanham, Maryland: Barnes & Noble Books, 1993), 113.

In his book *Britain's Imperial Century*, Ronald Hyam discusses the tactics and ideology of nineteenth-century British missionaries. He writes, "Evangelicals certainly regarded normative Christianity as involving a combative mentality, as well as an uncomplicated confidence in what they were doing."¹²⁷ This was definitely true of the Salvation Army's evangelists, who saw themselves as quite literally engaged in a war against sin and Satan, waging combat to save souls. But this aggressive and militant depiction of missionaries bears striking similarities to another aspect of British rule; the combative nature of these missionaries was not unlike the aggressive conquest of the actual British army. Likewise Kathryn Tidrick makes reference to the impact of evangelical religion on the nature of Victorian politics and government. She cites evangelical Christianity's emphasis on the individual's strength of character and role as a moral messenger. "That is to say, the evangelical belief in the changing power of personal example became conflated, in the political sphere, with a belief in its power to control."¹²⁸ In Tidrick's mind, religious philosophy had a dramatic effect on the political leadership of the day, actually serving to reinforce the British paternalistic means of control. While she does not address to what degree this was intentional, or even overtly accomplished, she does highlight yet another connection, a reciprocity even, between contemporary religion and government.

In his lecture "The Church Militant Abroad" Max Warren draws quite obvious connections between the missionary work of the Victorian era and the British imperial government. He quotes several political figures that supported the work of missions within the Empire, including a 1895 speech from Lord Rosebery in which his definition

¹²⁷ Hyam, 95.

¹²⁸ Tidrick, 4.

of liberal imperialism included “the development of missionary enterprise.”¹²⁹ Likewise he argues, “Nor can it astonish us if missionaries found it easy to accept the patronage of governments, as they did, seeing that so often the representatives of government, for one reason or another, offered that patronage.”¹³⁰ For Warren it seems fairly straightforward and unsurprising that there would be an obvious connection between missions and politics. Ian Bradley believes that missionaries “almost reluctantly” became “advocates of imperialism,” seeing direct rule by Britain as the best way to civilize and improve the lives of natives.¹³¹ Certainly many missionaries did truly believe that British society was superior and needed to be disseminated among the indigenous population.

John Wolffe also supports the idea of missionaries as reluctant imperialists when he writes, “The manner in which missionary endeavour and imperialism seemed increasingly in the late-nineteenth century to be feeding off each other was not usually the original intention of the missionaries.”¹³² Wolffe believes that missionaries worked most closely with the government when it served their own interests or agenda.

Likewise, Robert Johnson analyzes imperial missions, stating, “The missionaries pursued their own agenda and supported imperialism only where they saw some advantage to themselves and their missions.”¹³³ This viewpoint seems to characterize missionaries as highly subversive and frequently at odds with the imperial authorities. To support this claim, Johnson cites the fact that many missionary groups cooperated with those from other European countries, thus ignoring the nationalist loyalty and international

¹²⁹ Quoted in Max Warren, “The Church Militant Abroad: Victorian Missionaries,” in *The Victorian Crisis of Faith*, Anthony Symondson, ed. (London: S.P.C.K., 1970), 66.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹³¹ Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (New York: MacMillan, 1976), 88-89.

¹³² John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain: Religion and National Life in Britain and Ireland 1843-1945* (Routledge: London, 1994), 220.

¹³³ R. Johnson, 105.

competition that were a hallmark of nineteenth century empires.¹³⁴ This theory has been supported by the work of the Salvation Army missionaries. Although the organization began in England and the first missionaries sent to India were all English, many other nationalities eventually joined them, all of whom were loyal to the SA.

Some historians have viewed the goals of missionaries as completely separate from the imperialist agenda. According to Hayden Bellenoit, “Missionaries, upon close inspection, often diverged from imperial and metropolitan norms.”¹³⁵ These religious figures had their own goals, and their own methods, which did not always fit with colonial power structures. Geoffrey A. Oddie likewise sees the aims of the missionaries as completely different from those of the imperialists, “the colonizers being intent on the acquisition and maintenance of empire and missionaries on the saving of souls and the establishment of Christian communities.”¹³⁶

While these and other examples reveal missionaries working against a nationalist imperial agenda, there are plenty of other historians who view missionaries as a key component in the growth and success of the British Empire. Susan Thorne argues that, “Even at their most antagonistic . . . Victorian missionaries seldom questioned the moral validity of Europe’s imperial domination of the non-European world.”¹³⁷ Andrew Porter recognizes a middle ground for the missionaries who may have actually served as “intermediaries” between the colonizers and the local population. He argues that, “Again and again, missionaries eased the early encounters between indigenous societies and the

¹³⁴ Ibid., 100.

¹³⁵ Bellenoit, 198.

¹³⁶ Geoffrey A. Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism: British Protestant Missionary Constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 21.

¹³⁷ Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 156.

incoming British.”¹³⁸ Some missionary personnel walked a fine line as both supporters of empire and defenders of indigenous causes.¹³⁹ The true nature of the relationship between missionaries and the imperial government, in India and around the world, was indeed complicated and frequently in conflict.

One area of missionary work which often earned the respect of British officials however, was the establishment of schools for children. Many of the British saw education as the key to enlightenment and civilization. The best way to eliminate ‘backward’ and ‘barbaric’ Indian practices was by teaching the natives the English language and customs. Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General in the early 1800s said,

Examine the whole scheme of this Indian system, and you will find the same result: poverty, inferiority, degradation in every shape. For all these evils, knowledge! knowledge! knowledge! is the universal cure.¹⁴⁰

There was a common assumption that English wisdom was the key to improving Indian civilization. With their schools and their religious indoctrination, missionaries were on the forefront of this movement. But somewhat ironically, success in educating the Indians could have actually undermined the imperial mission. Education that prepared them for self-government and led to Indian nationalism would weaken the power base of the Raj. Thus, missionary schools had the potential to subvert the British colonial agenda. During the post-Mutiny era, concern for the stability of the Raj remained paramount. At the same time, however, Hayden Bellenoit argues that British colonial

¹³⁸ A. Porter, “The Empire and the World.” 148.

¹³⁹ Brian Stanley, “Church, State, and the Hierarchy of ‘Civilization’: The Making of the ‘Missions and Governments’ Report at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910,” in *The Imperial Horizons of Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, Andrew Porter, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 73.

¹⁴⁰ Quoted in Hyam, 112.

authorities actually needed educated Indian personnel to maintain a functioning bureaucracy. He writes, “Within India, the British were wary about proliferating English education, yet at the same time they needed Indians to keep the Raj running.”¹⁴¹

Likewise, in his examination of missionary education in India J.C. Ingleby discusses the tension between mission schools with their desire to emphasize religious instruction and the British government and its desire for theological neutrality. Despite this conflict, he writes, “Shortage of money tied the missionaries to the Government.”¹⁴² Missionaries *needed* government funds to run their schools.

Bellenoit’s study further explores the tensions inherent within the practices of mission schools. He contends that although in many instances mission schools actually shied away from overt proselytization in favor of more general teaching of character and morals, they still hoped that eventually their education would yield strong converts. Missionaries hoped that these well-educated Indian converts would prove to be stronger, more legitimate Christians than some of their more rapidly converted countrymen who may have been attracted to Christianity solely for the food or other benefits offered by the missionaries.¹⁴³ Bellenoit’s revelation that missionaries were eager to avoid the superficial conversions of so-called ‘rice Christians’ suggests that education was truly viewed by the missionaries themselves as a vital element of their ministry. While the desire for sincere, knowledgeable converts must certainly have been present, Bellenoit may have overestimated missionaries’ dissatisfaction with their illiterate converts.

¹⁴¹ Bellenoit, 33.

¹⁴² Ingleby, 169.

¹⁴³ Bellenoit, 74.

Eleanor Jackson, however, does cite evidence from the records of the LMS indicating problems the missionaries had with false converts and confidence tricksters.¹⁴⁴

Another major issue confronting mission schools was the question of language. English language instruction provided the most benefits to the Raj, by training potential employees of the imperial bureaucracy. Some religious leaders also championed the use of English, but other missionaries acknowledged the utility of the vernacular in spreading Christianity.¹⁴⁵ In fact, many missionaries showed a great interest in local languages, translating the Bible and other religious texts into versions which could be more widely understood, and opening vernacular schools. In many respects, however, vernacular education served to empower the Indian people and even promote nationalism. By teaching Indians in their own languages, missionaries may actually have been helping to build resistance to imperial authority. On the other hand, Paul Landau argues that missionaries' work with indigenous languages often served to "primitivize and tribalize peoples;" suggesting that Europeans may have used these languages to reinforce their distinction from and feelings of superiority toward Indian peoples. Thus, Landau feels "The legacy of missionaries' engagement with the languages of the Empire is not an entirely uplifting one."¹⁴⁶ Once again, we see evidence of the complexity and contradictions of the missionaries' position within the Empire.

Some missionaries stood firm behind the traditional imperial power structures, not wanting to provide the indigenous peoples with further autonomy. They refused to let

¹⁴⁴ Eleanor Jackson, "From Krishna Pal to Lal Behari Dey: Indian Builders of the Church in Bengal, 1800-1894," in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*, Dana L. Robert, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 174.

¹⁴⁵ Andrew Porter, "Language, 'Native Agency,' and Missionary Control: Rufus Anderson's Journey to India, 1854-55," in *Missions and Missionaries*, Pieter N. Holthrop and Hugh McLeod, eds. (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2000), 96.

¹⁴⁶ Landau, 213.

Indian converts assume positions of authority. Lee Grugel argues that, “Although the missionaries paid lip service to Carey’s [early Indian missions’ leader] advice to let Indian Christians manage their own churches, they were too reluctant to allow independence.”¹⁴⁷ This statement reveals one of the largest tensions within the nineteenth century missionary movement—the debate over native agency. There were imperial religious authorities who firmly believed in the importance of developing Indian leadership for the church in India, and others who found the concept of Indian clergy in positions of authority extremely threatening.

Recent scholarship has included much discussion of the debate over native agency among colonial religious leaders. A key figure in this discourse in Britain was Henry Venn, secretary of one of the largest missionary organizations—the Church Missionary Society, in the mid-1800s. Venn was a promoter of the so-called “three-self theory” which argued that the goal of missions was to create churches that were self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating.¹⁴⁸ While many laud Venn as a visionary and champion of indigenous Christians, C. Peter Williams offers a more complex picture, one that demonstrates how Venn’s ideals were shifted and even “killed off” in the late-nineteenth century.¹⁴⁹ Williams’ analysis contends that the realities of colonial missionary activity were much more Anglo-dominant than theorists such as Venn desired. His work suggests that even among missionaries who preached egalitarian ideals, imperial hierarchies remained. Likewise, in discussing missionary efforts in

¹⁴⁷ Lee E. Grugel, *Society and Religion During the Age of Industrialization: Christianity in Victorian England* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979), 92.

¹⁴⁸ Dana L. Robert, “Introduction,” in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*, Dana L. Robert, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 13.

¹⁴⁹ Williams, 111.

Calcutta Andrew Porter reveals a concern over the “weakness of Native Agency” throughout the late-nineteenth century.¹⁵⁰

Other scholars have worked to uncover instances of successful development of native agency within imperial missions. For example, Peggy Brock argues, “If, as some assert, the missionary movement was part of a larger imperial project of cultural colonialism, it is important to realize the footsoldiers of the advance were the indigenous preachers.”¹⁵¹ In this statement, Brock actually seems to contradict the notion of missionizing as imperialism. By placing such importance on the efforts of Indian proselytizers, she is making the spread of Christianity indigenous rather than imposed by foreigners. Likewise, historians such as Eleanor Jackson have tried to demonstrate the importance of Indian pastors and evangelists in spreading Christianity throughout India. Her essay in *Converting Colonialism* highlights two influential Indian missionaries of the nineteenth century.¹⁵² Jackson’s examples question traditional connotations of the term missionary; here foreignness is not an element, these men worked at missions within their home country. The Salvation Army remains one of the best examples of a British missionary organization which promoted native agency. They took pride in grooming Indian converts for leadership and placing them in positions of authority, even making a young officer from Ceylon second-in-command of the Salvation Army’s work in India, outranking European officers.

It comes as no surprise that many Indian people failed to embrace Christianity. As missionaries worked to convert Indians they often confronted the traditions and

¹⁵⁰ A. Porter, *Religion versus empire?*, 258.

¹⁵¹ Peggy Brock, “New Christians as Evangelists,” in *Missions and Empire*, Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 132.

¹⁵² Jackson, 168.

policies of the local caste system. A text put out by the London Missionary Society in 1908 acknowledged,

These rigid rules of caste demarcation must of necessity closely influence the spread of the Gospel, and any church which resolutely teaches and practices the equality of all within its fold must be prepared for prejudice and difficulty from within as well as without.¹⁵³

In this perspective missionaries may have found themselves at odds with India Office policies. Rather than *using* the caste system to further categorize and subjugate the natives, missionaries attempted to eliminate caste distinctions and Indian religions, instead promoting the equality of Christianity. In other instances, missionaries found themselves forced to target one caste or another; attempting to convert natives across caste boundaries was simply too difficult.

Some Indians even responded violently to British efforts at proselytizing. In the southern Indian state of Travancore, for example, missionaries found themselves the victims of a series of attacks over the course of the nineteenth century, largely the result of the missionaries' efforts to make local women cover their breasts and thus dress more appropriately according to Western standards.¹⁵⁴ This situation again represents the clash of cultures often inherent in missionary work. Converting to Christianity meant abandoning old traditions, which many Indians were unwilling to do. Kenneth Jones also cites more organized efforts to combat Christian missionaries in Tamilnad. In this case, during the late-1800s organized Hindu societies began using the Christian missionaries' own tactics against them. Holding processions in hopes of drawing people away from

¹⁵³ Rev. I.H. Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore: A History and Description of the Work done by the London Missionary Society in Travancore, South India During the Past Century* (London: H.R. Allenson, 1908), 16.

¹⁵⁴ Jones, 159.

Christian meetings and publishing Hindu tracts as competition for Christian pamphlets.¹⁵⁵

This instance of effective Hindu resistance to British proselytizing is a fascinating example of colonial interaction. The Indians observed the Europeans' strategies, and adopted them to counter colonial efforts at conversion.

Another development in recent imperial scholarship is the increasing attention paid to the role of female missionaries. Although the very earliest missionaries in India were predominantly male, this changed drastically over the course of the Raj. By the late-nineteenth century white female missionaries outnumbered the men in imperial missions.¹⁵⁶ These women included not only the wives of male missionaries, but later many single women who traveled to India on their own. The Salvation Army in particular prided itself on offering both married and single women opportunities to serve as preachers. Working overseas provided many women with a chance for increased autonomy and career advancement. Kumari Jayawardena writes, "Under British rule, women missionaries found space in the public domain and opportunities for achievement denied them at home."¹⁵⁷

As the nineteenth century progressed, and the number of female missionaries increased, however, Protestant missionary activity still often centered on the British concepts of home and family. In her study of imperial family Bibles Mary Wilson Carpenter discusses the way in which Victorian women and notions of British family values were exported throughout the Empire. She argues that "global imperial expansion

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 163.

¹⁵⁶ Patricia Grimshaw and Peter Sherlock, "Women and Cultural Exchanges," in *Missions and Empire*, Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 174.

¹⁵⁷ Kumari Jayawardena, *The White Woman's Other Burden: Western Women and South Asia During British Colonial Rule* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 21.

is justified by the virtues of the British family.”¹⁵⁸ Thus, female missionaries served an important role as exemplars of the British ideals of wife and mother. They had their own particular functions to perform within the missionary setting. This sentiment was expressed by Florence Booth, wife of Salvation Army General Bramwell Booth. In an address entitled “Mothers and Empire” she said: “For the home represents the nation; and only as far as the homes of its people are pure and good can the nation itself be pure and good, and fitted to take its place in the world.”¹⁵⁹

Over the course of the nineteenth century it was increasingly believed that male missionaries *should* be married. They needed a female companion to assist in their work.¹⁶⁰ Anna Johnston argues that, “Widespread use of structures and images centred on family in colonial missions meant that gendered domestic relations were crucial to missionary endeavours promoting Christianity.”¹⁶¹ The Victorian cult of domesticity and the notion of separate spheres for men and women were applied to the mission field. Dana L. Robert contends that, “the idea of the Christian home has been one of the most influential results of the Western missionary enterprise.”¹⁶²

Naturally, the primary targets for this campaign to promote Christian families were Indian women. In particular, the nineteenth century witnessed European missionary efforts to break through the traditional barriers of the Indian zenana, or the portion of the

¹⁵⁸ Mary Wilson Carpenter, *Imperial Bibles, Domestic Bodies: Women, Sexuality, and Religion in the Victorian Market* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2003), 52.

¹⁵⁹ Mrs. Bramwell Booth, *Mothers and the Empire and other addresses* (London: The Salvation Army Book Department, 1914), 3.

¹⁶⁰ Catherine Hall, “Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century,” in *Gender and Empire*, Philippa Levine, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 60.

¹⁶¹ Johnston, 52.

¹⁶² Dana L. Robert, “The ‘Christian Home’ as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice,” in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*, Dana L. Robert, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 134.

For more on female missionaries and the use of domesticity see also: Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

Indian household in which women were secluded. Zenana visitation was a missionary activity uniquely suited to female missionaries, and the development of such work helped to justify the presence of English women in the mission field. Many religious groups began developing separate zenana missions. The Church of England even had its own Zenana Missionary Society, which published its own magazine entitled *India's Women*.¹⁶³

Late-nineteenth century advancements in European women's access to education opened the door to yet another important aspect of female missions—medical work. As more Western women became trained as doctors, many took these skills to the mission field of India. The presence of female doctors was particularly significant to missionary efforts in India, because it allowed religious personnel to penetrate the world of the zenana. Female nurses and doctors were allowed access to Indian women which male European missionaries were denied. By the 1890s there were over 50 female missionary doctors of various denominations in India and in 1894 the Women's Christian Medical College, the first medical school for women was opened in the Punjab.¹⁶⁴ Such medical missionary work made a significant contribution to the expansion of Indian women's access to healthcare, one which male missionaries working on their own could not have achieved as effectively.

A thorough examination of the issues of gender and missionary activity involves more than an analysis of female missionaries. Male missionaries represent a particular type of imperial figure with their own gendered portrayal. Colonial narratives included depictions of strong, masculine Englishmen; this emphasis on masculinity was used for

¹⁶³ Ibid., 149.

¹⁶⁴ David Arnold, *The New Cambridge History of India, Vol. III-5: Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 88.

missionaries as well as secular imperial officials. This so-called ‘muscular Christianity,’ a term first coined in 1857, was epitomized by men who demonstrated, “physical strength, religious certainty, and the ability to shape and control the world around oneself.”¹⁶⁵ Muscular Christianity involved manly, assertive efforts to convert weaker colonial peoples. “Vigorous but pious British manliness was contrasted with depraved native masculinity.”¹⁶⁶ Mrinalini Sinha analyzes the shifting colonial identities of the “manly Englishman” in contrast with the “effeminate Bengali.”¹⁶⁷ While Sinha offers no specific discussion of the application of these terms to missionary figures, she does identify themes present in the imperial hierarchy, of which Christian missionaries were undoubtedly a part, be it willingly or not.

This image of a masculine Christian hero became quite popular in Victorian culture. Anna Johnston cites numerous examples of nineteenth-century fiction which revolved around a “heroic male missionary figure.”¹⁶⁸ Thus, this idea of strong, manly Christianity was reinforced at home in the metropole through popular literature. Both at home and abroad, the Salvation Army presented its own distinct image of Christian masculinity—one which used the military metaphor of a soldier yet preached non-violence. Richard Price discusses this new masculinity of Salvationists who were tough enough to face attacks from lower-class hooligans, but responded with kindness. He writes, “The male culture of the Salvation Army challenged the rough and exclusively male culture of the pub, the street and the racetrack, proclaiming a masculinity that was

¹⁶⁵ Donald E. Hall, “Muscular Christianity: reading and writing the male social body,” in *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age*, Donald E. Hall, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7.

¹⁶⁶ Johnston, 8.

¹⁶⁷ Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 11-12.

¹⁶⁸ Johnston, 20.

gentle and caring.”¹⁶⁹ Laura Lauer likewise describes male Salvationists as having created an identity of “‘masculine’ domesticity.”¹⁷⁰ In her analysis of this phenomenon, Lauer cites the SA’s gender equality; men and women worked together in the ministry.¹⁷¹ Salvationist masculinity also embodied an emphasis on fatherhood and family. The Army’s founder William Booth was seen as a father-figure for the organization’s members while his wife Catherine was referred to as ‘the Army Mother.’

Clearly, in setting examples of Christian homes, in establishing viable churches with very little resources, and in countless other activities, a great deal of responsibility was placed upon the shoulders of these missionaries—both from the indigenous population who depended on them and from the societies back in Britain who sponsored their work. The men and women who undertook such activities did so with great strength of purpose and devotion, but often with very little practical training. Organizations including the SPG and CMS offered almost no specific preparation for those destined for work overseas.¹⁷² Unlike the rigorous education and examination process civil servants of the ICS had to endure, Christian missionaries often benefited solely from on-the-job training. Some groups, including the Salvation Army, took advantage of the long voyages to India to prepare for their venture and study local languages. The fact remains, however, that many missionaries were inadequately prepared for a daunting task. And yet, they approached their work with a passionate fervor, believing in a cause higher than any political empire.

¹⁶⁹ Richard Price, *British Society, 1680-1880: Dynamism, Containment and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 230.

¹⁷⁰ Laura Lauer, “Soul-saving Partnerships and Pacifist Soldiers: the Ideal of Masculinity in the Salvation Army,” in *Masculinity and Spirituality in Victorian Culture*, Andrew Bradstock, et. al., eds. (London: MacMillan Press, 2000), 196.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹⁷² Oddie, 117.

Any study of imperial missionary activity must be critical of the available source material. Colonial missionary societies generated an enormous number of publications, particularly in India. This proliferation of written materials was due largely to the missionaries' need to garner public support from the metropole, and facilitated by the presence of printing presses within India.¹⁷³ While missionary texts provide scholars with a wealth of information, and "rapidly became one of the most potent forces affecting the British public's perception of India and Hinduism," they also raise major questions, and expose significant weaknesses in their depiction of historical events.¹⁷⁴ For example, Jeffrey Cox's analysis of Church Missionary Society records finds that Indian Christians were often marginalized in the narratives, and both European and Indian women were frequently omitted completely.¹⁷⁵ Likewise, Anna Johnston's study of missionary writing points out further limitations of such texts. These shortcomings include the continual emphasis on positive achievements with almost no mention of failures, and the primarily male authorship.¹⁷⁶ As much as the critiques of historians such as Cox and Johnston highlight the weaknesses of missionary texts, they also identify some important characteristics of imperial missionaries and help to construct a lens through which to view the history of colonial missions. Gareth Griffiths argues that despite their limitations missionary texts did possess some ability to express the views and experiences of the colonized peoples. He contends, "Mission texts . . . could thus be both and instrument of oppression and a means of resistance, depending on the circumstances of

¹⁷³ Johnston, 80.

¹⁷⁴ Oddie, 204.

¹⁷⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 5.

¹⁷⁶ Johnston, 7.

their production and dissemination.”¹⁷⁷ This dichotomy is true not only of missionary publications, but of their work in general.

In many respects missionaries represent an unusual case study of Anglo-Indian relations in India. There were many missionaries who abandoned traditional British hierarchies of class and race to work among the natives; Salvation Army personnel were particularly noteworthy in this respect. They lived amongst the Indians and experienced local culture in a way few Anglos did. Such close associations often served to undermine the ideology of difference on which the Raj relied. Likewise, the egalitarian nature of Christian theology threatened imperial hierarchies. The belief that “all peoples, whatever their color or creed, were part of God’s family,” suggested that perhaps the Indians and the British were not so different.¹⁷⁸ Geoffrey Oddie argues that many missionaries, despite cultural variations, “never believed that Hindus were totally ‘other’.”¹⁷⁹ Such equality between the Indians and the Europeans would certainly have seemed threatening to imperial authorities.

Anthony Webster even suggests that the late-nineteenth century witnessed increasing toleration toward *non*-Christian religions by British missionaries who recognized similarities in their faiths.¹⁸⁰ Certainly most Protestant missionaries must still have promoted Christianity over any other religion. However, Webster’s point that they may have been less prejudiced toward other groups, or have at least expressed an intellectual interest in Indian religions, is well taken. While Antony Copley

¹⁷⁷ Gareth Griffiths, “‘Trained to Tell the Truth’: Missionaries, Converts, and Narration,” in *Missions and Empire*, Norman Etherington, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 154.

¹⁷⁸ Hall, “Of Gender and Empire,” 59.

¹⁷⁹ Oddie, 289.

¹⁸⁰ Anthony Webster, *The Debate on the Rise of the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 123.

acknowledges the presence of such intellectual curiosity on the part of missionaries, he still views the efforts of missionaries as part of an aggressive attack on Indian ideologies. In his study of missions in India entitled *Religions in Conflict*, Copley writes: “This has been the story of an encounter, bitter and invariably one of mutual incomprehension.”¹⁸¹ Copley’s analysis is somewhat overly antagonistic in its portrayal of missionaries, and as such must be viewed as a generalization. The nineteenth century missionary population varied; some showed toleration toward local religious groups, while others were as aggressive in their proselytizing as Copley suggests.

Indeed, there were missionaries for whom “the cultural shock of the Indian environment was too great,” who retreated into an isolated, English society in a manner similar to many other Europeans working in the subcontinent.¹⁸² In 1890 a controversy broke out concerning the Wesleyan Missionary Society. Articles were published in the *Methodist Times* accusing missionaries in India of living in relative luxury while failing to convert the natives.¹⁸³ While the organization managed to survive the scandal, it did prove telling about the typical relationships between British missionaries and the Indians. It appears that these Wesleyans continued to maintain a clear separation between themselves and their intended converts, unlike the Salvationists who were eager to live among the people.

Thus, the Salvation Army embodied a key piece of the British missionary endeavor of the late-nineteenth century. The Salvationists created a direct connection between their church in the metropole and their proselytizing abroad, representing British

¹⁸¹ Antony Copley, *Religions in Conflict: Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late-Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 255.

¹⁸² Gordon, 119.

¹⁸³ John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), 302.

Protestantism in the colonies and engaging in many typical English missionary practices. At the same time however, the Salvation Army was distinct in its structure, organization, and use of popular culture. Some of these tactics including their willingness to live economically among the local people and emphasis on native agency, allowed the Salvationists to have greater success than other missions in India. While they worked to gain new converts, the Salvationists alternately found themselves disrupting and supporting the Raj.

The Raj in Transition

While the separation of the Indians and the English was clearly inherent in the structure of the Raj, many Britons—both religious and lay personnel—saw themselves as benevolent older siblings, picking up the so-called ‘white man’s burden’ to improve the lives of the Indians. The extent to which British rule was actually advantageous for the natives is a topic for extensive debate, although certain programs and reforms can be acknowledged.¹⁸⁴ Douglas M. Peers writes, “Imperial membership had its benefits, at least for some.” The British did make India a key participant in the international economy. By the late-nineteenth century India represented a hugely important trading partner for the British, providing natural resources such as cotton, jute, and tea, and more importantly, providing markets for increasing numbers of British manufactured goods. However, much has been written on how this British-dominated economic structure was

¹⁸⁴ For a discussion of the impact of Western science and technology in India, see: David Arnold, *Science, Technology, and Medicine in Colonial India*.

actually harmful to India, destroying native handicrafts with the introduction of British finished goods.¹⁸⁵

Over the course of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries the British introduced into India a number of economic and technological developments associated with the industrial revolution, including roads, canals, telegraphs, and most notably—railroads. “By the beginning of the twentieth century British India had the largest irrigation system in the world, 37,000 miles of metalled roads and 25,000 miles of railways.”¹⁸⁶ Again, the actual benefits of these improvements are subject to debate. While the creation of railroads meant that long-distance travel became possible for many Indians, it also meant that the British would reap economic benefits, not only from the increased access to markets, but from the manufacture of locomotive engines to be used in India.¹⁸⁷ Conversely, many have argued that this newfound mobility and improved communication allowed for greater unity among the people and the growth of Indian nationalism. But even if we accept that developments such as the railroad were good for India, David Gilmour acknowledges the difficulty of spreading such technology in a territory of this size. “Thus even over so long a reign hundreds of thousands of villages altered little in appearance and not much in material wealth.”¹⁸⁸

British interference in the Indian economy also had a major impact on agriculture. Many historians cite a negative shift toward cash crop agriculture during the Raj, which left the Indians less able to feed themselves. On the other hand, the British did set up Famine Commissions and a Department of Agriculture in attempts to increase

¹⁸⁵ Wolpert, 245.

¹⁸⁶ Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste*, 9.

¹⁸⁷ Ferguson, 171.

¹⁸⁸ Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste*, 10.

agricultural output. But again, these activities were carried out only partly as a result of paternalist efforts to improve Indian life, but also out of British economic interests.¹⁸⁹

Land revenues represented a vital part of imperial funding. Unfortunately, British attempts to deal with the shortcomings of Indian agriculture were never completely successful; famine was a very real part of life for India.

The campaigns against *sati* and child marriage, the building of schools and railroads, and famine relief efforts were all examples of British attempts to improve India, albeit based on their own Western ideals of progress and civilization. All of these initiatives were fundamental to the British colonial project. They improved India, facilitated colonial rule, and tied colonial subjects more firmly to the Empire. Perhaps not coincidentally, missionaries were actively connected to many of these endeavors, again raising questions concerning the nature of their role within the Empire.

The turn of the twentieth century saw changes in the British Empire, which in turn had an impact on missionary work. The year 1901 witnessed the death of Queen Victoria and thus the end of the longest single reign of any monarch in Britain's history. The early-Edwardian era continued to encourage the spirit and pageantry of the Empire as seen in the Delhi Durbar of 1903. This event was the pet project of one of India's most famous Viceroy—Lord George Nathaniel Curzon. Curzon is well-known for his reforms and his attempts to glorify Indian culture, all within the context of maintaining a strong empire. He has been described as both autocratic and orientalist. Yet biographer David Gilmour writes, "His vicereignty had been great in many things, in the efficiency of government and the zeal of reform, in the pursuit of justice and of the welfare of the

¹⁸⁹ Edwardes, 216.

people, in the sympathy for India and the preservation of its monuments.”¹⁹⁰ His reforms were really steeped in his determination to extend the life of the Raj. He is quoted as saying, “As long as we rule in India we are the greatest power in the world.”¹⁹¹ His fascination within Indian culture did not really extend to taking into consideration an Indian point of view, however. Thus, Curzon is significant in that his tenure marks the distinctive intersection of two potentially opposing forces present in the British Empire at the turn of the twentieth century—the continued push to maintain a powerful overseas empire and the rising tide of Indian nationalism.

Ultimately, it was a nationalist outcry that helped remove Curzon from his post. In 1905 he was forced to resign as Viceroy, partially due to a power struggle with the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army Lord Kitchener, but largely the result of a public relations fiasco involving the partition of Bengal. Curzon had ordered the province partitioned on administrative grounds, looking to make the system more efficient. But he failed to take into account the locals’ traditions and sympathies, and his decision brought about intense protest on the part of the Bengalis, which in turn led to further nationalist demonstrations. As Denis Judd describes it, “An unprecedented display of militant nationalism marked Curzon’s departure from the country which he had hoped to bind even closer to the British Empire.”¹⁹² Thus, despite his achievements, Curzon’s term ended poorly and with an indication of future trouble for the Raj.

The origin of Indian nationalism is another topic of debate among historians. Some suggest that the Mutiny of 1857 was really a proto-nationalist uprising, others cite

¹⁹⁰David Gilmour, *Curzon: Imperial Statesman* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994.), 345.

¹⁹¹ Quoted in Judd, 175.

¹⁹² Judd, 183.

the 1882 debate over the Ilbert Bill concerning legal equality for natives, or the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 as a starting point, still others look even earlier in the nineteenth century to the growth of English education in India.¹⁹³ Whenever the exact conception of Indian nationalism occurred, this movement had a significant effect on the Empire of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. While the Raj would continue its control of the subcontinent for several more decades, and the widespread nationalist movement led by Gandhi had yet to take place, there were indications at the turn of the century that British rule in India was changing. For example, 1909 saw the passage of the Morley-Minto reforms, laws which increased native participation in the governance of India. Although most of the British officials were loathe to admit it, Thomas Metcalf argues that such legislation obviously “anticipated a transition in time to full parliamentary self-government for India.”¹⁹⁴ John Bowle suggests that the Raj actually created its own demise with its creation of a more educated, more united group of Indians—a phenomenon in which Christian missionaries that encouraged native agency must have played a part. Bowle writes, “From 1909, with the Morley-Minto reforms, the *raj* was thus gradually, if reluctantly, putting an end to itself.”¹⁹⁵ By most accounts then, the turn of the twentieth century and the end of Queen Victoria’s reign represent the apex and the beginning of the decline of the Raj. It is within this context of tension between imperial authority and Indian nationalism that both British government officials and religious missionaries like those of the Salvation Army carried out their work.

¹⁹³ Masani, 52.

¹⁹⁴ Metcalf, 223.

¹⁹⁵ Bowle, 307.

Devoted British imperialists may not have envisioned the collapse of the Raj, and many struggled mightily to retain control over the colonized people. But for Christian missionaries, the political and military decline of the British Empire was often viewed as irrelevant. Throughout their missionizing efforts, these men and women worked to “transcend the temporal realities of empire.”¹⁹⁶ The churches they helped to create were intended to outlast the fleeting Raj. Long after the colonizers were gone, missionaries expected local Christian churches to thrive. To this end, developing native agency within the Indian churches became particularly important for many missionaries.

Christian missionaries were present in diverse locations from the earliest days of the British Empire. As the Empire grew increasingly complex, reaching its height at the end of the long nineteenth century, so to did the relationship between English protestant missionaries and the imperial government. In many instances, Christian missionaries helped to reinforce the Raj and promote Western culture; mission schools taught English to the Indians, and missionary families helped to model the British institutions of home and family. At the same time, however, the spread of Christianity remained the missionaries’ primary objective—a preoccupation which did not always fit with imperial objectives. In the post-Mutiny era colonial authorities were particularly fearful of the potentially disruptive nature of aggressive proselytization. Furthermore, the egalitarian nature of Christianity threatened the colonial hierarchy. All Christians were part of the family of God, regardless of race. Thus, Protestant missionaries had a dramatic and often contradictory impact on the British Empire. As James Greenlee and Charles M. Johnston argue, “Although they could at times embrace the great trinity of Christianity, commerce, and civilization, there was never any doubt in mission circles that the first of these

¹⁹⁶ Cox, *The Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 15.

elements took precedence.”¹⁹⁷ These missionaries were not merely part of the nineteenth century foreign Empire, however. They represented the evangelical religion of the British metropole, and as such, the next chapter examines domestic Victorian Christianity.

¹⁹⁷ Greenlee and Johnston, 41.

CHAPTER III: RELIGION AND VICTORIAN SOCIETY

In many respects, the British Empire was an extension of the metropole. The missionaries who ventured forth into the peripheries were indicative of a British metropolitan imperial society profoundly marked by the presence of religion in social life and even politics. Indeed, as Mark A. Smith notes, “The nineteenth century was clearly a period in which religion claimed a significant role in the lives of English men, women and children of all ages and at all levels in the social structure.”¹⁹⁸ Protestant Christianity occupied a central place in Victorian Britain, both at home and abroad. Recent scholarship has acknowledged the difficulty of identifying and defining so-called Victorian values.¹⁹⁹ While it is true that the duration of Queen Victoria’s reign encompassed several decades of changing social developments and varying ideals, Protestantism remained a notable and potent ideology throughout the period. As James Obelkevich argues, “Religion provides one of the keys to the history of the age.”²⁰⁰

The foundations of Victorian society rest with the woman who granted the era its moniker, Queen Victoria. She took the throne as a young woman in 1837, and throughout the remaining years of the nineteenth century she served to guide and shape Britain and its Empire. At the time of Victoria’s ascension to the throne, her first Prime Minister Lord Melbourne apparently remarked, “Nobody is gay now; they are so religious.”²⁰¹ His statement did carry some truth in characterizing her reign. The young

¹⁹⁸ Mark A. Smith, “Religion,” in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Chris Williams, ed. (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 337.

¹⁹⁹ Gordon Marsden, “Introduction,” in *Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth Century Society*, Gordon Marsden, ed. (London: Longman, 1990), 2.

²⁰⁰ James Obelkevich, “Religion,” in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950: Volume 3 Social Agencies and Institutions*, F.M.L. Thompson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 311.

²⁰¹ Quoted in: Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (New York: MacMillan, 1976), 13.

queen and many other socially and politically prominent Victorians were raised as evangelicals; an experience which had a profound impact in shaping their later morals and customs. Indeed, religion was a significant factor in determining British national identity in the nineteenth century. Contemporary preacher R.W. Dale said later in 1874, “Our Protestantism has become one of the chief bonds of our national unity; the achievements of our ancestors in the Protestant cause have been cherished among our most glorious national traditions.”²⁰² Such a direct connection between British nationalism and Protestant religious authority is a particularly notable feature of this period, one which clearly expanded into the Empire as well.

François Bédarida acknowledges the prevalence of Christianity in nineteenth-century British society. He identifies the influence of religion at a personal level in terms of the strength of individual faith and piety, at an institutional level in terms of the established church, and, “finally, at a level which transcended sectarian boundaries, the heritage of Christianity dominated the population, *undenominationaly*, you might say.”²⁰³ Thus, according to Bédarida, despite individual differences and denominational rivalries, Christianity remained a fundamental aspect of British culture and identity. Indeed, as Linda Colley argues in her study of the period leading up to Victoria’s reign, “Protestantism lay at the core of British national identity.”²⁰⁴ John Wolfe also contends that Christianity was directly connected to nationhood in England. His work *Great Deaths* examines public responses to the deaths of leading nineteenth-century figures

²⁰² Simon Gunn, *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and authority and the English industrial city 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 123-24.

²⁰³ François Bédarida, *A Social History of England 1851-1990*, translated by A.S. Forster and Jeffrey Hodgkinson (London: Routledge, 1991), 86.

²⁰⁴ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 369.

including the Duke of Wellington and Queen Victoria. Wolffe demonstrates the dramatic intersection of religiosity and nationalism as seen in these state funerals.²⁰⁵

Protestantism was part not only of the British cultural identity, but of its political character as well. “Christianity was also built into the foundations of governance, Britain’s Christian identity sustained by the unique bond that had been forged between Church and State.”²⁰⁶ Queen Victoria remained the most recognizable symbol of both the British government and the established Church. She was both sovereign and Head of the Church of England. Within their own household, Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert set an example with their stable marriage and orderly family, avoiding the scandalous mistresses and illegitimate offspring of her royal predecessors.²⁰⁷ Their family represented an ideal of Protestant morality and propriety. On the occasion of the birth of her son the Prince of Wales in 1842, preacher Jabez Bunting sent a letter of congratulations to the young queen on behalf of the Methodist Conference. He wrote,

More especially do we rejoice in the additional security now afforded us, that those Protestant institutions which are the truest glory and strongest defense of Your Majesty’s throne, and which we regard as the bulwark of our constitutional liberty, both civil and religious, will be perpetuated among ourselves and our descendants to the latest posterity.²⁰⁸

This message reveals a clear belief in a strong connection between the monarchy and Protestant religion; a belief held not merely by a lay person, but by a group of leading religious figures. Protestant institutions were associated with security and the strength of

²⁰⁵ John Wolffe, *Great Deaths: Grieving, Religion and Nationhood in Victorian and Edwardian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 6.

²⁰⁶ Mark Knight and Emma Mason, *Nineteenth-Century Religion and Literature: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 8.

²⁰⁷ Bonnie G. Smith, *Changing Lives: Women in European History Since 1700* (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1989), 181.

²⁰⁸ Jabez Bunting, “Address to Queen Victoria, signed by Jabez Bunting as Chairman of the Committee of Privileges. London, January 1842,” Quoted in W.R. Ward, *Early Victorian Methodism: The Correspondence of Jabez Bunting 1830-1858* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 269.

the nation. Some historians such as William Gibson even argue that the state used the churches “as instruments of social control.”²⁰⁹

John Wolffe identifies a very clear and direct relationship between religion and politics in nineteenth-century Britain. In exploring both the established Church and dissenters, he suggests that “religion, especially when broadly defined, did have very noticeable influence on both the substance and the style of politics.”²¹⁰ Connections between the Church of England and the state were seen in the influence of bishops in the House of Lords, the levying of Church taxes, and, reciprocally, government funding for Church schools.²¹¹ Thus, not only did the Church have a great deal of influence over the British government, but the reverse was also true. As the established Church, any changes to the liturgy, doctrine, or structure of the Anglican Church had to be approved by Parliament.²¹² Protestantism also influenced major political figures of the period, despite religious differences. For example, not only did Prime Ministers Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone head opposing political parties, but they also identified with differing religious traditions. As a Jew, Disraeli represented a small religious minority within Britain. This is in its own way significant; while Protestantism remained a powerful force in nineteenth-century Britain, there existed a liberal sentiment strong enough to elect a religious outsider. His election is evidence of the principle of religious toleration as a feature of English Protestantism. While minority groups such as the Jews did face restrictions and prejudices, they were much less severe than those found in other

²⁰⁹ William Gibson, *Church, State and Society, 1760-1850* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), ix.

²¹⁰ John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain*, 124.

²¹¹ Suzanne Fagence Cooper and Paul Atterbury, “Religion and Doubt,” in *The Victorian Vision: Inventing New Britain*, John MacKenzie, ed. (London: V & A Publications, 2001), 125.

²¹² Knight and Mason, 8.

European nations.²¹³ British politics may not have been quite so forward thinking, however. Although Disraeli was the first (and only) Prime Minister of Jewish heritage, he was evidently also baptized in the Anglican Church. Thus, no nineteenth-century British statesman could completely disassociate himself from Protestantism.

Prime Minister William Gladstone emphatically embodied the tradition of the established Church. In 1838, early in his career, he wrote a work entitled *The State and Its Relations to the Church*. While the context of this work is a paternalistic debate on the fate of Ireland, the fact remains that Gladstone saw religion (specifically Anglican Christianity) as inextricably linked to the government. He wrote,

. . . we must disregard the din of political contention, and the pressure of worldly and momentary motives, and in behalf of our regard to man, as well as of our allegiance to God, maintain among ourselves, where happily it still exists, the union between the church and the state. . .²¹⁴

Young Gladstone placed great importance on his Christianity, and thus, as a leading politician, on religion as a mode of national unification.

While Protestantism was a defining feature of British culture in the Victorian era, despite Gladstone's hope that it might bring the nation together, not all Britons uniformly supported the Church of England. Timothy Larsen views Victorian Christianity as "contested." He writes, "Christianity in nineteenth-century England was strong and pervasive, but it was also forcefully and vehemently attacked from without and given to rancorous disputes between different factions and versions of Christian thought within."²¹⁵ Indeed, the growth of various dissenting denominations was an important

²¹³ Obelkevich, 318.

²¹⁴ William E. Gladstone, "On The State In Its Relations to the Church, 1838," in *Religion in Victorian Britain: Volume III Sources*, ed. James R. Moore (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 119.

²¹⁵ Timothy Larsen, *Contested Christianity: The Political and Social Contexts of Victorian Theology* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2004), 2.

aspect of religious development in this period. As the Anglican Church struggled due to structural weaknesses in its organization, inadequate distribution of resources, and even corruption among its clergy, groups such as the Baptists, Congregationalists, and Methodists stepped in and recruited new members.²¹⁶ These churches offered more dramatic spirituality and freedom from traditional Church structures.

Methodism, for example, under the leadership of its founder John Wesley, emphasized passionate feelings, personal conversion and a direct relationship with God.²¹⁷ This belief in a personal religious experience provided a greater sense of empowerment and individual agency than what was available within the structures of the established Church. David Hempton's work draws attention to the expansion of Methodism during periods of profound change in both England and the United States.²¹⁸ His analysis suggests a connection between nineteenth-century religion and politics, in which Methodists utilized a period of political change to expand and strengthen their religion. Methodists were dedicated to gaining new converts, and thus aggressively evangelistic; its membership nearly tripled in size between 1800 and 1830.²¹⁹ Methodism ultimately became one of the most significant of the nonconformists groups, although as William Gibson reminds us, it was by no means monolithic.²²⁰ Indeed, just as English Protestantism was composed of various denominations, the Methodists gave rise to their own splinter groups and sectarian organizations. In fact, the Salvation Army grew out of Methodist traditions.

²¹⁶ M. Smith, 337-338.

²¹⁷ Knight and Mason, 30.

²¹⁸ David Hempton, *The Religion of the People: Methodism and popular religion c. 1750-1900* (London: Routledge, 1996), 21.

²¹⁹ Obelkevich, 323,324.

²²⁰ Gibson, 79.

There was a strong connection between the established Anglican Church and the British state, but nonconformist groups such as the Methodists also had an impact on politics. The work of Alan Gilbert suggests that social and political reforms of the nineteenth century were not unrelated to the religious developments of the era. He argues that the appeal of dissenting religions to the working class may have been fueled by the social and political implications of such groups.²²¹ Deborah Valenze explores these themes in her book *Prophetic Sons and Daughters* which studies the development of more informal cottage religion in the nineteenth century. She argues, “dissent still inspired religious independence and a critique of English government.”²²² Richard J. Helmstadter’s analysis of nonconformity cites the importance of nonconformist voters in the formation of the Liberal Party. As the number of nonconformists grew, so too did their influence as a bloc of voters.²²³

As Timothy Larsen argues, the nineteenth-century Anglican Church faced challenges both from without and within. For example, in the 1830s a movement emerged out of Oxford led by John Keble and others known as the Tractarians. Unlike many nineteenth-century Protestant sects, these men looked for a return to traditionalism in Christian worship and an emphasis on the sacraments. More politically significant however, is the fact that this group began to question the involvement of the state in ecclesiastical activities.²²⁴ Some Tractarians suggested that the government should have

²²¹ Alan D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (London: Longman, 1976), 82.

²²² Deborah M. Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 17.

²²³ Richard J. Helmstadter, “Orthodox Nonconformity,” in *Nineteenth-Century English Religious Traditions: Retrospect and Prospect*, D.G. Paz, ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1995), 68.

²²⁴ Cooper and Atterbury, 129.

no power to appoint religious officials.²²⁵ This discourse was perhaps the best example of the complex nature of nineteenth-century English religion. On the one hand, the Oxford Movement seemed conservative, with their stress of High Church tradition and ritual. On the other hand, however, they were a potentially subversive element against state authority. The 1850s witnessed increasing clashes between Tractarians and angry Protestants who attacked the groups with lawsuits, legislation, and even violence.²²⁶

Although it encompassed growing sectarian differences, the Christianity which helped comprise the British national identity in the nineteenth century was still primarily Protestant. However, the Catholic minority cannot be ignored. In fact, British Catholicism experienced significant growth in the mid-nineteenth century. Although this was largely due Irish immigration, the rising numbers did include some significant converts from the Oxford movement.²²⁷ Even as the British Catholic population grew, however, the Protestant English national identity was constructed in contrast to Catholicism. Catholics provided an ‘other’ against which Protestant Britons could construct a more united nationality. Anti-Catholic prejudice was common; many English people regarded the pope as antichrist and reacted with shame and horror if a family member converted to Catholicism.²²⁸ Such themes of conflict between Protestants and Catholics were even prevalent in the popular literature of the nineteenth century.²²⁹ Thus, Victorian Protestantism was characterized by both dissent and opposition.

²²⁵ Knight and Mason, 92.

²²⁶ Obelkevich, 330.

²²⁷ Bédarida, 90.

²²⁸ Obelkevich, 336.

²²⁹ Jude V. Nixon, “Framing Victorian Religious Discourse: An Introduction,” in *Victorian Religious Discourse: New Directions in Criticism*, Jude V. Nixon, ed. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 1.

Evangelicalism

Victorian Protestantism was also defined by its evangelicalism. The term evangelical originally referred to an idea of teaching as being “of the gospel.” By the nineteenth century the word came to describe any group associated with revivalism and a dedication to spreading religion.²³⁰ It was most prevalent among nonconformist denominations, but also made its mark on the established church. Mark A. Smith contends that at least two-thirds of mid-nineteenth century churchgoers attended evangelical churches.²³¹ Geoffrey Best writes that, “It was a movement both of enormous psychological power in the lives of individuals and of great physical energy in its capacity to spread and circulate through all parts of society.”²³² Indeed evangelicalism transcended social class and appealed to the working class as well as the middle class. D.W. Bebbington identifies four main characteristics that typify evangelical religion: “conversionism,” or a belief in the importance of a life-changing conversion experience; “biblicism,” an emphasis on the Bible; “activism,” expressing religious devotion through service; and “crucicentrism,” a focus on the sacrifice of Christ’s crucifixion.²³³ These features identify both the emotional nature of evangelical religion, as well as the Protestant focus on the Bible as the source of religious teachings. In addition they draw attention to the religious inspiration for the social reform movements of the nineteenth century.

²³⁰ D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History From the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 1.

²³¹ M. Smith, 341.

²³² Geoffrey Best, “Evangelicalism and the Victorians,” in *The Victorian Crisis of Faith*, Anthony Symondson, ed. (London: S.P.C.K., 1970), 37.

²³³ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3.

Likewise, Ian Bradley identifies a fervent desire among evangelicals to “lead useful lives.” In addition to their religious services, evangelicals helped create hundreds of societies and volunteer organizations.²³⁴ Such Victorian emphasis on hard work and industry was clearly connected to religious developments. Evangelical Christian notions of faithful labor and self-discipline found their way into the factory system of industrial Britain as well. Evangelical factory owners worked to foster these ideals among their employees.²³⁵ Over the course of the nineteenth century, British society as a whole placed increasing value on the concepts of self-improvement, self-reliance, and voluntarism.²³⁶ Authors like as Samuel Smiles advocated these industrious ideals. In his 1859 work *Self-Help*, Smiles wrote: “National progress is the sum of individual industry, energy, and uprightness.”²³⁷ In this quotation Smiles was equating the same values of hard work and self-reliance championed by evangelical Christians with the English national identity.

G. Kitson Clark, however, is careful to remind us that evangelicalism, “was only one side of the religious revival that swept through Victorian England.”²³⁸ He cites Catholic revivals and movements within the Anglican Church as concurrent revivalist tendencies of the nineteenth century. His point is well taken, and we cannot view evangelicalism as the only trend in Victorian religion, or even one narrowly associated with a particular denomination. John Wolffe uses the term “institutional diversity” to describe the evangelical movement.²³⁹ Thus, it may be difficult to define the term

²³⁴ Bradley, 25, 135.

²³⁵ Cooper and Atterbury, 128.

²³⁶ F. David Roberts, *The Social Conscience of the Early Victorians* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 3.

²³⁷ Samuel Smiles, “Self-Help (1859),” in *Culture and Society in Britain 1850-1890: A Sourcebook of Contemporary Writings*, J.M. Golby, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 107.

²³⁸ G. Kitson Clark, *The Making of Victorian England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 189.

²³⁹ Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain*, 30.

evangelicalism, but there is no denying its power and prevalence in nineteenth-century Britain.

Evangelicalism also had a political impact. In his analysis of nineteenth-century political activity among religious nonconformists, Timothy Larsen argues that the efforts of evangelical dissenters actually led to Christian pluralism in England and support for the ideal of religious equality for all.²⁴⁰ In the political arena nonconformists challenged the dominance and influence of the Anglican Church. Larsen takes great care, however, to counter any potential arguments that the dissenters' disestablishment campaign suggests a waning level of religiosity. On the contrary, he argues that the evangelical dissenters were preoccupied with religion, and that their efforts toward achieving a separation of church and state were more concerned with improving the church than creating a "godless government."²⁴¹ Even in their factionalized division, and development of more liberal religious policies, these Englishmen remained devoted to their faith.

Influence of American Revivalism

These British religious revival movements owed elements of their development to the American revivalist tradition of the nineteenth century. In 1859 leading American revivalists Charles Finney, James Caughey, and Phoebe Palmer all visited England and conducted revivals. John Kent argues that their work in England did not yield the results the evangelicals may have hoped for in terms of the numbers of converts identified. Of

²⁴⁰ Larsen, 145.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 155.

the two men, Caughey seemed to have greater success.²⁴² Kent argues that part of the reason revivalism did not experience such dramatic successes in England is because Victorian society was already fairly religious, and thus did not have the advantage of a great contrast in religious worship in the 1860s.²⁴³ While his argument lacks statistical evidence, his suggestions seem reasonable. He correctly identifies a tradition of religious practice, while still acknowledging the relative lack of formal participation on the part of the working classes.

While not entirely disagreeing, D.W. Bebbington takes a somewhat more positive view of the success of evangelicalism in nineteenth-century Britain. He writes:

In that period the activism of the movement enabled it to permeate British society. . . . Major inroads were made on the existing mass of religious indifference. Less impact was made on the lower working classes than on higher social groups, but it is quite mistaken to hold that the working classes as a whole were largely untouched by the gospel.²⁴⁴

He sees a lot of strength in the evangelical movement and refutes Kent's claim (and for that matter, the stories of the Salvation Army) that the working classes were left unsaved. Although Kent's work suggests that American revivalism did not catch on the way some would have hoped, he cannot deny the emotional quality of Caughey's sermons did have an effect, particularly on William and Catherine Booth, the founders of the Salvation Army. Through influences like Caughey's the holiness movement took hold in England, with a notable appeal to the working classes, especially women.

Likewise, American Methodist revivalist Phoebe Palmer, who along with her husband Walter founded New York's Five Points Mission in 1850, the first Protestant organization for slum work, inspired the Booths, encouraging Catherine's defense of a

²⁴²Kent, 77-79.

²⁴³ Ibid., 123.

²⁴⁴ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 149-150.

woman's right to preach.²⁴⁵ This was a fairly dramatic development within the context of a religious culture that left women largely marginalized. In most British Anglican and Catholic churches women were not only forbidden from preaching, but they could not hold any church office or participate in decision making. Many chapels did not allow women to serve as deacons until 1914.²⁴⁶ The Church of England did not ordain women until the 1990s.²⁴⁷ Thus, Mrs. Palmer's participation in the services was understandably controversial, even if she refrained from referring to her remarks as a complete sermon.

Examples such as that of Phoebe Palmer must have had an impact on nonconformists. Although the Church of England remained restrictive, dissenting churches did begin to exhibit increased gender equality.²⁴⁸ Some of these new sects allowed women more rights and opportunities for leadership. For example, Deborah Valenze highlights the growth of female preachers among early-nineteenth-century cottage religion. While Valenze demonstrates the impact of these female evangelists on local religious practice, she is forced to acknowledge the limitations they faced. Various sectarian Methodists allowed these women to preach, but the larger Wesleyan church did not, believing that female preaching was inappropriate and not in keeping with their notions of respectability.²⁴⁹ Furthermore, by the late-nineteenth century this type of cottage religion and the number of female preachers had significantly declined.²⁵⁰ Thus, the Salvation Army, known for its 'Hallelujah Lassies' was particularly significant as a

²⁴⁵ Murdoch, 16.

²⁴⁶ Gunn, 122.

²⁴⁷ Steve Bruce, *Religion in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 15.

²⁴⁸ Larsen, 190.

²⁴⁹ Deborah Valenze, *The First Industrial Woman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 109.

²⁵⁰ Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, 11.

British religious sect which allowed female preaching and ordination in the late-Victorian era.

Phoebe Palmer influenced the Salvation Army in several different ways. During revival meetings Mrs. Palmer would “say a few words to the people” and conduct altar calls in which members of the congregation were encouraged to come forward to be prayed over.²⁵¹ This technique ultimately became a common feature of Salvationist services, and the concept of sanctification and the forgiveness of sins was a popular element of nineteenth-century Protestant theology. Sanctification meant being set apart and brought into a life of holiness and purity. Palmer said, “Holiness is a state of soul in which all the powers of the body and mind are consciously given up to God.”²⁵² The path to this holiness was repentance. She continued, “The work is accomplished the moment we lay our all upon the altar.”²⁵³ This belief was later echoed in the altar calls held in Salvation Army meetings.

Thus, Phoebe Palmer’s teachings encouraged both the spread of female preaching and the growth of the so-called holiness movement in England. This revival, with its emphasis on a more personal relationship with God and a life free from sin, actually had its roots in John Wesley’s early Methodism and his doctrine of “entire sanctification.”²⁵⁴ Thus, the growth of this holiness ideology was an interesting product of the Atlantic world, and the cultural interactions between Britain and her former colony. First influenced by the teaching of an English theologian, the holiness movement developed in

²⁵¹ Kent, 89.

²⁵² Phoebe Palmer, “Entire Devotion to God (1845),” in *In Her Words: Women’s Writings in the History of Christian Thought*, Amy Oden, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 290.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 290.

²⁵⁴ Roger J. Green, *Catherine Booth: A Biography of the Cofounder of the Salvation Army* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1996), 97.

America in the mid-nineteenth century, eventually spreading to England in the later decades of the century. This movement, with its Bible studies, revival meetings and itinerant preachers, led to the creation of many new holiness churches—including the Salvation Army.²⁵⁵

In studying the American evangelists who visited England in the late-nineteenth century, other scholars have recognized the work of Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey in the 1870s as the most successful revivalists.²⁵⁶ Contemporary preacher Rev. C.M. Davies wrote in 1875, describing a meeting held by Moody and Sankey, that “. . . every inch of the vast building was filled with a congregation numbering probably 15,000, representing all sections of the population of London.”²⁵⁷ His account suggests an extremely successful undertaking, one that not only drew large crowds, but did so from a variety of social classes. These revivalists were particularly known for their incorporation of music and singing in their services; Davies recalled the audience’s reaction to Moody’s introduction of a hymn, “The congregation responded heartily, every man and woman appearing to join full-voiced in the doxology.”²⁵⁸ Such use of music in religious services was another trait successfully adopted by the Salvation Army. But again, not one with which all traditional religious leaders felt comfortable. Just as many traditionalists shied away from female preaching, there were those who found the use of more informal and even popular music shocking and inappropriate. Such disapproval was seen not only in the established Anglican Church, but also in more traditional

²⁵⁵ Melvin Easterday Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 1996), 7.

²⁵⁶ Clark, 182.

²⁵⁷ C.M. Davies, “On ‘Moody and Sankeyism’, 1875,” in *Religion in Victorian Britain: Volume III Sources*, ed. James R. Moore (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 274.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 275.

dissenting sects including the Wesleyan Methodists.²⁵⁹ These tensions often seemed representative of the class frictions within Victorian society.

For the nineteenth-century British population the concepts of religion and culture were inextricably connected. “In Victorian England hymns were the most universally popular art-form, and the nearest thing to a cultural inheritance common to women and men, working class and middle class, old and young, the skeptical and the devout.”²⁶⁰ While there may have been debates over which music was appropriate for use in which context, there was no denying its familiarity and significance in British culture. Likewise, sermons were truly cultural events—performances even. Simon Gunn discusses the common contemporary analogy between the pulpit and the stage; he cites an 1887 poll in the *British Weekly* ranking the most popular preachers in the leading denominations.²⁶¹ These speakers were literally evaluated as local celebrities. It seems almost impossible to differentiate their star power from their theological impact.

The Religious Census

Although the nineteenth century witnessed increasing examples of religious revivals as well-attended cultural events, it is still extremely difficult to identify exactly how religious the general population of England was in this era. Hugh McLeod argues that “a relatively high degree of religious consensus” existed in Victorian Britain in the form of Protestant Christianity.²⁶² There is no way to definitively answer the question of

²⁵⁹ Louis Billington, “Revivalism and Popular Religion,” in *In Search of Victorian Values: Aspects of nineteenth-century thought and society*, Eric M. Sigworth, ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 150.

²⁶⁰ Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 105.

²⁶¹ Gunn, 118.

²⁶² McLeod, 1.

how many Britons really believed in God or how they felt about religion in general.

However, we can actually examine the texts that people were reading and the sermons to which they were listening. Hugh McLeod also finds evidence of the Christian nature of Britain architecturally—in the pervasiveness of churches and other religious buildings which ubiquitously dotted the English landscape. This meant that “organized religion [was] highly visible and accessible.”²⁶³

To further determine the influence of Christianity in Victorian Britain we can try to interpret what limited statistical data is available. To this end, many scholars have turned to the Religious Census of 1851. This year marked the first, and ultimately only, time that religious data was incorporated into the national collection of statistics in Britain.²⁶⁴ This instance represents a quantitative connection between church and state. The mid-nineteenth century British government clearly felt that religion was a national concern, and that gathering data on the subject would be of value, both socially and politically. One possible aim of this project may have been to collect information that would support the existence of the Anglican Church as the established church of Britain. Politicians were also keenly interested in using the religious census to measure the success of Sunday schools and religious education in England. Today the value of the 1851 religious census is seen in the number of scholars who have studied the results. The most sweeping of these examinations is K.D.M. Snell and Paul S. Ell’s book *Rival Jerusalems*. This work includes extensive data analysis, and their tests “leave one in no doubt that this huge source is one of remarkable value to the historian.”²⁶⁵

²⁶³ Ibid., 72.

²⁶⁴ K.D.M. Snell and Paul S. Ell, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 449.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 51.

When the census data was compiled and released in the 1850s, many people, including the report's author Horace Mann, were concerned by the census' revelation that less than half the population of England had attended church and that of those, less than half attended an Anglican church.²⁶⁶ Mann wrote, "A sadly formidable portion of the English people are habitual neglecters of the public ordinances of religion."²⁶⁷ But historian D.W. Bebbington suggests that these figures were not quite so bleak. He argues that while many feel these numbers indicate a fairly weak level of Victorian religiosity, they do in fact reveal a significantly higher percentage of churchgoers than that seen in the late-twentieth century.²⁶⁸ He also draws associations between the census figures and social class, identifying higher church attendance in middle-class areas.²⁶⁹ However, Jane Garnett offers more recent analysis of the 1851 census figures combined with other available data in which she suggests that working-class attendance in several cities was actually much more significant than previously realized, contradicting those who have pointed to the census as evidence of a lack of religiosity among the urban poor. Furthermore, she writes, "analysis of the 1851 returns shows no clear correlation between the size of towns and the percentage of the population attending church."²⁷⁰ This directly contradicts Donald Read's earlier use of the same data to argue that the larger towns usually had weaker attendance.²⁷¹ Perhaps Read's argument is based strictly on overall numbers of attendees, while Garnett looks at percentages of the population.

²⁶⁶ Contemporaries and historians often use the term "church" to refer solely to the Anglican Church, and "chapel" to refer to Dissenting services.

²⁶⁷ Quoted in Liza Picard, *Victorian London: The Life of a City 1840-1870* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005), 282.

²⁶⁸ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 108.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁷⁰ Jane Garnett, "Religious and Intellectual Life," in *Short Oxford History of the British Isles: The Nineteenth Century*, Colin Matthew, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 208.

²⁷¹ Donald Read, *England 1868-1914* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1979), 73.

Many recent historians have analyzed the 1851 census data for geographic variations in religious worship, the most notable example of this being Snell and Ell's *Rival Jerusalems*. While the scope of their project includes the entirety of the country, others have conducted case studies of particular cities or regions. Historians have not only pointed to distinctions in religious activity between rural and urban areas, but even among villages within the same county. David Hempton writes, "It has become clear that patterns of religious practice must be closely related to the diverse economic, occupational and denominational characteristics of specific regions."²⁷² In examining Victorian religion we must remain mindful of such work and the variations which existed within British Protestantism. Nevertheless, the collection of such data and its later analysis continues to illustrate the significance of Christianity in nineteenth-century England.

Although the 1851 census results may suggest that Britons were not overwhelmingly participating in formal Christian worship, the figures alone do not provide a full picture of the situation. Indeed, John Wolffe argues that geographic variations in response to the census do not necessarily correlate solely with socio-economic factors, as some scholars have suggested. He cites more intangible elements such as the personalities of individual religious leaders and congregations in determining a community's level of religious participation.²⁷³ Furthermore, Suzanne Cooper and Paul Atterbury suggest that people's religious loyalties might actually have fluctuated. Some might have attended an Anglican service in the morning, but gone to a dissenting meeting

²⁷² David Hempton, "Religious Life in Industrial Britain, 1830-1914," in *A History of Religion in Britain: Practice and Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*, Sheridan Gilley and W.J. Sheils, eds. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 307.

²⁷³ Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain*, 67.

in the evening, particularly to see a popular preacher. On the other hand, regular chapel attendees might still have called upon an Anglican priest to perform important rites and ceremonies.²⁷⁴

The 1851 church census is significant not only in the numbers it revealed, but also in the contemporary attention it generated—21,000 copies of the report were sold.²⁷⁵ This suggests a rather high societal interest in British religious practices. Even if the statistics suggest that fewer people were attending church than may have been expected, the widespread concern over this fact indicates a great importance placed on religion within British society. This is true both of the political leaders who organized this census who may have been concerned that the influence of Protestant Christianity was diminishing in England, as well as the thousands of Britons who read the report.

Nineteenth-century author Thomas Wright questioned the extent to which people used the census as evidence that the lower classes were less religious than wealthier groups. He wrote in 1868,

That the classes in question do not attend places of worship in anything like the same proportion to their numbers as do the upper and middle classes, is admitted upon all hands, though it is questionable whether this is the case to so great an extent as is generally supposed.²⁷⁶

Wright cited the fact that working-class attendance was higher among dissenting sects such as the Primitive Methodists, suggesting that perhaps more of the responsibility for reduced church attendance lay with the Anglicans in failing to properly welcome in the lower classes. While Wright certainly revealed his own class bias, his argument is not without merit; the census itself does fail to truly address the motivations or religious

²⁷⁴ Cooper and Atterbury, 132.

²⁷⁵ Picard, 282.

²⁷⁶ Thomas Wright, "On the Working Classes and the Church, 1868," in *Religion in Victorian Britain: Volume III Sources*, James R. Moore, ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 321.

sentiments of the British workers. Furthermore, Wright revealed a sound logic in comments such as,

No person with the slightest knowledge of the world—and I take it that even clergymen should have some worldly wisdom—needs to be told that attendance at a place of worship is not necessarily a proof of religious feeling, and yet it is upon the ground of non-attendance that the working classes are stigmatized as irreligious.²⁷⁷

Indeed, many historians have drawn attention to a variety of factors besides lack of religious sentiment which may have precluded the English poor from attending church services. These include such class-specific circumstances as the need to work (or rest) on Sundays and inhibitions based on lack of proper dress. Such arguments indicate that Victorian society may actually have been even more religious than previously assumed—throughout the social hierarchy. Indeed, in 1902, Charles Booth concluded that, “No class has a monopoly of religious-minded persons.”²⁷⁸

Simon Gunn suggests however, that “Attendance at church or chapel was integral to definitions of respectability in all social classes, but above all in the most prosperous sections of urban society, where it remained obligatory until at least the 1890s.”²⁷⁹ While social class may not have dictated whether or not one went to church, it did play a role in *where* they chose to worship. The upper classes identified with the established Anglican Church, middle classes with nonconformists, and the working classes with other sectarian groups.²⁸⁰ James Obelkevich also suggests that the middle classes played the largest role in Victorian religious growth, becoming actively involved in church life and volunteer

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 321.

²⁷⁸ Charles Booth, “Life and Labour of the People in London. Third Series: Religious Influences, Vol VII,” (1902) in *Religion in Victorian Society: A Sourcebook of Documents*, Richard J. Helmstadter and Paul T. Phillips, eds. (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985), 252.

²⁷⁹ Gunn, 106.

²⁸⁰ Edward Royle, *Modern Britain: A Social History 1750-1997*, 2nd Edition (Arnold: London, 1997), 330.

organizations.²⁸¹ Although the revivalist excitement of the Victorian period is often associated with the working classes, G. Kitson Clark argues, “There was plenty of evangelistic exuberance in the middle class. Indeed, when a revival was at its height no one cared much for class or for respectability.”²⁸² While his argument of a class-transcendent quality of evangelicalism seems likely, it is difficult to imagine that in Victorian society no one really cared for class or respectability—two of the guiding features of the century. In fact, Ian Bradley suggests that while evangelicalism had its greatest success among the middle classes, evangelicals were particularly concerned with converting the *upper* classes; “they felt it would influence those of lowlier station who took their cue in matters of attitude and behaviour from their betters.”²⁸³ His analysis indicates both that evangelicalism had something to offer all social classes, and that class distinction was still very important in Victorian society.

The nature and practice of Protestant religion within Victorian society concerned not only issues of social class, but also family life. Stories of religious revivals often included accounts of conversions of an entire family.²⁸⁴ Particularly among the middle classes, religion was viewed as a family affair. This was reinforced not only by attending church as a family unit, but also at home with family prayers and grace before meals.²⁸⁵ The head of the household thus also assumed a certain spiritual authority in maintaining moral discipline and monitoring religious observance.²⁸⁶ This close association between

²⁸¹ Obelkevich, 338.

²⁸² Clark, 183.

²⁸³ Bradley, 51, 36.

²⁸⁴ Kent, 91.

²⁸⁵ Obelkevich, 339.

²⁸⁶ Gibson, 174.

Christianity and proper family life was emphasized both at home in the metropole, and by Christian missionaries abroad.

At the same time, the late-nineteenth century was a period of religious growth particularly in new sects like the Salvation Army. Alan D. Gilbert cites a rise in membership of the Salvationists from under 5,000 persons in June 1877 to an estimated 100,000 by 1900.²⁸⁷ Likewise the organization grew from 81 Corps in 1878 to 1,431 in 1906.²⁸⁸ These numbers do indicate fairly dramatic expansion over the course of the late-Victorian era. But overall, British churches had ceased to grow at a productive rate. Donald Read cites 1885 as the year after which church attendance no longer managed to keep pace with the growing population.²⁸⁹ But even such statistics cannot accurately assess the significance of Protestant religion in Great Britain. If nothing else, they fail to take into account the enthusiasm and activities of those who remained regular attendees and participants.

In discussing the formation of nineteenth-century sects such as the Salvation Army, Kent cites the fact that the rise of such groups must naturally have drawn from older, more established religious organizations such as the Methodists.²⁹⁰ Thus, according to Kent, statistics on the growth of movements such as the Salvation Army do not necessarily represent an overall increase in religious practice. In his analysis of such new denominations and service organizations, M.J.D. Roberts applies an economic metaphor in keeping with the industrial age. He describes “the new generation of evangelical urban mission societies which sprang into action to compete for market share in the new era

²⁸⁷ Gilbert, 42.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 43.

²⁸⁹ Read, 265.

²⁹⁰ Kent, 298.

free-market denominationalised religion.”²⁹¹ While Roberts acknowledges some difficulties created by this diversification, he generally seems to view the development positively. However, his acknowledgement of competition for “market shares” does beg the same question Kent raises as to whether the presence of new sects actually represented an increase in the overall population of Christians. This is a valid question, but even if Robert and Kent are correct in suggesting that new sects do not necessarily represent an overall gain in the number of Christians, they do indicate the growth and transformation of the Victorian age. Perhaps these new sects were even responsible for the retention of Christians who were so disillusioned with the traditional religious groups they were ready to abandon the faith entirely.

Religion and Education

Even as English Protestantism became more diversified, and census results raised questions as to the true extent of religious practice in Britain, the churches continued to demonstrate their powerful influence on British society. For example, education remained a significant social arena permeated by religion in nineteenth-century Britain. Both the Church of England and dissenting congregations established their own schools. According to one source, in 1867 Anglican Church schools had a million and a half children enrolled as day students and a further 150,000 in night schools.²⁹² While the numbers were much lower for the dissenters, they too promoted their own educational institutions. While somewhat less formal, Sunday schools also played a key role in developing reading skills and promoting religious and moral education. Many Victorians

²⁹¹ M.J.D. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 149.

²⁹² Clark, 174.

viewed Sunday schools as an important vehicle for developing proper character; they also fostered involvement in other charitable associations. Indeed, newspaper reporter Angus Bethune Reach wrote in 1849, “Were it not for the Sunday Schools . . . Lancashire would have been a hell on earth.”²⁹³

Attendance at Sunday schools was not a privilege reserved for the middle class. Hugh McLeod reports that, “By the late Victorian period the overwhelming majority of working-class children went to Sunday School up to the age of about 13.”²⁹⁴ It appears that Sunday school was a very common part of life; one that the working classes in particular took advantage of when their children were unable to attend schools during the week as they were too busy working. The prevalence of Sunday school attendance also suggests a stronger working-class support for Christianity than earlier church service statistics indicated. Thus, even if working-class men were too busy or disinterested to attend church or chapel themselves, they appear to have at least valued religion enough to send their children for training. E.P. Thompson likewise emphasized the significance of Methodist Sunday schools in shaping the attitudes and religious devotion of the workingmen, writing, “The first reason—indoctrination—cannot be overstated. The evangelical Sunday schools were ever-active, although it is difficult to know how far their activities may be rightly designated as ‘educational’.”²⁹⁵ While Thompson was clearly rather critical of the quality of intellectual instruction delivered by these organizations, he was fully convinced of their success in propagating the growth of Protestant ideals and regulations. Sunday schools were instrumental in influencing working-class behavior and beliefs.

²⁹³ Quoted in Snell and Ell, 275.

²⁹⁴ McLeod, 78.

²⁹⁵ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 375.

Dissenting Sunday schools had a definitive impact on British society, but the Church of England remained the dominant force in education throughout much of the nineteenth century. Before 1870 the Anglicans ran nine out of every ten primary schools.²⁹⁶ Religious influence permeated higher education as well. Among the nineteenth-century English people, schools and universities were often chosen based on religious affiliation. In the early nineteenth century the Anglican Church held a monopoly on university education, which Suzanne Fagence Cooper and Paul Atterbury argue helped to reinforce the close relationship between Church and state in Britain.²⁹⁷ Although, this changed somewhat over the course of the nineteenth century with the advent of nondenominational institutions, the connection between the Church of England and higher education was still significant.

The rise in literacy and the growth of a large print culture in Victorian England also had their impact in the religious realm. Moral concerns over the content of new popular literature encouraged the formation of organizations like the Society for the Diffusion of Pure Literature among the People.²⁹⁸ The creation of such groups represents the intersection of religion, social reform movements, and the growing print culture of the period. Furthermore, revivalist groups began publishing their own inexpensive tracts and pamphlets for the working class glorifying evangelicalism. “This literature contained vivid reports of highly charged conversions, camp meetings, processions and the journals and letters of the preachers, which underlined their heroic perseverance and successes.”²⁹⁹ Such dramatic and emotional publications became commonplace for the

²⁹⁶ Bédarida, 87.

²⁹⁷ Cooper and Atterbury, 125.

²⁹⁸ Roberts, 169.

²⁹⁹ Billing ton, 151.

Salvation Army. These tracts were significant in both their mass appeal and their broad circulation; they made religious literature available to an increasingly wider audience. For example, in 1849 an evangelical Christian group known as the Religious Tract Society was issuing its tracts at the rate of 20 million per year.³⁰⁰

Even non-religious British literature of the nineteenth century included countless references to evangelical religion. Authors such as George Eliot and Charles Dickens often fashioned novels with clerical characters that focused on religious or moral issues. Interestingly, these pious characters were not always favorably depicted and were often quite unlikable. The presence of an unkind or hypocritical clergy member in a Dickens novel could represent a not-so-subtle criticism of religious authority. And yet, even in such negative portrayals, the existence of these characters reinforces the Victorian preoccupation with religion and the impact of evangelicalism on society. Such institutions clearly permeated English society, popular culture, and intellectual discourse.

Social Missions

The influence of such publications and religious-influenced education was felt throughout the Empire. As the previous chapter has demonstrated, missionaries played a key role in the growth and maintenance of the British Empire. Evangelicalism had strong ties to the missionary efforts of the nineteenth century—both throughout the peripheries of the Empire and at home in Britain. Geoffrey Best suggests that, “Evangelicals virtually invented modern missionary work.”³⁰¹ Although he cannot identify a clear catalyst for this development, Best surmises that a Romantic fascination with foreign

³⁰⁰ Bradley, 42.

³⁰¹ Best, 52.

lands was a contributing factor. In any case, he does accurately identify the significance placed on missions amongst the Victorian religious population. Ian Bradley agrees, “Missionary zeal was perhaps the single strongest characteristic of the Evangelicals in the early nineteenth century, and it was certainly one of their most powerful legacies to the Victorians.”³⁰² In her work *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in 19th-Century Britain* Susan Thorne recognizes the importance of mission work and examines the impact of such efforts on British culture both abroad and at home. She writes, “The missionary defense of the imperial ideal constituted one of the most powerful rationales imaginable in Victorian political culture, given the intense religiosity by which the latter was characterized.”³⁰³ As the Empire grew throughout the nineteenth century, so too did British religion expand from the metropole.

Thorne and others acknowledge that the religious revivalists of the nineteenth century were concerned with charity at home as well as abroad. One of the key features of Victorian religion was the growth of the social gospel movement. Methodists preached social reform and self-improvement, helping develop the voluntary association as a key feature of British society.³⁰⁴ Many new social missions were created in response to the growth of the new industrial economy.³⁰⁵ For denominations such as the Salvation Army, attempts to convert the lower classes and make them into regular church attendees were closely linked to a variety of social service efforts including soup kitchens, temperance societies, shelters and reform homes.

³⁰² Bradley, 74.

³⁰³ Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 11.

³⁰⁴ Bruce, 8.

³⁰⁵ Gibson, 96.

A growing concern for the plight of the poor was a defining characteristic of Victorian society. For example, in 1883 the London Congregational Union published a pamphlet entitled *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*. This work gave a shocking description of the conditions under which the poorest of London lived including details of their filthy dwellings, inadequate food, and immoral activities. This detailed case study was accompanied by an exhortation to the people of England to reach out and offer assistance to the downtrodden; “That something needs to be done for this pitiable outcast population must be evident to all who have read these particulars as to their condition.”³⁰⁶ This plea bears a striking similarity to Salvationist William Booth’s 1890 work *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, as does the subsequent argument regarding the success of Christian charity, “The very records which supply the sad story we have been telling, give also proofs of what can be done by the Gospel and by Christian love and tact and devotion.”³⁰⁷ Both works utilized case studies and quotations from converts who had improved their situation through assistance from Christian charity. For example, *The Bitter Cry* quoted a reformed sinner who himself became a missionary—“I was as bad as any of you, but the Lord Jesus had mercy upon me, and has made me better and so happy.”³⁰⁸

In 1884 the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* published an article entitled, “Outcast London; Or Wealth, Want, and Crime.” While praising groups such as the London Congregational Union and the London City Mission for their efforts among the poor, this work also called upon the people of England to do more for those suffering amongst

³⁰⁶ Rev. Andrew Mearns, “The Bitter Cry of Outcast London,” in *Religion in Victorian Society: A Sourcebook of Documents*, Richard J. Helmstadter and Paul T. Phillips, eds. (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985), 429.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 430.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 431.

them. It is significant to note, however, that this demand was placed not only upon the citizens, and the churches, but also the state. Author Rev. W.J. Dawson wrote, “It is to the Government we must look, in the first place, for help.”³⁰⁹ This sentiment echoes those of *The Bitter Cry* which said, “We shall be pointed to the fact that without State interference nothing effectual can be accomplished upon any large scale.”³¹⁰ These statements reveal not only a strong belief in the welfare state, but a direct linkage between such a state and Protestant Christianity. Religion, the government, and social reform were all clearly intertwined in Victorian England. “Britain’s greatness, Victorians believed—its prosperity, social stability, political liberties, and Empire—was rooted in Christian (and Protestant) faith.”³¹¹

Despite a growing secularization as the twentieth century dawned, Protestantism held a prominent place in British society.³¹² Over the course of Queen Victoria’s reign English Protestantism experienced a variety of challenges and saw increasing diversification. The influence of evangelical movements and American revivalism led to a more dynamic religion, which encouraged participation across all social classes. This in turn led to new political influence on the part of nonconformist groups, and increasing social service efforts among the new denominations. Furthermore, both the

³⁰⁹ Rev. W.J. Dawson, “Outcast London; Or Wealth, Want, and Crime,” in *Religion in Victorian Society: A Sourcebook of Documents*, Richard J. Helmstadter and Paul T. Phillips, ed. (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985), 440.

³¹⁰ Mearns, 430.

³¹¹ Obelkevich, 328.

³¹² For a discussion of the gradual separation of church and state in nineteenth century England see: Edward Norman, “Church and State since 1800,” in *A History of Religion in Britain: Practice and Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*, Sheridan Gilley and W.J. Sheils, eds. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1994) and Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000* (London: Routledge, 2001).

ideologies and the charitable endeavors of these groups were sent to the peripheries of the Empire through the work of Christian missionaries. The Salvation Army displayed all of these aspects of Victorian religion, while providing their own unique contribution to British imperial Protestantism.

CHAPTER IV: ORIGINS OF THE SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army embodied the spirit of reform, high moral standards, and hard work so typical of the Victorian age; yet the organization was also unique, innovative, and even subversive. Originally dubbed the East London Christian Revival Society, only later did the group adopt its unusual militaristic structure and symbols. Founded by William Booth and his wife Catherine as a mission to save the souls of the needy, the Salvation Army began its work in London's impoverished east end in 1865. From these humble origins, the ministry flourished and spread out from the capital city into the country, the Empire, and the world, becoming one of the globe's most widely recognized charitable organizations. In 1908 journalist and editor of the London *Daily News* A.G. Gardiner said of the Salvation Army: "It is an empire within the Empire."³¹³

The Founder

"It is a truism that great movements owe their origin and sustaining enthusiasms to one or more creative personalities, and the Salvation Army is no exception."³¹⁴ The story of this unique denomination, which both represented and rebelled against British culture, begins with its founder William Booth. Born in 1829 in a suburb of Nottingham, England, Booth experienced the unhappy childhood of a son of supposedly "desperately poor" members of the British laboring class.³¹⁵ Biographer Roy Hattersley maintains that the Booths were actually relatively well off, but did suffer from periods of financial

³¹³ A.G. Gardiner, "At Queen Victoria Street," in *Prophets, Priests and Kings* (London, 1908) quoted in: R.G. Moyles, ed., *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007), 42.

³¹⁴ Frank Glenn Lankard, "William Booth," in *Creative Personalities, Volume III: Founders of Christian Movements*, Philip Henry Lotz., ed. (New York: Association Press, 1941), 10.

³¹⁵ Norman Murdoch, *Origins of the Salvation Army* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 21.

crisis due to his father's failed business ventures or investments. Hattersley writes, "We can however be certain that the family lived in constant insecurity."³¹⁶ F.G. Lankard describes the period of Booth's upbringing as "marked by social and economic distress."³¹⁷ Bernard Watson suggests that, "Samuel Booth, the father, was embittered by his inability to make good in the new world of machines and mass production."³¹⁸ This analysis places emphasis on a typical social problem of the early industrial age. Whatever the Booth family's exact financial circumstances, it seems likely that William would have felt a sympathy born out of experience for many of the disadvantaged nineteenth-century population to whom he would later minister. Much later in life, writing in the preface to his landmark 1890 work *In Darkest England and the Way Out* Booth himself said:

When but a mere child the degradation and helpless misery of the poor Stockingers of my native town, wandering gaunt and hunger-stricken through the streets droning out their melancholy ditties, crowding the Union or toiling like galley slaves on relief works for a bare subsistence, kindled in my heart yearnings to help the poor which have had a powerful influence on my whole life.³¹⁹

Booth's personal sympathy with poor British workers displaced by mechanization was fundamental to his desire to create a new religious movement that could speak to the needs of the lower classes.

In addition to his economically humble origins, the other historically and culturally significant aspect of Booth's youth was the dramatic religious conversion he experienced as a teenager. Booth himself did not necessarily divine an exact moment of conversion; in his words, he merely "had the advantage of hearing some good preaching

³¹⁶ Hattersley, 15.

³¹⁷ Lankard, 11.

³¹⁸ Bernard Watson, *A Hundred Years' War: The Salvation Army 1865-1965* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964) 15.

³¹⁹ William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (London: Salvation Army Publishing, 1890) preface.

and came under the influence of some godly companions.”³²⁰ However, Hattersley claims that Booth’s views on conversion were “entirely consistent with one of the theories of redemption over which the Wesleyans of the day engaged in constant argument.”³²¹ Booth adopted the viewpoint shared by John Wesley that men and women could experience instant and complete conversion. This belief would manifest itself in the Salvationist emphasis on a personal and individual relationship with God. It reinforced the intense and emotional appeal of Booth’s ministry, and challenged traditional religion as it was made available to all, regardless of class or gender.

Historian Norman Murdoch also suggests that Booth’s ministry was the product of influence from American revivalists preaching in Great Britain in the 1840s and 50s. “James Caughey was the American who most influenced the Booths.”³²² Booth first heard the Methodist preacher speak as a teenager in 1846. As a revivalist, Caughey believed in converting people, emotional preaching, and emphasis on prayer—all tactics later used by the Salvationists. During his visits to England in the mid-nineteenth century he served as an unofficial mentor to William Booth, encouraging him in his preaching and ministry. While the influence of revivalists such as Caughey encouraged the dramatic and emotional nature of Booth’s early ministry, it also indicated a break with some of the more traditional religious authorities. Caughey himself fell out of favor with Methodist leaders and spent much of his time in England as an itinerant preacher without any official connection to the Methodist conference.³²³ Booth too would find himself in trouble with denominational authorities.

³²⁰ Quoted in Hattersley, 19.

³²¹ Hattersley, 19.

³²² Murdoch, 7.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

Under influence and guidance such as Caughey's, Booth began ministering at a very young age. Even while working as a teenage apprentice in a pawn shop to help support his family, Booth and his friend Will Sansom began preaching in the streets of Nottingham.³²⁴ A seventeen-year-old evangelist seems quite strange, but Hattersley suggests that in nineteenth-century Britain it was "regarded as unusual but not extraordinary."³²⁵ Thus while Booth's interest in religion and devotion to saving souls were certainly noteworthy, they can be viewed as part of a larger historical context of religious revivalism. F.G. Lankard writes, "There were two events following Booth's conversion that greatly influenced his future work. One was the remarkable religious awakening that swept the local society of which Booth was a member, which made the entire community religion conscious."³²⁶ While it seems unlikely that each and every member of Booth's hometown was concerned with religion, Lankard's comment does speak to the power of Protestant religious revivalism in nineteenth-century British society. Booth's own conversion clearly took place within the framework of a much broader popular religious movement.

The origins of the Salvation Army lie not only in William Booth's religious conversion and development, but also in the spiritual experience of his future wife, Catherine Mumford. Although there has been some debate as to the validity of the early Salvationists' claims of gender equality in their ministry, there can be no doubt that Catherine Booth, 'The Army Mother,' played a vital role in the creation and maintenance of the Salvation Army. Also born in 1829, Catherine Mumford grew up in a very devout

³²⁴ Helen Hosier, *William and Catherine Booth: Founders of the Salvation Army* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour, 1999), 19.

³²⁵ Hattersley, 23.

³²⁶ Lankard, 12.

household. Her mother claimed that young Catherine began reading the Bible at age three and had read it through eight times by age 12.³²⁷ Although this family statistic might seem hyperbolic and unbelievable, it does reveal the values and discipline held dear by the Mumfords and their contemporaries. Clearly Catherine's mother viewed reading of the Bible as worthy of mention. But Catherine's spiritual studies were not solely the result of a parental mandate. A bright student, she displayed her own interest in theology, particularly works of revivalists like Charles Grandison Finney, a key figure of the Second Great Awakening in America, whom she later encouraged William to follow. Booth ultimately adopted many of Finney's techniques including giving long and passionate prayers to create an intense emotional state within a congregation.³²⁸

Although Catherine's upbringing was deeply religious, and she wrote that she could not "remember the time when I had not intense yearnings after God," she too subscribed to a belief in dramatic conversion.³²⁹ Even her choice of the words "intense yearnings" reveals an emotion consistent with Wesleyan ideas. She did recall at the age of sixteen having "felt the assurance of Salvation" when reading a Charles Wesley hymn.³³⁰ Familiar religious words were associated with a dramatic moment which brought about a feeling of immediate and definite salvation.

Catherine's personal religious influences also include the American woman Phoebe Palmer. When in 1859 a Methodist paper attacked Palmer for preaching, Catherine leapt to her defense and wrote *Female Ministry or Women's Right to Preach the Gospel*. She argued, "In Christ there is neither male nor female. The promise of the

³²⁷ Murdoch, 22.

³²⁸ Hattersley 63.

³²⁹ Quoted in Murdoch, 23.

³³⁰ Quoted in Hattersley, 45.

outpouring of the Spirit is no less to the handmaidens than to the servants of the Lord . . .³³¹ In joining this public debate, Catherine found herself addressing a major social reform issue of the nineteenth century—the women’s movement. Her belief in a woman’s right to preach the gospel became an integral part of the Salvation Army’s philosophy and methods. Thus illustrating the manner in which the Salvation Army was not only attuned to Victorian culture, but prepared to push and extend the limits of this society. While most nineteenth-century ministers recognized the importance of gaining women’s support for evangelical religion, they still promoted a separate sphere of female religious activity, one which was subordinate to men.³³² Most men viewed women as nurturers, capable of influencing society from within the domestic realm, but not appropriate as preachers.³³³

While each of the Booths was remarkable in their own way, they were still traditional young people of the nineteenth century. Their social, political, and religious interests were typical of the time period. Perhaps what is most significant about the couple is the manner in which they relied on each other, and the key role played by Catherine in the development of the Salvation Army alongside her full-time occupation as wife and mother. She is known as the ‘Army Mother’ and historians have even commented on the way in which she mothered William himself. Bernard Watson writes:

The ‘mother’ relationship arises from the fact that from the first she was his superior in education, his counselor in error. Handicapped as he was by lack of book-learning and misgivings about his own ability, he might

³³¹ Quoted in Watson, 30.

³³² Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Women’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 159.

³³³ Kathryn Gleadle, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 67, 27.

have given up his long, heart-breaking struggle had it not been for her love, patience, and confidence in him.³³⁴

For a well-known religious leader, William Booth was not very well educated, while his wife was very interested in intellectual inquiry and encouraged him to study more. In fact, Roy Hattersley maintains that Catherine possessed “undoubted intellectual superiority” to her husband.³³⁵

From its very beginning the couple’s relationship centered on their religious devotion. Their earliest correspondence focused on the importance of the ministry and William’s career as a preacher.³³⁶ Despite his conversion and active evangelism as a teenager, William’s career path was not clearly established. Long before he contemplated starting the Salvation Army, he struggled with finding a denominational home. He tried being a Congregationalist, but abhorred the Calvinist idea of an “elect.”³³⁷ At the time of their marriage in 1855 William was preaching for the Methodist New Connexion, a sect that seceded from the original Wesleyan Methodist church. The distinguishing feature of the New Connexion was an increased role for lay leaders in relation to the church’s ministers, but otherwise the group relied on Wesleyan doctrine.³³⁸ Understandably, a Methodist influence was thus evident in the founding of the Salvation Army. John Coutts writes, “Any search for the religious roots of Salvationism must begin with the Methodism from which the Army sprang.”³³⁹

But even the less formal Methodist organization did not allow Booth to preach in the manner and locations he desired. In 1857 the New Connexion voted him out of full

³³⁴ Watson, 29.

³³⁵ Hattersley, 4.

³³⁶ Ibid., 46.

³³⁷ Ibid., 49.

³³⁸ Victor A. Shepard, “From New Connexion Methodist to William Booth,” *New Connexion Methodis*. Available: <http://www.victorshepherd.on.ca/Wesley/new.htm>

³³⁹ John Coutts, *The Salvationists* (London: Mowbrays, 1977), 50.

time evangelism, probably due to disapproval of his methods including his extremely emotional meetings and public prayer requests.³⁴⁰ Eventually he resigned from the New Connexion, saying:

I was satisfied that the methods of the average Methodist Church were out of date. They had ceased to attract the people to the Church—at any rate, in the city . . . I was not satisfied with the chapel itself, with its dull grey walls, detached life, class pews, and high-toned preaching, far beyond the thoughts of the people. I was dissatisfied with my own work. I saw grow under my ministry warm, loving, soul-seeking Christians; and then I saw them chilled, neglected, and killed. I rebelled against the repetition of this work.³⁴¹

While it may not have been his intent to work outside the support of an established denomination, by the late-1850s Booth clearly seems to have been discouraged with his options. He sought a type of religion that was more accessible to a broader population, but no contemporary organized religion suited his goals; he was particularly critical of the Methodists' apparent detachment from the people. Most of Booth's biographers seem to agree that his decision to start a new religious organization was not a long-term goal; he came to the decision gradually, merely wanting to approach his evangelism in what he felt was a more effective manner. However, "Finally he became the founder of a new denomination, while believing—like most founders of denominations—that he was doing nothing of the kind."³⁴² Booth evidently had respect for traditional British religious institutions, yet when he felt he had no other options he fought tradition and branched out on his own. But even in his break with established churches, Booth embodied the climate of change and reform present in Victorian Britain.

³⁴⁰ Hosier, 55.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 69.

³⁴² J. Coutts, 21.

In 1861 Booth left the Methodists and continued working as an itinerant preacher. His new denomination developed almost by accident in 1865 when he began holding revival meetings in London's east end. Booth focused on these poorer areas of town because they were the places where church was least well attended and help was most desperately needed.³⁴³ Initially Booth saw his open-air services as a form of outreach to draw converts into established denominations. As Bernard Watson describes the situation, "With his hero, John Wesley, he seems to have had the idea that he was a link between the churches and the un-churched."³⁴⁴ However, in actual practice Booth discovered it was quite difficult to bridge that gap. Many of his converts refused to attend more formal churches, finding more traditional services much less appealing and entertaining than Booth's lively and emotional revivals. "For the church was felt to be a middle-class, formal, snobbish affair, while the mission was a working-class, lively and loving concern."³⁴⁵ Likewise, "The Booths soon concluded that people who live in a world of saloons and honky-tonks often found a tent flap more inviting than the heavy door of a stately church."³⁴⁶ And this feeling was often mutual; the middle-class members of dignified churches were often less-than-welcoming when Booth's underdressed and underwashed converts attempted to join their congregations.

Thus, largely because no established church offered quite the same religious experience to the urban working class, Booth's evangelical ministry developed into its own denomination. The class divisions of nineteenth-century England effectively gave birth to this church. The early organization experienced several incarnations. It began

³⁴³ Frederick Coutts, *No Discharge in this War* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 20.

³⁴⁴ Watson, 20.

³⁴⁵ J. Coutts, 68.

³⁴⁶ Hosier, 72.

with the name East London Revival, was later called the East London Christian Mission, and this moniker was eventually shortened to the Christian Mission.³⁴⁷ It was not until 1878 that Booth and his followers adopted the title Salvation Army and implemented its distinctive military structure.

From its inception Booth's ministry was significant not only in its focus on the disadvantaged lower classes, but also in its style of worship. "Salvationist spiritual expression in the late nineteenth century resembled an urban version of the old-time frontier camp meeting combined with working-class forms of popular culture."³⁴⁸ From the street corner, to hastily erected tents, to old theaters and music halls, even the locations of Booth's meetings were less formal and more familiar to the people he worked to convert. Using these spaces was key to the Salvation Army's urban popularity. By physically bringing religion to places where people felt comfortable, Booth made his theology more accessible to the lower classes. Likewise, the adoption of popular music and the development of brass bands were an instrumental part of the movement's appeal. As Bernard Watson describes it, "Though William Booth preferred good old Methodist tunes, with occasional Anglican ones, he found that many of his unchurched audiences could not sing them, either because they did not know the tunes or because they could not read."³⁴⁹ Thus, early on Booth discovered the effectiveness of combining well-known popular tunes with new religious lyrics, such as "Bless His Name He Sets Me Free" sung to the notes of "Champagne Charlie." Over time many

³⁴⁷ Lankard, 15.

³⁴⁸ Lillian Taiz, *Hallelujah Lads and Lasses: Remaking the Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 5.

³⁴⁹ Watson, 89.

Salvationist composers emerged and as early as 1882 the Salvation Army was publishing its own music.³⁵⁰

Several recent historians have focused on the cultural significance of the early Salvation Army. Pamela Walker writes, “The Salvation Army was a neighborhood religion. It invented a battle plan that was especially suited to urban working-class geography and cultural life. . . Salvationists culled techniques from contemporary advertising and revivalism.”³⁵¹ Diane Winston’s study of the early Salvation Army in the United States also emphasizes the cultural aspects of the Salvation Army’s urban ministry, focusing on issues such as clothing and performance.³⁵² Despite its rather unique organization, the Salvation Army was most assuredly a product of the urban culture of the period.

Female Salvationists

In both style and composition, William Booth’s urban, working-class revival mission was quite different from the traditional British churches. Perhaps even more shocking than the unwashed congregation and the boisterous music hall services, were the female preachers. Certainly Catherine played a key role the early development of William’s ministry, but not merely as a supportive wife and mother to his children. Her own preaching helped support the endeavor, and her influence encouraged William to allow female pastors within his own organization. When Booth began his mission in the 1860s Catherine had actually developed her own following among the wealthier

³⁵⁰ F. Coutts, 42.

³⁵¹ Walker, 2.

³⁵² Diane Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of the Salvation Army* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

neighborhoods of London and spent a great deal of time preaching and gathering donations to help finance William's ministry. "In fact, Catherine was the primary promoter and publicizer of The East London Christian Revival Society."³⁵³

While it is true that women were allowed to become ministers in the Salvation Army, and that the so-called 'Sallies' or 'Hallelujah Lassies' became symbolic figureheads of this ministry, many historians have raised questions about the real level of gender equality within Booth's organization. Andrew Mark Eason argues that the early Salvation Army was not nearly as egalitarian as it claimed to be. Eason notes the few women who did rise to high ranking positions in the early Army were members of the Booth family, and that even the 'Army Mother' ultimately kept herself subordinate to her husband.³⁵⁴ This reinforces the depiction of William Booth as an authoritarian leader; the woman with the most power and influence in the early Salvation Army still deferred to her male counterpart.

Even late-twentieth-century Salvationist writers and historians have recognized the limits ultimately placed on the status of women within the organization. In 1974, writing on the current conditions in the Salvation Army Flora Larsson admitted that all was not as it should be, identifying a reluctance on the part of men to accept female authority and the lack of women in high commands.³⁵⁵ And in 1977 John Coutts acknowledged a disparity between the genders within the Salvation Army, writing, "But while it may be true theologically—for women can perform any religious rite that men perform—it is very doubtful if it is true administratively."³⁵⁶ Thus, while women do have

³⁵³ Hosier, 91.

³⁵⁴ Eason, *Women in God's Army*, 90.

³⁵⁵ Flora Larsson, *My Best Men are Women* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 170.

³⁵⁶ J. Coutts, 30.

the opportunity to serve as General—the international leader of the Salvation Army, it is also true that there have been only two female Generals in the denomination’s 140 year history, one of whom was the founder’s daughter.

It is impossible to ignore the realities of gender inequality within the Salvation Army, and it is clearly evident that the role of women within the organization has been glorified and romanticized. Nevertheless, while we must admit that William Booth’s denomination was not fully egalitarian, we must still acknowledge its uniqueness.

Although women in the Salvation Army may not have been given authority equal to that of their male counterparts, they were certainly given more authority than women in other denominations. Women were not allowed to preach at all in more traditional churches. In fact, part of Booth’s troubles with the Methodist New Connexion stemmed from a disapproval of his views on women preaching.³⁵⁷

There can be no doubt that early Salvationist women were conspicuous and had a major impact on the organization’s development, as well as its public image. A 1911 SA publication wrote: “The secular world has its reserves where the executive power of woman is concerned, and . . . says, ‘Thus far shalt thou come and no further.’ The Salvation Army knows no such ban.”³⁵⁸ The Salvationists took pride in distinguishing themselves from other organizations by offering women access to all ranks of officership. William Booth himself was quoted as saying, “My best men are women.”³⁵⁹

³⁵⁷ Hosier, 7.

³⁵⁸ *Phases of The Work of The Salvation Army* (St. Alban’s: The Salvation Army Printing Works, 1911), 27.

³⁵⁹ Larsson, 64.

The Military Metaphor

Booth's early ministry lived through several different monikers and changes to its structure and organization, before finally settling into its incarnation as the Salvation Army. His original mission, begun in 1865, added a committee for financial and property issues in 1867, and in 1870 introduced a constitution establishing a Methodist-style government, with Booth serving as General Superintendent and Conferences held to run the organization.³⁶⁰ This group, then called The Christian Mission, created an even more legally legitimate form of self-government in 1875 when a Deed Poll was prepared by the mission's solicitors, signed by William Booth and his assistant George Scott Railton, and submitted to the British Chancery.³⁶¹ By establishing themselves via this official state document, Booth and his followers ensured that future changes to the structure of their sect would require an act of Parliament.³⁶² Thus, from its earliest days, the Salvation Army was legitimized and influenced by the British government. This tie to the official regime would later influence the Salvation Army's activities in India.

In 1878 a dramatic change occurred in the organization, when Booth and his closest advisors began using the title The Salvation Army and implementing their distinctive military system.³⁶³ Ultimately, Booth became the first "General," ministers were known as "Officers" with a series of ranks, church members were called "Soldiers," and a local church was a "Corps."³⁶⁴ It is somewhat unclear when or with whom the advent of the military lexicon lies; Booth's moniker of General was a natural shortening

³⁶⁰ Murdoch, 41.

³⁶¹ Robert Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume One: 1865-1878* (New York: The Salvation Army, 1947), 181.

³⁶² Walker, 61.

³⁶³ "The Salvation Army Timeline," *The Salvation Army: International Heritage Centre*, Online. Available: www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/flashTimeline.

³⁶⁴ Walker, 62.

of his Christian Mission title of General Superintendent. The Christian Mission Conference of 1877 seems to be a turning point; here Booth talked about spiritual warfare and how to best advance the interests of God's army.³⁶⁵ Salvationist folklore places the origin of the name Salvation Army in an 1878 publication, the *Report of the Christian Mission*, in which the heading "The Christian Mission is a Volunteer Army" was changed to "The Christian Mission is a Salvation Army." According to George Scott Railton, Booth himself made this change, arguing that his converts were not *volunteers* but people who felt it was their *duty* to serve the Lord.³⁶⁶ Certainly this name change represented an entirely new marketing scheme for Booth's organization. A call for members to fight and wage war in the name of God was a dramatic and emotional appeal, one that captured the attention of many militaristic Victorian citizens.

The transition from the Christian Mission to the Salvation Army represents a much deeper change than the implementation of a new terminology, however. The creation of the Salvation Army meant more autocratic control for the General. At the notable 1877 Mission Conference questions were raised about the effectiveness of the Christian Mission's current government. It was (supposedly almost unanimously) determined that rule by committee was too inefficient; decisions were reached in a slow and tedious manner.³⁶⁷ By this point, the organization had expanded enough geographically that it was actually logistically difficult to consult all conference members before making organizational changes. If this group was truly in the midst of a spiritual war, they needed prompt and decisive leadership. Thus, this meeting voted to abolish Conference rule, placing William Booth in sole command of the organization, with the

³⁶⁵ Murdoch, 89.

³⁶⁶ Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume One*, 230.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 198.

Conference only continued as an advisory “Council of War.”³⁶⁸ Booth had effectively created a royal government for his religion. As Norman Murdoch describes it, “At the 1877 annual mission conference, the last time there would be a free exchange of ideas, he made it clear that he was creating a system modeled after Queen Victoria’s imperial command.”³⁶⁹ The extent to which Booth actively set out to follow such a system may be questionable, but there is no doubt that the organization he created bears striking similarities to the official structures of the British government.

Such fundamental changes to the organization would require alteration of the 1875 Deed Pole. In 1878 that document was revoked and a new one was implemented. The primary directives of this new document were that: 1) The Christian Mission should be under the control of one person designated General Superintendent. 2) William Booth should serve as General Superintendent until his death or resignation. 3) The General Superintendent would have the power to appoint his successor. 4) The General Superintendent would have the authority to expend all monies, acquire and dispose of properties, and establish trusts.³⁷⁰ Although the designation Salvation Army was not utilized in this document; the Deed Pole clearly represents a shift toward the more militaristic structure of the organization. There is no hiding the fact that these changes created a decidedly autocratic form of governance, with Booth wielding absolute power. With a lifetime term and the authority to appoint his successor, Booth could even control the direction of his Mission from beyond the grave. In essence he had created a

³⁶⁸ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1953), 13.

³⁶⁹ Murdoch, 88.

³⁷⁰ Quoted in Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume One*, 234-235.

hereditary dynasty by which the Booth family would rule the Salvation Army; again reminiscent of the structure of the British Empire.

Salvationist accounts of these events are quick to point out that the decision to alter the organization was arrived at democratically, beginning with the Mission's Conference meeting in 1877 and culminating in Christian Mission personnel approving the new Deed Pole. Apparently, before the changes were officially implemented Booth even gave disapproving Conference members the opportunity to leave the organization if they were not comfortable with the change to the system, although very few took him up on the offer.³⁷¹ Granddaughter and biographer of the Army Mother, Catherine Bramwell-Booth rejects criticism of Booth's authority in writing, "Autocracy can only be exercised when supported by force or fear. In considering the rise of the Salvation Army, one must remember that it was built on a foundation of *voluntary adherence*."³⁷² As Catherine Booth herself stated, "Nobody is bound either to join the Army or stay in it after they have joined."³⁷³ Thus, the organization's official record indicates both unanimity in granting dictatorial power to Booth and his family, and continual acceptance of this hierarchy. The two Booth women make a valid defense of the voluntary nature of this organization, a characteristic distinct from the political and military empires of the period. However, we must question the claim of unanimous support for Booth's usurpation of authority. There were certainly members who questioned the decision, and some even chose to leave the organization.³⁷⁴

³⁷¹ Ibid., 235.

³⁷² Catherine Bramwell-Booth, *Catherine Booth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), 234.

³⁷³ Quoted in Bramwell-Booth, 235.

³⁷⁴ Murdoch, 99.

Such dissension must have been inevitable, but overall Booth must have enjoyed widespread support. Given the nature of the Christian Mission's original constitution, it would have been impossible for him to restructure the denomination without the Conference's authorization. And while there is certainly room to debate the extent to which Mission members felt a centralized power base was necessary, and the intensity with which they revered Booth and felt him worthy of their obedience, there can be no denying the manner in which William Booth exercised complete control over the Salvation Army and created a dynastic leadership corps. Lady Frances Balfour, sister-in-law of the Prime Minister, met the General in 1904 and later offered the following description of him: "General Booth's individuality was autocratic and dominant, with a manner bordering on the severe and dictatorial."³⁷⁵

Early Salvationist leader George Scott Railton utilized another nineteenth-century metaphor for the denomination. He spoke of the newly organized Salvation Army by saying, "We have got an organization managed upon the simple business-like principles of a railway, with all the cohesion and co-operative force of a trade union, formed of people whose devotion, determination and confidence at least equal that of the Jesuits."³⁷⁶ Railton's statement makes blatant references to the historical context of the Salvation Army's founding; he draws on the imagery of the new industrial age of the late-nineteenth century. The Salvationists were an army, a union, perhaps even a factory for saving souls.

³⁷⁵ Lady Frances Balfour, "A Leader and Commander of the People," in *General Booth* (London: Nelson, 1912) quoted in: R.G. Moyles, ed., *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances*. (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007), 99.

³⁷⁶ Quoted in J. Coutts, 23.

Salvationist Symbols

The transition from the Christian Mission to the Salvation Army included not only the implementation of an autocratic hierarchy of power with military ranks, but also the adoption of a variety of culturally distinctive practices and military adornments. In 1879, Catherine Booth presented the first official Salvation Army flags to several corps. The distinctive red, yellow, and blue design was rich with symbolism. Mrs. Booth explained, “The *crimson* represents the precious blood by which we were all redeemed; the blue is God’s chosen emblem of purity; the *sun* represents both light and heat, the light and life of men; and the *motto* “Blood and Fire,” the blood of the Lamb and the fire of the Holy Ghost.”³⁷⁷ The simple design and use of bright primary colors made the flag easy to recognize and replicate. It also created a Salvationist version of a well-known type of banner, most often associated with nation-states and empires. In presenting the flag, Catherine Booth also argued, “The flag, is a symbol of our devotion to our great Captain . . . This flag is emblematical of our *faithfulness to our great trust*. . . .an emblem of victory.”³⁷⁸ Thus, this piece of cloth was not only an easily visible rallying point, but an item imbued with great meaning. The concepts of faith and salvation, dramatically embodied in “Blood and Fire” were central to the tenets of the Salvation Army.

The current Salvation Army flag has been altered only slightly from the original. The change was made in 1882, when the General presented a corps with a flag with a star rather than a sun in the center, explaining that the yellow star represented the Holy Ghost. Although there is no official explanation as to why this adjustment was made, many officers have speculated that it was actually done at the suggestion of Frederick Tucker

³⁷⁷ Quoted in Robert Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two, 1878-1886* (New York: The Salvation Army, 1950), 38.

³⁷⁸ Quoted in Bramwell-Booth, 240.

who was about to begin the Salvation Army's work in India. Tucker allegedly believed that in Bombay they would encounter many people for whom the sun was an important non-Christian religious symbol.³⁷⁹ Although this account of the icon's transition is largely speculative, Salvationist historian Robert Sandall seems to accept it as fact, citing the confirming opinions of other officers who served in India. If there is any truth to this story, it represents a fascinating commentary on the nature of signs and symbols in religious culture and their impact on imperialism. If Booth did change the flag out of concern over its potential significance for the Indians, it would indicate both an awareness of indigenous culture and a calculated attempt to avoid encouraging traditional non-Christian beliefs through such a public emblematic display. At the very least, this decision to change the design would be evidence of the importance the Salvationists placed on the use of the flag in identifying their ministry and promoting their specific ideals.

In addition to their tri-colored banner, Salvationists became easily recognizable by their navy blue uniforms. Even before the transition to the Salvation Army, evangelists in Booth's Mission had adopted various forms of distinctive dress, both for the practical purpose of identifying themselves as religious personnel, but also as evidence of a spiritually motivated desire to separate themselves from worldly concerns and fashions. Some of these well-intentioned converts, however, chose costumes that were inappropriate or even "ridiculous."³⁸⁰ Thus, there was some concern on the part of Catherine Booth that uniforms might not be the best move for the organization. George Scott Railton, one of Booth's most trusted advisors and a key figure in the early Army,

³⁷⁹ Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 40.

³⁸⁰ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development*, 15.

also expressed reservations about the adoption of uniforms. He was concerned that uniforms might serve create a barrier between the Salvationists and the people whom they hoped to convert.³⁸¹ Railton's quandary is an interesting one; uniforms, while clearly serving the purpose of identifying members, also naturally indicated belonging, or *not* belonging to the group. In creating their new organization, with all its physical accoutrements, the Salvationists seemed constantly concerned with how they would be perceived by the public, particularly as it affected their success in winning souls for Christ.

In due course, both Mrs. Booth and Commissioner Railton became strong proponents of the uniform. In fact, Railton supposedly became so enamored with the Salvationist cap and tunic that for years he wore almost no civilian garments. Railton favored the adoption of identical dress which would unite the organization's membership. He supported the use of a suit simple enough that the poor population they hoped to serve would not be intimidated or put off by it, an outfit that was likewise "so rough, coarse and plain that no one would wish to wear it for the sake of its appearance or texture."³⁸² Catherine Booth ultimately took responsibility for choosing what became one of the Salvation Army's most well know symbols—the Hallelujah Bonnet, a sturdy black straw bonnet with a red band, and fastened in place with a large bow. She and her daughter spent many hours searching for the appropriate headgear for the female Salvationists. They wanted something that was simple, unworldly, practical (i.e. offering some protection from the weather and objects thrown by unfriendly citizens), and easily recognizable, yet not entirely unfashionable.

³⁸¹ Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 43.

³⁸² Quoted in Hattersley, 238.

In George Scott Railton's mind, there was also a spiritual aspect to the wearing of the uniform, as a symbol of unity and devotion to the cause. But it seems clear that the greatest motivations for the creation of uniforms were based on practical concerns, most importantly its impact on public relations and recruiting. There is no doubt that the uniform made Salvationists easily identifiable, and this was most important to Booth and his followers. It is significant that the Salvationists' choice of a military-type outfit proved to be popular. Men and women of late-nineteenth-century Britain not only recognized this quasi-military organization, but they desired to be part of it. Even if the uniforms were originally designed for their practical rather than their symbolic value, it is evident that in late-nineteenth century Great Britain wearing a uniform connoted duty, discipline, and respect. Once again, Booth and company utilized popular symbols and sentiments to further their mission.

It was a few years before any sort of consistency was instituted with regard to the uniform, but by the early 1880s Salvationist publications like *The War Cry* and public statements from the General encouraged the use of uniforms. While the early Salvationists outfits were something of a hodgepodge of militaristic garments and insignia, eventually official uniforms were created and sold by the Salvation Army, and orders and regulations were issued to govern their wearing. Thus, the implementation of uniforms served not only as a public display to outsiders, but also as yet another way for Booth to maintain discipline and control over his organization. It is no coincidence that the establishment of dress requirements occurred in conjunction with the Mission's move to a more autocratic power structure. Again Booth cleverly and successfully imitated institutions and practices well-established in imperial Britain.

Salvationist historians point out that the uniforms were not designed to be completely unalterable, but rather that modifications were made as necessity dictated. The most significant examples of this principle are the adjustments made to account for climactic and cultural differences as the Salvation Army spread overseas. For example, lighter materials were authorized for use in tropical climates, and in India, Salvationist caps and bonnets were abandoned in favor of traditional head gear like turbans.³⁸³ Such a culturally motivated modification must be viewed as a very clever public relations technique by the Salvationists. Booth's officers were aware of their target population and chose to present themselves in the manner that they felt the locals would find most acceptable. In many ways, it was a similar technique to the adoption of the tunic and cap in England.

Musicians for God

Around the globe the development of the Salvation Army included not only the implementation of the visual symbols of the flag and uniform, but also the distinctive sound and spectacle of Salvationist brass bands. From the early days of Booth's ministry his followers had used a variety of music and instruments in their worship; songs were sung constantly, bugles were played in the streets and religious lyrics were adapted to popular tunes. In the early 1870s under the auspices of the Christian Mission the Booths actually compiled several hymnals. The 1876 *Christian Mission Hymn Book* included 531 hymns, spirituals, and well-known tunes.³⁸⁴ It was not until 1878, however, that the first brass band appeared in a Salvation Army meeting. Ultimately, brass music would

³⁸³ Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 48.

³⁸⁴ Ronald W. Holz, "The Story Behind Salvation Army Music," *Christian History*, Issue 26 Volume IX No. 2 (1990), 31.

become an integral part of Salvationist worship, and the organization would produce world renowned musicians and composers of the highest caliber.

The first Salvationist brass group was a quartet made up of members of the Fry family of Salisbury, England. The Frys had great success in using their instruments in open-air meetings and attracting newcomers to services. They recalled that the brass bands were particularly useful in combating the noise of the city streets and the taunts of hecklers, thus ideally suited for the open-air activities of the Salvation Army.³⁸⁵ As music historian Trevor Herbert describes them, “Brass instruments are robust, durable, and easy to play, and are suited for indoor or outdoor use. By the late 1870s, they were cheap, and a large stock of them was on the second-hand market.”³⁸⁶ Undoubtedly, the availability and relatively low cost of these instruments influenced the growth of Salvationist brass bands.

Somewhat ironically, these groups who became one of the most distinctive features of the movement were initially regarded with skepticism by the founder. Booth was concerned that “artificial music profaned the sacred atmosphere of his services.”³⁸⁷ While he supported congregational singing, he was wary of organized choirs and feared that musicians who gained prominence solely from their musical skills would detract from the religiosity of their work. In 1877 he said, “Merely professional music is always a curse and should you ever find a choir in connection with any hall in this mission, I give you authority to take a besom [broom] and sweep it out.”³⁸⁸ Catherine Booth later recalled, “We had a great deal of argument regarding the first introduction of bands into

³⁸⁵ Walker, 122.

³⁸⁶ Trevor Herbert, “God’s Perfect Minstrels: The Bands of the Salvation Army,” in *The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History*, Trevor Herbert, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 191.

³⁸⁷ Hattersley, 245.

³⁸⁸ Quoted in Holz, 31.

the Army and a great many fears.”³⁸⁹ This concern over prideful, egocentric musicians represents the Salvation Army’s humble origins and spiritual focus contingent upon an intense personal devotion to God and the winning of souls. However, it is also possible that Booth’s reluctance to incorporate musicians was not entirely out of concern for the humility of their characters, but partially motivated by reluctance on his part to relinquish authority and control.

Ultimately it seems that Booth’s commitment to converting unbelievers led him to allow the brass band movement to thrive. After the Frys’ debut, other such musical groups quickly sprung up among Salvationists around the country. Despite his skepticism, William Booth was quickly won over by the practical success of the musicians. In 1880 he wrote in *The War Cry*, “Whereas, . . . we have proved the great utility of musical instruments in attracting crowds to our open-air and indoor meetings, we do here express our desire that as many of our officers and soldiers generally, *male or female*, as have the ability for so doing, learn to play on some suitable instrument.”³⁹⁰ Such a decision illustrates three principles inherent in the early Salvation Army: one, the extremely astute adoption of nineteenth-century culture in the marketing of the organization. Brass bands were a popular form of entertainment in England, countless outsiders were attracted by the music of the Salvationists, not only to listen, but also to participate; many converts were gained through musical groups. Second, he publicly acknowledged the right of women to participate. This was particularly significant given that playing in a band tended to be an activity for men only. Callum Brown even

³⁸⁹ Quoted in Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 119.

³⁹⁰ Quoted in *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development*, 53.

suggests that “Music was one of the important male connections to religiosity.”³⁹¹ But the Salvation Army used this technique to reach both men and women. Finally, in issuing this statement Booth was quick to assert his authority over the situation.

Once it became evident that allowing the Salvationist brass band movement to prosper would be beneficial to the organization, Booth issued regulations to maintain discipline and control over the groups. He was adamant that, “They are to work for the good of the corps and for the salvation of souls, and for nothing else.”³⁹² In February 1881 “General Order for Brass Bands” was published in *The War Cry*. They included the following stipulations: 1) No one may be a member of the band who is not a member of the Salvation Army. 2) All instruments are to be the property of the Salvation Army. 3) Nothing but salvation music should be played.³⁹³ While Booth’s rules and restrictions helped reinforce his desire that Salvation Army musicianship be solely religiously motivated and applied, they also made sure that no other person or organization could benefit from the talent of his musicians. His stipulations required the utmost loyalty from the members of his church. This level of discipline again highlighted the Salvationists’ imitation of military structure; the British army demanded no less of a commitment from its soldiers than William Booth did of his bandsmen.

Brass bands were a logical choice for Salvation Army musicians not only for the durability of the instruments and their success in drawing the attention of people on the streets, but also for the way in which these groups so obviously reinforced the military metaphor. Trevor Herbert writes, “Brass instruments have associations with militarism in

³⁹¹ Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding secularization 1800-2000* (London: Routledge, 2001), 138.

³⁹² Quoted in Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 119.

³⁹³ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development*, 53.

many cultures, and such associations were especially resonant in the late Victorian period, because of the ever-present image of military imperialism and the common sight of brass bands in volunteer exercises and ceremonies.”³⁹⁴ By developing these musical groups, the Salvation Army publicly reinforced their image as an army for God. Ultimately, these bands became not only useful in outdoor meetings, but emblematic of the denomination itself. Pamela Walker points out that other volunteer organizations used brass bands, but the Salvation Army was unique in the extent to which this music became a part of their ministry.³⁹⁵ Salvationists quickly became not only performers, but also composers, arrangers, and publishers of music. In 1883, *Salvation Music, Volume II* was published which contained the first original material by Salvationist authors and composers. That same year the Music Editorial Department was founded to oversee and administer the various music programs and publications. Since their inception, Salvation Army bands have become world-renowned; their recordings and published compositions prolific. And from the 1880s it has come under the control and administration of Salvation Army headquarters. As the musical groups sprang up within his army, William Booth made sure he had a system in place to regulate and control the musicians. The advent of Salvation Army musical publications not only guaranteed that Booth could regulate the content of compositions to ensure their religious nature, but also provided a potential revenue stream for the organization. While this musical ministry clearly had its origins in religiously motivated evangelistic activity, there is something impressive about the manner in which it was quickly regulated and marketed. The ultimate goal of saving

³⁹⁴ Herbert, 192.

³⁹⁵ Walker, 122.

souls remained, but the techniques employed were steeped in practicality, and helped to financially support Booth's aims.

Training Recruits

As the transformation of Booth's early mission into the Salvation Army took place, with the development of the flag, uniforms, and brass bands, the organization continued to grow, and that meant a great influx of new 'recruits.' From its earliest incarnation, Booth's urban ministry was predicated on the concept that later became the Salvation Army motto, "Saved to Serve." That is, he hoped to convert unbelievers to Christianity and then use these converts in turn to recruit new members. As Booth described, "As soon as a man gets saved we put him up to say so, and in his testimony lies much of the power of our work."³⁹⁶ Here was the feeling that Britain's working poor would respond well to evangelists from similar socio-economic backgrounds. As such, the preparation of new ministers became a vital part of Booth's mission. As biographer Helen Hosier describes it, "Although General William Booth used uneducated men and women—very often people with little or no appreciation for culture—he never assumed that education wasn't important."³⁹⁷ With the advent of the Salvation Army, there also came formalized Training Homes to prepare the Cadets for Officership.

All these issues of training, regulations, authority and organization were particularly relevant given the rapid pace at which the Salvation Army grew in its early years. In 1878, the Christian Mission had approximately 60 evangelists on its staff, while

³⁹⁶ Quoted in G.S. Railton, *The Authoritative Life of General William Booth: Founder of the Salvation Army* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1912), 78.

³⁹⁷ Hosier, 127.

an 1883 list of Salvation Army officers cites 723 male and 746 female officers.³⁹⁸

Salvation Army records also indicate the establishment of 519 corps during that same time period.³⁹⁹ Thus, as the movement exploded throughout Great Britain, Booth worked hard to maintain control and direction over his organization. In the early days of the Christian Mission, when the numbers were small, new recruits to the ministry could easily be trained by an unofficial system of mentoring and practice. With the rapid growth of the Salvation Army, more formalized instruction and preparation became necessary, not to mention a better system for weeding out those unsuited or unqualified for the position.

The first formal attempt at training officers took place in Manchester in 1879 under the direction of Booth's son Ballington. By the following year, the Salvationists purchased a large orphanage in northeast London with plenty of room for housing and teaching the cadets.⁴⁰⁰ Earlier in 1880, a training home for women was opened with Booth's young daughter Emma in charge. At these training homes, the cadets received instruction in speaking, singing, Salvationist theology, and other skills necessary for running a local corps, such as account keeping, house-to-house visitation, and street work. They studied the Bible and learned some reading, writing, and spelling. William Booth and his cohorts worked to provide education that was,

real and practical . . . Whilst by no means undervaluing knowledge, whether of a practical or doctrinal character, the Founder's great desire was to teach what was absolutely essential for the war his officers were to wage, without burdening their minds with knowledge which would have no direct bearing upon their work.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁸ Glenn K. Horridge, "William Booth's Officers," *Christian History*, Issue 26, Volume IX, No. 2 (1990): 15.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁰⁰ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development*, 23.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

Despite the disclaimer, it seems clear that William Booth did not place that high a value on the 'book learning' or formal education. While this by no means precluded Salvationists from being great scholars and intellectuals, it does highlight Booth's desire to maintain the truly working class nature of his organization. He wanted his officers to be appropriately trained to deal with his target audience of the urban poor.

As the first training homes were developed, Booth wrote that these facilities should also "test the genuineness of the candidate. . . .we seek to develop and encourage and confirm the uttermost devotion to God , and of self-sacrifice for the salvation of men."⁴⁰² While it is unclear exactly how this confirmation should be carried out, this stipulation does indicate Booth's desire that his officers truly be of right mind and devoted to God's work through the programs and structure of the Salvation Army.

Catherine described the process, writing, "In addition to meetings and lectures devoted to heart-searching truths, every cadet is seen privately, talked and prayed with, and counseled according to his or her individual necessities."⁴⁰³ She acknowledged that "we find many of them are not sanctified."⁴⁰⁴ These comments seem to indicate a successful use of the training process to weed out inappropriate candidates. According to Glenn K. Horridge, the organization did suffer from numerous resignations in the early years. He cites factors including the popular opposition to the army, frequent moves, hard work, and the strict authority of William Booth.⁴⁰⁵ Even after completing the training program officers were occasionally dismissed for failing to comply with Booth's regulations.

⁴⁰² Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army: Volume Two*, 68.

⁴⁰³ Quoted in Bramwell-Booth, 252.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Horridge, 17.

Emma Booth was only 20 years old at the time she took command of the women's training program, yet her father placed her in a significant position of authority. She wrote to her staff of the experience of training cadets, "All eyes are on *us*. I don't think we have any idea of the influence as a Training Home Staff we exert in the whole movement—and through it over the whole world!"⁴⁰⁶ The manner in which this young woman in her twenties was able to affect a growing international organization illustrates two important principles of the early Salvation Army. First, women were allowed to participate at a level unknown in other denominations. Second, the dynastic structure of Booth's movement; in the late-1800s nearly all of William and Catherine's children held high-ranking positions within the Salvation Army. Emma and Ballington trained the early cadets. Bramwell, and later Evangeline, would both succeed their father as General. William Booth created an inner circle of power tied to a family legacy that rivaled any imperial dynasty.

Not everyone felt comfortable with the authority exercised by the Booth family, however. A former officer named S.H. Hodges, for example, wrote and published a pamphlet entitled *General Booth: "The Family" and the Salvation Army showing its Rise, Progress, and Moral and Spiritual Decline* in which he attacked the Army and its inner leadership. Hodges was particularly scornful of the Booth sons-in-law who eagerly joined the family. He wrote of daughter Kate's husband Col. Stanley Booth-Clibborn,

His only weakness was when he consented to the humiliation of changing his name at the marriage by adding "Booth." There are few things that have shocked the Army so much as the requiring of this both from him and Mr. Tucker. It is looked upon as being an irrefragable proof of pride

⁴⁰⁶ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *The Consul: A Sketch of Emma Booth-Tucker* (New York: The Salvation Army Publishing Dept., 1903), 71.

on “The Family’s” part, and the humiliation of the men who have been chosen as husbands.”⁴⁰⁷

There are many examples of Salvation Army personnel taking pride in the organization’s claims to gender equality, but clearly Hodges represents a segment of the membership which held more traditional views. While his work is clearly the product of a disgruntled former employee, he does draw attention to the very real dominance of the Booth family; a fact which manifested itself in a number of ways including the husbands’ atypical adoption of the famed Booth name. .

Public Opposition

Indeed, as General Booth’s religion grew with its clear hierarchy, strict rules, strange dress, and loud music not all of British society happily embraced the new movement. While this army for God clearly reflected the ideals and utilized well-known forms of nineteenth-century culture, it also railed against traditional religious authority and provoked serious criticism and ridicule—from a variety of people. For example, General Booth earned “the inveterate hostility of the publicans, who have lost their best customers through the operations of the Army.”⁴⁰⁸ The Salvationists’ promotion of abstinence was bad for business. Crowds that gathered around Booth could be so vicious in their mockery, that he even acquired a bodyguard, a converted boxer named Peter Monk.⁴⁰⁹

In some instances, young men formed themselves into bands of more organized opposition to the Salvation Army’s work that became known as ‘Skeleton Armies.’

⁴⁰⁷ S.H. Hodges, *General Booth: “The Family” and the Salvation Army showing its Rise, Progress, and Moral and Spiritual Decline* (Manchester: S.H. Hodges, 1890), 19.

⁴⁰⁸ “Correspondence,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 October 1882, p. 2.

⁴⁰⁹ Watson, 19.

These groups followed Salvationist meetings and processions, harassing and attacking them. Captain Henry Bullard, later one of the first SA missionaries in India, was the victim of some brutal harassment from Skeleton Armies during his early career in Britain. In one instance the members of Bullard's congregation suffered a continuous barrage of stones being thrown through the windows of the church hall; Bullard helped the worshippers escape through a back window and sought out police assistance.⁴¹⁰ Some Skeleton Armies even used Salvationist techniques against them, adopting their own flags and uniforms to mock the Sallies, as Booth's female recruits were popularly known.⁴¹¹

Salvationists also received less violent, but no less impassioned, criticism from religious leaders who disapproved of their tactics. For example, in 1882 *The Pall Mall Gazette* reported on a discussion of the Salvation Army at an Anglican Diocesan convention. A Canon Girdleston "strongly protested against the irreverence that characterized that body," and "Canon Bell said that in his own parish of Cheltenham the Salvationists were doing more harm than good, and he was doubtful of the Church copying their example."⁴¹² Thus, even as the Salvation Army was beginning its foray into India, the denomination still faced public scorn from the established religion in Britain. A subsequent editorial in the same paper acknowledged the Bishop of Peterborough's "distrust of unsober enthusiasms" and consequent criticism of the Salvation Army.⁴¹³

Thus, from the organization's very inception they struggled against opposition, even physical violence, reinforcing their ideology of fighting a war for their beliefs. But while such scorn and ridicule may have been troublesome, it did not effectively hinder

⁴¹⁰ Catherine Sturgess, *This Quiet Man* (London: Salvationist Publishing & Supplies, 1944), 3.

⁴¹¹ Walker, 225.

⁴¹² "The Churches and The Salvation Army," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 October 1882, p. 7.

⁴¹³ "Occasional Notes," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 October 1882, p. 3.

the Army's development. Throughout the late-nineteenth century they continued to gain new recruits and began expanding their religion throughout the globe, despite any criticism and harassment.

Salvationist Theology

Despite the implementation of all the unusual military terminology, Booth was quick to reassure the public that at heart his organization remained a fairly traditional, religious movement. In 1878 he wrote,

We believe in old-fashioned Salvation. We have not developed or improved into Universalism, Unitarianism, or Nothingarianism, and we don't expect to. Ours is just the same Salvation taught in the Bible, preached by Luther and Wesley and Whitefield . . . purchased by the agony and sufferings and blood of the son of God.⁴¹⁴

His reference to such well-known Protestant preachers and revivalists as Luther, Wesley, and Whitefield again emphasized Booth's grounding in traditional Protestant theology. Indeed, the early constitution of his mission "closely resembled that of the various Methodist denominations from which so many members had come."⁴¹⁵ The religious concepts and beliefs taught at the Salvation Army training schools were not so different from those of other Protestant divinity schools. Central to Booth's theology was Charles Wesley's doctrine of sanctification. This belief maintained that a person's redemption began with faith and that through God's grace individuals could be freed from sin, and ultimately empowered to save souls.⁴¹⁶ This concept of holiness was certainly key to the Salvation Army's ministry. Much of their work, and the cultivation of new members,

⁴¹⁴ Quoted in J. Coutts, 5.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁴¹⁶ Roger J. Green, "William Booth's Theology of *Redemption*," *Christian History*, Issue 26, Vol. IX, No. 2 (1990) 28.

was predicated on this idea that one could become free from sin, and work to bring others closer to God.

Booth believed that this redemption of mankind should ultimately lead to the creation of a kingdom of God on earth. His work toward gaining new converts was an attempt to reach this goal. Roger Green notes that Booth ultimately felt Great Britain should be at the center of that new religious kingdom. He quotes Booth as saying, “Oh London, that ought to be the New Jerusalem in this lower world.”⁴¹⁷ In this statement, Booth revealed himself to be nationalistic, a sentiment that tied in well with his militaristic, authoritarian organization. This belief in Britain as a center of Christianity raises questions about the nature of Salvationists proselytizing outside the metropole. Were they then indeed teaching a religion whose foundation and strength were under the dominion of the Queen? If so, then sharing their faith abroad would be inextricably linked to empire building.

Salvationist tenets were summed up in a list of eleven doctrines. These statements outlined a monotheistic religion, based on the Bible, which offered salvation to all people.⁴¹⁸ Within these eleven doctrines is evidence of several basic protestant

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁴¹⁸The doctrines read as follows:

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience, they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by His suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

beliefs—the importance of scripture as religious authority, the existence of the holy trinity, and the Lutheran concept of salvation through faith. Organizing this theology into a simple list was an effective measure in helping new converts to learn the Salvationist credo, and thus easily enabled them to pass it on to others.

In keeping with his new organizational structure and the desire to ensure the devotion of each new convert, William Booth introduced the “Articles of War” in 1882. In keeping with the military metaphor, this document, whose title reminded recruits that they were in the midst of a spiritual battle, was a pledge to be signed by each soldier. It was intended to serve the following purposes:

- a. That he may understand beforehand the doctrines, principles and practices to which he will have to conform.
- b. Thinking and praying over these Articles will help him to find out whether he really has the faith and spirit of a salvation soldier or not.
- c. The pledge involved in signing these articles will help him to be faithful to the Army in the future.
- d. They prevent many joining who are not in heart and head with us, and who consequently would be likely afterwards to create dissatisfaction and division.⁴¹⁹

Thus, the reading and the signing of this deed would help address Booth’s concern that those who volunteered for his Army were of the right mindset and truly devoted to the cause.

We believe that repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.

We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, in the general judgment at the end of the world, in the eternal happiness of the righteous, and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

“IHQ: The Doctrines of the Salvation Army,” *The Salvation Army*, Online. Available:

www1.salvationarmy.org.

⁴¹⁹ “Articles of War—Origins,” *The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre*, Online. Available: www1.salvationarmy.org

The document began with a statement of belief in both Christianity and the Salvation Army, and included an affirmation of the eleven Salvation Army doctrines, listed for the adherent. In addition, the Articles contain a series of strict guidelines for the Salvationist's life. For example, Article 3 read:

I do here, and now, and for ever, renounce the world with all its sinful pleasures, companionships, treasures, and objects, and declare my full determination boldly to show myself a Soldier of Jesus Christ in all places and companies: no matter what I may have to suffer, do, or lose, by so doing.⁴²⁰

This item emphasizes the Salvation Army's fear of worldly vices and the importance they placed on individual sacrifice. It reflects a Victorian respect for hard work and devotion. Further Articles more specifically addressed the social ills of the late-nineteenth century, such as promising to abstain "from the use of all intoxicating liquors, and also from the habitual use of opium, laudanum, morphia, and all other baneful drugs" and making a declaration that "I will never treat any woman, child, or other person, whose life, comfort, or happiness may be placed within my power, in an oppressive, cruel or cowardly manner."⁴²¹ The mandate to protect women and children reveals a chivalry in keeping not only with domestic social service concerns, but also with the late-nineteenth-century imperial mindset that Englishmen abroad should defend their women and protect them from the dangers and savagery of foreign lands. The Articles of War also make reference to the "war" for Christ, acknowledging the evangelical focus of the Salvation Army by promising to "endeavour to lead my family, friends, neighbours, and all others whom I can influence" to follow the Lord.⁴²²

⁴²⁰ General William Booth, *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers of the Salvation Army*, 2nd Edition (London: The Salvation Army, 1888), 189.

⁴²¹ Ibid. 189, 190.

⁴²² Ibid. 190.

The implementation of these rules reinforced the authoritarian nature of the newly created Salvation Army. It was totally in keeping with the concept of an army at war to demand that his followers adhere to a specific set of regulations. Likewise, the single-mindedness of Booth's mission was assuaged by the presence of a measure which would determine that all converts fully accepted his philosophy. Such discipline and control was central to the nature and character of the early Salvation Army. By the 1890s, Booth had written an entire series of books instructing his soldiers and officers, including *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers* and *Orders and Regulations for Soldiers*.⁴²³ Even joining Booth's church as a layperson required discipline, submission to authority, and unwavering support of the mission. Much as the actual military demanded strict adherence to their system, so William Booth demanded nothing less of his followers. And it appears to have been successful; "some recruits did not fully share the spirit of the Army and were reluctant to commit themselves," but those who did were enthusiastic converts.⁴²⁴

From the beginning, Booth's revivalist style of worship, his rowdy congregations, and his female preachers certainly differed from traditional, middle-class churches. As he created his own mission, and eventually the Salvation Army, William further broke away from Anglican practices by eventually abandoning many of the sacraments. This was partially for theological reasons, but more often motivated by practical concerns. For example, the practice of serving Communion was discontinued partially due to a persistent belief that Victorian society, particularly the male half, was simply not

⁴²³ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development*, 19.

⁴²⁴ "Articles of War—Origins."

progressive enough to accept female ministers serving the Eucharist.⁴²⁵ Such an idea seems a rather feeble justification for eliminating a long-established religious ritual, and indeed, this was certainly not the only or even the dominant factor in prompting Booth's decision, but the existence of such sentiments certainly speaks to the contradictions and limits of the Salvation Army's practice of female ministry.

Ultimately, the primary reason the Salvationists stopped practicing Communion was concern over drunks gaining access to the wine.⁴²⁶ William very quickly discovered that a key part of his ministry had to be devoted to keeping his urban, lower-class converts sober. How could they accept the word of God without a clean heart and a clear head? Removing the use of wine from his religious services simply served the practical aim of eliminating a temptation to 'backslide,' and eventually this was reinforced within the organization's demand that members abstain completely from the use of alcohol as outlined in the Articles of War. Thus, by the 1880s the Salvation Army had become the world's largest abstinence society.⁴²⁷

This abandonment of Communion is a key example of Catherine's influence on the organization. Most of the anti-sacrament pressure came from Mrs. Booth.⁴²⁸ The child of an alcoholic and an experienced abstinence advocate, she was certainly the more impassioned supporter of the Temperance movement. It was Catherine who encouraged William himself to completely avoid alcoholic drinks, even for medicinal purposes.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ Watson, 22.

⁴²⁶ J. Coutts, 72.

⁴²⁷ Murdoch, 30.

⁴²⁸ Harry Dean, "The Founders and the Sacraments," in *The Salvation Army and the Churches*, John D. Waldron, ed. (New York: The Salvation Army Literary Department, 1986), 66.

⁴²⁹ Murdoch, 30.

She also pushed for the elimination of sacraments for spiritual reasons. In a speech at Exeter Hall she said,

Another mock salvation is presented in the form of *ceremonies and sacraments* . . . men are taught that by going through them or partaking of them. . . they are to be saved . . . what an inveterate tendency there is in the human heart to trust in outward forms, instead of seeking the inward grace!⁴³⁰

This belief in the importance of personal holiness rather than meaningless rituals is typical of revivalist Christianity. This emphasis on internal grace and a personal experience of conversion was integral to the Salvation Army's theology and worship.

While these practices were ultimately pursued by William Booth and the organization as a whole, it is noteworthy that they developed through the influence and encouragement of the Army Mother.

A Social Mission

Temperance was not the only social service movement that Booth's mission supported. He modeled his ministry on a concept which inspired the slogan, "soup, soap, and salvation."⁴³¹ Although his primary focus was spiritual redemption, from the beginning, Booth's work rested on the belief that social service work was connected to saving souls. He wrote, "But what is the use of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad, desperate struggle to keep themselves alive?"⁴³² Thus, his early missions had included soup kitchens, shelters, and other charitable programs, and as the Salvation Army grew, the church began its development into one of the most well-known social service institutions in the world.

⁴³⁰ Quoted in J. Coutts, 72.

⁴³¹ Watson and Brown, 3.

⁴³² W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, 53.

Over time Booth truly became a Victorian-era social reformer. In 1890 he issued his social welfare manifesto entitled *In Darkest England and The Way Out*. This book, published shortly after his dear wife Catherine's death, offered Booth's detailed plan for dealing with Britain's impoverished working class. Once again, Booth took advantage of the local culture, cleverly referencing a hero of Victorian England, explorer Henry Stanley. The title of Booth's book was obviously and admittedly a play on Stanley's *Darkest Africa*, a popular text of the period, a story that focused on the mysteries and horrors of a foreign continent, inspiring the British pride in exploring and conquering such uncharted heathen wildernesses.

Booth began his work with a reference to Stanley's book, and quickly drew what he saw as obvious comparisons. He wrote,

As there is a darkest Africa is there not also a darkest England? . . . May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone's throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those which Stanley has found existing in the great Equatorial forest?⁴³³

As much as Booth's words may have been designed to shame people into action, asking the question should we not be doing just as much to help the people in our own neighborhoods as we are abroad, he was also appealing to their sense of adventure and fascination with the foreign. He suggested that the exciting discoveries of Stanley could in fact be made around the corner, that the ordinary citizens of Britain could contribute as much to Victorian society as the great explorer.

Booth's book continued with a detailed explanation of his darkest England metaphor. He acknowledged the plight of women both in Africa and among the poor of London, he highlighted the manner in which disease ravaged both populations, and

⁴³³ Ibid., 18.

suggested that much of the misery of these groups came from their own bad habits.⁴³⁴

Booth's use of the horrors associated with the uncivilized life of darkest Africa proved very effective in drawing peoples' attentions to the concerns of Britain's poor. While the language was steeped in melodrama, it was exactly such emotion that appealed to the Victorian reader.

The purpose of Booth's *Darkest England* however, was not merely to draw attention to the social ills of Great Britain, but to provide a comprehensive plan for dealing with these problems. The text moved on from his metaphorical descriptions to outlining his scheme, complete with statistics and budgets. The foundation of Booth's proposal was a three-part plan to deal with unemployment: the city colony, which includes urban workshops and factories; the farm colony, where the poor (or what he called the "submerged tenth") would learn basic agricultural skills; and finally, the overseas colony, which would assist the unemployed in emigrating and being new lives in foreign lands.⁴³⁵ Booth's emphasis on the need for productive employment for England's poor, seems representative of a strong Protestant work ethic, and a belief in personal responsibility—principles which would later guide the Salvation Army's activities in India.. Another key aspect of Booth's proposal was his incorporation of British expansion beyond the metropole. Social historian Victor Bailey writes, ". . .the book seems to emerge from the fusion of the ideas of the social-imperialist movement, anxious to use the Empire to combat urban degeneration. . ." ⁴³⁶ In this manifesto Booth

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 20-21.

⁴³⁵ Norman Murdoch, "In Darkest England," *Christian History*, Issue 26, Volume IX, No. 2 (1990): 35.

⁴³⁶ Victor Bailey, "'In Darkest England and the Way Out': The Salvation Army, Social Reform and the Labour Movement, 1885-1910." *International Review of Social History*, 29, No. 2 (1984): 151.

revealed his confidence in the Empire and conviction that these lands should indeed be utilized for the benefit of Britain.

In outlining his social rehabilitation scheme, Booth's writing demonstrated less of the emotional romanticism of a Victorian novel, and adopted a more scientific approach.

He wrote,

I appeal neither to hysterical emotionalists nor head-long enthusiasts; but having tried to approach the examination of this question in the spirit of scientific investigation, I put forth my proposals with the view of securing the support and co-operation of the sober, serious, practical men and women who constitute the saving strength and moral backbone of the country.⁴³⁷

This reference to scientific investigation targeted the intellectual curiosity of Victorian society. Furthermore, in this quotation we see evidence of both Booth's goals and methods. This book was written not as some abstract wish list or vague mission statement for a new organization, it was a specific plan that he actually expected to be carried out. Likewise, his militaristic authority reveals itself. He was searching for serious, practical men and women to assist him in his cause. He also drew on the spirit of British nationalism, referring to his desired recruits as the "moral backbone of the country."

In the text of *Darkest England*, Booth was very specific in asking not only for the recruits to do the work, but also for their financial support. In detailing his scheme, he included a proposed budget and request for funds, suggesting that an initial bequest of 100,000 pounds and a further annual income of 30,000 pounds could support his projects.⁴³⁸ He also called upon the government to contribute. This was a new tactic, and

⁴³⁷ W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, 24.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 254.

one fraught with implications for the relationship between church and state, and the role of the government in carrying out Booth's activities.

Booth's book was filled with not only with myriad Victorian cultural references and colorful metaphors, but many interesting asides and words of wisdom that illuminated Booth's political tendencies and unique views on contemporary society. For example, *Darkest England* revealed Booth's socialist sympathies. He criticized laissez-faire economics, deriding, "Let things alone,' the law of supply and demand, and all the rest of the excuses by which those who stand on firm ground salve their consciences when they leave their brother to sink. . ." ⁴³⁹ This was classic Booth, depicting the impoverished worker as a man literally drowning, while the economic system fails to rescue him. In some instances, Booth was even more matter of fact in outlining his beliefs, stating, "If anyone asked me to state in one word what seemed likely to be the key to the solution of the Social Problem I should answer unhesitatingly Co-operation." ⁴⁴⁰ Booth made no attempt to hide the fact that he felt capitalism had failed society, and that people must work together to help their fellow man.

Booth's vision of social cooperation, however, was not one of communal religious governance. By this point in his career he was clearly committed to an authoritarian structure within the Salvation Army. In the chapter in which he outlined how his great scheme for social improvement could be achieved, Booth argued that one of the reasons the Salvation Army was so well suited to handle this task was because of its discipline and respect for authority. He wrote, "Our fourth credential is that our Organization alone of England's religious bodies is founded upon the principle of

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 51.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 237.

implicit obedience.”⁴⁴¹ Booth suggested that not only was discipline an asset, but that the people themselves actually appreciated, if not longed for it, as evidenced by the Salvation Army’s rapid growth in the 1870s and 80s. It was Booth’s view that,

There cannot be a greater mistake in this world than to imagine the men object to be governed. . . .the instinct to obey is so universal that even when governments have gone blind, and deaf, and paralytic, rotten with corruption and hopelessly behind the times, they still contrive to live on.⁴⁴²

There’s no indication that Booth was referring to any particular government in his list of negative adjectives; such graphic derision of the British government seems unlikely, even for Booth. But while the criticism may not have an explicitly defined target, Booth’s implied view of his own organization and leadership ability is clear. No government could gain its members’ obedience and devotion quite so well as William Booth controlled his army.

In Darkest England and the Way Out is significant not only because of what it reveals about the intentions and beliefs of William Booth and his followers, but also because of the public reaction to the book. This was not simply a manifesto circulated amongst the organization itself; it was a bestseller. By December 1890 115,000 copies had been sold, and the book had “aroused more public interest than any other book since Henry George’s *Progress and Poverty*.”⁴⁴³ Booth recalled that very quickly the initial 100,000 pounds he requested was donated, although they did have trouble obtaining the subsequent yearly pledges of 30,000.⁴⁴⁴ Many people were moved by the work and supported Booth’s scheme. Norman Murdoch writes that Booth’s ideas “drew praise from social leaders in labor, government, religion, and professional social services,” and

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 250.

⁴⁴² Ibid., 240.

⁴⁴³ Bailey, 155.

⁴⁴⁴ Railton, 192.

Victor Bailey acknowledges that the reaction of the major London newspapers “was generally very favourable.”⁴⁴⁵ Despite this interest however, Booth’s schemes also provoked much criticism, most notably from T.H. Huxley. Many social reformers found his plans overly ambitious, impractical, and not financially viable. One contemporary pamphlet attacked Booth’s plan saying, “. . . your conception of the task is so inadequate, and your method of the procedure so grotesque . . . that I am necessitated to lay bare its faults with an unsparing hand.”⁴⁴⁶

Even in the face of public criticism, Booth chose to pursue his scheme. A “Darkest England” bureau and account were established; once again officially organized through a deed poll in Chancery.⁴⁴⁷ Although the farm colonies and overseas colonies ultimately did not survive much beyond the early-twentieth century, Booth did seem to achieve a certain measure of success with the publication of *Darkest England*. An 1891 Salvation Army report on the first year of the implementation of the scheme cited over 2.5 million meals served, with about 100 unemployed people per day visiting the SA labor bureau of whom roughly 30% had been found jobs.⁴⁴⁸ These figures were admirable, but still short of Booth’s goals. At the very least, however, the Darkest England scheme effectively aroused public interest and precipitated an increased effort to help the poor. “Yet another effect was that the fountains of compassion broke out in the hearts of large numbers of individuals, and lead them to make similar efforts.”⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁵ Murdoch, “In Darkest England,” 35. Bailey, 155.

⁴⁴⁶ Elihu, *Is General Booth’s Darkest England Scheme a Failure* (Manchester: Abel Heywood & Son, 1893), 18.

⁴⁴⁷ Quoted in St. John Ervine, *God’s Soldier: General William Booth*, Vol. II. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), 1050.

⁴⁴⁸ Elizabeth Reeves Swift, *The “Darkest England” Social Scheme: A Brief Review of the First Year’s Work* (London: The Salvation Army, 1891), 1, 22.

⁴⁴⁹ Railton, 193.

Regardless of the extent to which its aims succeeded, the publication of *In Darkest England and the Way Out* represents a milestone in the history of the Salvation Army. The year, 1890, also marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization. Through the practical efforts of his church and the dynamic ideas of his publications, Booth had clearly established himself as both a powerful religious leader and social reformer; an icon for the Victorian era. But Booth and his followers were not content with the success they enjoyed within Great Britain. The schemes of *Darkest England* were intended to target poverty and social misery beyond the borders of the metropole, within the Empire, and around the world.

As early as the 1870s, the Salvation Army chose to take their distinctive mission beyond the boundaries of England. The church spread to America in 1879 and to the European continent in 1881. Salvationists also embarked upon missionary work in many under-developed nations, including both colonial holdings and independent sovereign territories. In 1882 India became the Salvation Army's first true mission field, and their work on the subcontinent reveals the complex relationship between missionaries and the nineteenth-century British Empire.

CHAPTER V – The Salvation Army ‘Invades’ India

Even before a single representative of the Salvation Army left the shores of England the denomination was clearly an imperial organization. William Booth founded his new religion during the height of the British Empire, when British nationalism and influence were spreading from the metropole throughout the globe. Booth’s paramilitary structure and socially conscious religion reflected the traditions and values of nineteenth-century Britain. As the Empire grew, including the all-important Raj in India, so did the Salvation Army. In the 1880s, as the great powers of the western world became steeped in imperial competition, working to extend their influence across the globe, the Salvation Army moved its activities overseas as well. Under the leadership of the General and his staff at the International Headquarters in London, the Salvationists created outposts in dozens of countries, all with the same unifying ideology and goals.

As the Salvation Army expanded its reach to other continents, paralleling the expansion of the British Empire, the Salvationists remained loyal to the organization’s mission of winning converts. They brought the same religious fervor, dramatic style, and cultural adaptations used in Great Britain to the people of places such as America, France, Japan, and India. Unfortunately for the Salvationists, bringing their techniques to the Asian subcontinent meant conflict with the colonial authorities. The Salvation Army, a group so clearly the product of nineteenth-century British religious and imperial developments, became a threat to the stability of the Raj due to their aggressive proselytizing and loud public worship. As the Salvationists’ overseas work continued, however, the organization eventually developed a more complex relationship with the British imperial government.

General William Booth was eager and willing to expand his organization throughout the globe, but the specific enterprise of moving to India was precipitated by a young man named Frederick Tucker. Tucker himself was a product of the Empire and the British ruling class. Born in India in 1853, the son of a government official in the Indian Civil Service with several preceding generations of distinguished British ancestors, he appeared destined for imperial employment. An early-twentieth century biography reveals the Victorian preoccupation with social class and breeding in stating: “Frederick Tucker was, in the best sense of the word, well-born, for he sprang from a house that for centuries had proved its manhood.”⁴⁵⁰ Thus, Frederick was expected to display the strength of his bloodlines and his own masculinity through participation in the colonial government.

Tucker’s life was undoubtedly shaped not only by his family’s history, but also by his own early experiences in the colonies, all of which would influence his later work with the Salvation Army in India. For example, another early biographer begins Tucker’s life story: “The mutineers! The mutineers are coming!”⁴⁵¹ As a young boy at age five living in Northern India, Frederick and his family experienced the fear and tension of the Sepoy Mutiny. Even as a child, he was witness to the potentially precarious nature of the British position within India and the widening gap between the Indians and the Europeans. Meanwhile, biographer Harry Williams suggests that Frederick and his family enjoyed quite “close” and “happy” relationships with the many Indian servants who worked in the Tucker household and protected their belongings when the family was

⁴⁵⁰ F.A. Mackenzie, *Booth-Tucker: Sadhu and Saint* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930), 1.

⁴⁵¹ Madge Unsworth, *Bridging the Gap: Frederick Booth-Tucker* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1949), 1.

forced to flee the Mutiny.⁴⁵² Williams oversimplifies his description of master and servants; certainly not all the cooks, maids, gardeners, etc. were quite as joyful about their life of servitude as his cheery depiction suggests. However, there can be no doubt that young Frederick Tucker's upbringing did provide an exposure to Indian culture which ultimately influenced his later career. Speaking in 1917, Tucker himself said: "I have the honour to be a child of India."⁴⁵³ While it may have been from a position of European authority, Frederick clearly developed a fascination with, and a concern for, India which would last throughout his life. For example, the study and use of Indian languages would become a key element of Tucker's later missionary work, an affinity he developed as a youth studying Urdu and other languages.

Tucker's childhood influences included not only his family's economic and political heritage, but their religious history as well. The Tuckers maintained a Christian home, apparently embracing the religious fervor of nineteenth-century Britain, although in the manner most befitting loyal government officials—as members of the Anglican Church. In notes for his autobiography, Tucker recalled:

The Tuckers were a godly family, solidly good and quietly religious, excellent examples of the best Church of England fruit. They were loyal to their Church. They loved it and believed in it. In fact, I think my mother would almost have expected the roof to fall in on her if she had attended a meeting in a dissenting place of worship.⁴⁵⁴

In this passage Tucker acknowledged the importance of his parents' Christian beliefs, while openly criticizing the rigidity of their religious practice. As much as he was a product of traditional nineteenth-century English religion, he later came to be associated

⁴⁵² Harry Williams, *Booth-Tucker: William Booth's First Gentleman* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980), 17.

⁴⁵³ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Reprint of a Speech at the Cannon Street Hotel* The Indo-British Association, 30 October 1917.

⁴⁵⁴ Quoted in Mackenzie, 10.

with dissent and even subversion. Ultimately, his decision to join the Salvation Army caused a rift within the Tucker family. His mother refused to enter a dissenting church even for Frederick's wedding and actually cut him out of her will.⁴⁵⁵ Association with the Salvationists meant renouncing his inherited class and status.

But this break with familial and societal expectations came later. Young Frederick practiced Christianity as his parents did, attended English schools, and joined the Indian Civil Service just as his father before him. But even as pursued the traditional career path expected by his family, Tucker fell under the influence of the emotional religious revivals of the nineteenth century. Even as he passed the examination for entrance in the ICS in 1875, he became captivated by the meetings held by American evangelists Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey.⁴⁵⁶ He had been raised a Christian, but Tucker now experienced an emotional religious conversion typical of the evangelical religions of the period. This religious fervor would have a dramatic impact upon his career.

Living in India with his new wife Louisa and employed by the ICS, Frederick Tucker was still preoccupied with spreading the gospel. He worked to evangelize among his fellow ICS recruits, holding Bible studies and prayer meetings. As a government official he also took opportunities to preach to the Indians. But Frederick's unauthorized proselytization brought complaints to the desks of his superiors; among other rebukes, he was officially instructed as a representative of the government, not to promote religious education in government schools.⁴⁵⁷ Even as a young man Tucker showed signs of being

⁴⁵⁵ H. Williams, 18.

⁴⁵⁶ Mackenzie, 18.

⁴⁵⁷ H. Williams, 40.

a rogue element within the colonial power structure; ignoring his superiors in favor of his own personal, religiously-motivated agenda.

Meanwhile, Frederick took an interest in church-sponsored missionary activities in India. He questioned the methods and success of groups like the Church Missionary Society and the American Presbyterian Church.⁴⁵⁸ Tucker felt a strong dissatisfaction concerning the advancement of Christianity in India; the missionaries he read about simply were not making enough progress in gaining converts. Then he read about an organization back in England called the Salvation Army. Tucker was apparently captivated by stories of the Salvationists, finding inspiration in their active, aggressive approach to winning souls for Christ. He took a leave of absence from the ICS and returned to the metropole to seek out General Booth and his followers.

The story of Tucker's abandonment of a successful government career to join forces with a group of largely unpolished and lower-class militant evangelists is told by his Salvationist biographers with all the melodrama, idealism, and self-sacrifice befitting their nineteenth-century hero. In leaving the ICS, Tucker forfeited an annual salary of £500 and the eventual earning potential of ten times that amount.⁴⁵⁹ Tucker relinquished his comfortable living, social status, and family connections in favor of a life of impoverished service as a missionary. His family and friends begged him not to follow through with such a ridiculous act; when he aligned himself with the Salvationists his parents' disowned him. On the surface this story seems too sensationalized to be true—the family drama and Tucker's transition to social outcast have all the makings of a Victorian novel. Perhaps his career change did not embody quite the level of intensity as

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁵⁹ *Life Links: In the Warfare of Commissioner and Mrs. Booth-Tucker* (London: The Salvation Army IHQ, 1888), 75.

the record suggests. But whether Tucker's choice was made out of intense self-sacrifice or merely boredom with his predetermined career path, quitting the ICS to become a Salvation Army officer represented a clear break with his class and society. As General Booth apparently told young Tucker, "now, you are one apart—one of 'the dangerous classes.'"⁴⁶⁰

Frederick must have felt some confidence in the potential of Booth's organization. Excitedly volunteering for the SA during his leave of absence did not mean an immediate pursuit of Tucker's goal of more active missionizing in India. When Frederick insisted he wanted to resign from his government position and join Booth's group, the General made him wait six months, spending time in contemplation and more detailed examination of the Army's beliefs and activities.⁴⁶¹ Booth must have been excited by the prospect of a recruit of Tucker's caliber, but he showed excellent forethought in pushing Tucker to verify his commitment before bringing him on board. The building blocks were put in place for the creation of one of the Salvation Army's early heroes.

Evidently, Tucker's zeal and dedication did not wane during this probationary period. In 1881 Major Frederick Tucker became an officer in William Booth's Salvation Army. His first position was in the Legal Department of the SA's headquarters in London. Thus, he showed at least some willingness to follow Booth's leadership and work as directed within the confines of the organization. This element of discipline and hierarchy was an important part of the Salvation Army's structure; although Tucker had left behind his position within the traditional power of the state and aligned himself with a dissenting organization, the principles of authority and leadership remained.

⁴⁶⁰ Unsworth, 8.

⁴⁶¹ Mackenzie, 46.

Tucker's passion for developing a Salvation Army mission to India remained as well. He continued to research, plan, and discuss his ideas with the General. By 1882, "General Booth was won over."⁴⁶² Although Booth already favored expanding his organization, it seems clear that Tucker was the driving force behind the move to India. Harry Williams suggests that Booth was actually hesitant to pursue work in India out of financial concerns. He wanted to expand, but feared that the limited budget of the Salvation Army could not meet the demands of such overseas activity. "So Tucker had to convince the General that an Indian Army could live off the land."⁴⁶³ This depiction reveals two important elements of the SA's efforts in India. First, it was the product of Frederick Tucker's determined labors. Second, the principle of self-sufficiency and the idea of living simply among the locals were part of the Salvationists' plans from the very beginning. Once he convinced the General that India could be an economical mission field with great potential profits in terms of the number of souls won, Tucker began working in earnest to recruit officers and raise funds for his grand foray to bring Christianity to the people of India.

One of the earliest Salvation Army biographies of Frederick Tucker does raise a discrepancy in detailing the events which led to the Salvationists' arrival in India. According to *Life Links*, General Booth was actually convinced of the validity of the plan and ready to send a group to India, but *Tucker* insisted on remaining in England a little longer for training, believing that the missionaries should be fully educated by the Salvation Army's experience in England.

I advise my Cadets not to get impatient to be off into the Field, but to learn all that there is to be learnt, that they may be more fully equipped for the

⁴⁶² Ibid., 54.

⁴⁶³ H. Williams, 61.

War, when they in reality enter upon it. I have always believed Headquarters to be led by God in all they do for the reaching of the masses, and thus we in India have followed closely upon the wake of England in all its systems, plans and arrangements.⁴⁶⁴

Here Tucker articulated his devotion to the organization of the Salvation Army and his belief in the efficacy of their tactics. He worked hard to first understand Salvationist activities in the metropole to then apply them to India. Ultimately, all of Tucker's biographers identify his pivotal role in bringing the SA to India. But it makes sense that this booklet, published by Salvation Army Headquarters during General Booth's tenure, most likely with SA personnel as the intended audience, would take advantage of an opportunity to reinforce the leadership principles of the organization and its military model.

Once again, principles of discipline and hierarchy reminiscent of other imperial organizations such as the Indian Army and Indian Civil Service held a fundamental place in the Salvation Army. Thus, under Tucker's leadership they prepared to take ideologies, values, and systems from the metropole and implement them in the colonies. Having left the ICS behind, Tucker now represented the structure and authority of the SA.

The Arrival In India

Rumors that the Salvation Army was planning what they referred to as an 'invasion' of India provoked mixed reactions from the public, ranging from curiosity and excitement to anxiety and apprehension. European colonials felt not only a concern that the Salvationists would cause tension and hostility among the native Hindus and Muslims, but also that the SA officers' antics of shaking tambourines and singing in the

⁴⁶⁴ *Life Links*, 97-98.

streets would weaken the dignified image of strength and power the British had worked so hard to cultivate. Upon their arrival in Bombay, the *Times of India* stated:

We cannot judge of what the conduct of the Salvationists in India will be by what the conduct of some of the Salvationists in England has been, but if Christianity be made a laughing-stock by any of their doings here, or if the natives are offended by an unseemly exhibition of offensive though puerile bigotry, it is certainly the duty of the police here to interfere.⁴⁶⁵

Clearly, public speculation about the Salvationists' activities in India was based on their previous proselytizing in Britain. Many people viewed the Salvationists as low class and unseemly, and feared that their rowdy form of worship would make a mockery of Christianity.

The final group that set out from London to bring the Salvation Army to India was composed of six people. Those selected were Major Tucker and his wife Louisa, who despite her apparent misgivings had joined Frederick in his new career.

Accompanying the couple were Captain Henry Bullard, Lieutenant Arthur Norman, Lieutenant Mary Thompson, and Sister Jennings. Thus the initial detachment included an equal number of men and women—and single women at that. By this period it was not particularly unusual for women to travel to the colonies, however the Salvation Army was unique in the leadership roles it allowed women to take, and thus in the vehicle it provided for *single* women to travel to India.

In August 1882 the group embarked upon a three-week voyage to India via the steamship *Ancona*. Unwilling to waste any moment, they spent the journey holding meetings on board the ship, studying the Bible, and learning Urdu from Major Tucker. From the outset of their endeavors, the development of native language skills was an

⁴⁶⁵ “The Salvation Army commenced operations in Bombay yesterday,” *Times of India*, 21 September 1882, p. 2.

important part of the Salvationists' efforts. Unfortunately, Sister Jennings fell ill during the trip, and when the boat docked at Port Said, she was forced to leave the group and return to England with the assistance of Mrs. Tucker.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, the Salvation Army force which, in keeping with the military metaphor, first 'invaded' India was comprised solely of Tucker, two other men, and one woman. This little band hardly seemed likely to pose a threat to the security of the Raj.

As the Salvationists initiated their efforts to bring the 'Good News' to India, General William Booth took the time to make his intentions known. In August 1882, he sent a letter to the *Bombay Guardian* detailing the Salvation Army's plan of attack in India, and asking for public support for their endeavors. He wrote:

My officers will always do their utmost to work harmoniously with Government. In England we have now succeeded in winning the cordial support and sympathy of nearly every class. . . . In most of the towns where we have established stations we have the cordial support and sympathy of both Magistrates and Police, who testify to the wonderful reclamation of the vilest characters and to the moral reformation of the worst of localities.⁴⁶⁷

Booth devoted a large portion of his letter to emphasizing the Salvationists' roles as good citizens; highlighting the praise and respect they earned from law-enforcement officials at home in the metropole. While Booth was clearly hopeful for success in India, he must have anticipated some difficulties—perhaps based on the early persecution faced by Salvationists in England—and thus felt it necessary to issue this preemptive defense.

Booth's letter continued with a plea, if not for overt public support, than at least for neutrality. "All we ask is fair play in India. Do not condemn us unheard and unseen.

⁴⁶⁶H. Williams, 70.

⁴⁶⁷ Quoted in India Office Records, "Appendix A Entry No. 2292 of the Abstract of Proceedings for October 1882," *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/1981*, July to Dec. 1882.

Among the 250 millions of India there is surely room for such a work as ours.”⁴⁶⁸ In this statement, Booth addressed two potential problems for the Salvationists in India—public criticism and competition with other missionary groups. Despite his recognition of these likely concerns, however, Booth was still optimistic that there was a place for the Salvation Army in India. Booth’s attempt to avoid potential tensions with this letter of introduction reveals both savviness and confidence on the part of the General. He acknowledged and addressed the difficulties the Salvationists could expect, while at the same time maintaining a clear belief in his own mission. Booth never wavered in his conviction that the Salvationists’ agenda was not only right and proper, but destined to succeed.

This letter to the *Bombay Guardian* was significant not only in what it revealed about Booth and his organization, but in how colonial authorities reacted to the publication. The text of Booth’s missive was included in the official government documents of the Bombay Police. Furthermore, a police commissioner circulated a memorandum suggesting: “Mr. Booth’s letter published in the *Bombay Guardian* of 9th September last should be copied in print and sent to the Commissioners for information, as it contains a full statement of the instructions with which the Salvation Army have come out.”⁴⁶⁹ The Bombay authorities were obviously deeply concerned about the Salvationists’ pending ‘invasion.’ They felt it necessary that all local police commissioners be well-informed on the nature and intentions of this group who threatened to disturb the Pax Britannica.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ India Office Records, “Memorandum from the Commissioner, C.D.,” *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/1981*, 7 October 1882, No. 6263.

In fact, the copy of Booth's letter and relevant police correspondence is included in the public record as a response to an earlier police inquiry. When colonial authorities heard that the Salvation Army was coming to India, discussion, questioning, and strategizing began. A resolution dated 19 September 1882 (coincidentally, the day the first Salvationists actually arrived in Bombay) stated:

The Governor in Council has no information in regard to the proposed time or place of their arrival in India, or to their plan of operations, and he does not desire to express any anticipation that they will overpass the legal limits within which ordinary missionary enterprise is peacefully prosecuted in this country.⁴⁷⁰

Interestingly, this document takes great care not to make assumptions about the Salvationists or to preemptively accuse them of impropriety. And yet, the mere existence of this document is evidence of colonial officials' preconceived notions and concerns about the Salvation Army. Such fears on the part of the local authorities are confirmed as the text continues:

At the same time it is right that their intention should from the first be carefully watched by those charged with the maintenance of the peace as any such proceeding as this religious body pursue in the United Kingdom would be very offensive to the nations of India, if directed against their religion.⁴⁷¹

Again, reference was made to the Salvationists' activities in the metropole. The police feared that strategies employed in England would be transferred to India with disastrous results; great care was taken to avoid offending the religious sensibilities of Indians lest another uprising like the Sepoy Mutiny occur.

Furthermore, police correspondence on this matter included instructions for how the Salvationists were to be treated. Police memos indicated that if SA personnel were to

⁴⁷⁰ India Office Records, "Resolution," *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/1981*, 19 September 1882, No. 5793.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*

be addressed by the authorities, “the self-assumed titles of the “Salvation Army” should not be recognized.”⁴⁷² The *real* officers of the colonial regime were taking steps to disassociate themselves from these upstarts, thereby de-legitimizing the authority of the Salvationists, and undercutting the foundation of their organization.

When news of the Salvation Army’s imminent ‘invasion’ reached India, the police were not the only ones concerned. Many other members of the public feared these rabble-rousers would disturb the peace and cause riots among the natives. A correspondent for the *Times* wrote from Calcutta:

There is considerable danger that these objective and aggressive religious demonstrations may excite native sensibilities and cause disturbances. The recent riots at Salem, and the rancorous feeling existing there, are the best evidence of the acute condition of native sensitiveness on all questions affecting religious difference.⁴⁷³

Clearly, even in 1882 the memories of the Sepoy Mutiny still had a major impact on the Raj. The British were desperately afraid of further rebellion, and as such, took great pains to avoid exacerbating any religious tensions.

Somewhat ironically, given their fears, the waiting crowds actually appeared disappointed by the understated nature of the Salvation Army’s arrival in India. The people of Bombay had anticipated a large ‘invasion,’ a veritable army come to convert India. When only four people disembarked from the ship on September 19, 1882 the crowd was quite surprised. “They had expected a thousand at least!”⁴⁷⁴ And yet, colonial authorities seemed just as concerned with this tiny band of missionaries as they would have a much larger group. As Tucker later recalled, “the effect produced on the

⁴⁷² India Office Records, “Letter from the Commissioner of Police Bombay,” *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/1981*, 8 November 1882, No. 6990.

⁴⁷³ Quoted in Mackenzie, 62.

⁴⁷⁴ Unsworth, 9.

whole of India could hardly have been exceeded had it been equal in numbers to the British force at Tel el Kabir.”⁴⁷⁵ Once again, he compared his band of followers to imperial forces.

Despite their limited numbers, the first Salvationists in India did manage to draw attention to themselves, provoking the colonial authorities in the process. Even as they disembarked from the ship, the small group displayed some Salvationist fanfare. Tucker lead the way with a SA flag, Bullard played a cornet, Norman a drum, and Mary Thompson her tambourine.⁴⁷⁶ The Salvationists wasted no opportunity, and were demonstrably eager to begin their proselytization. On the day immediately following their arrival, the group was out on the street for a procession and open-air meeting. Tucker had acquired some carts for this demonstration which he referred to as ‘war chariots.’ Evidently, their use and the subsequent meeting caused quite a stir. He reported a crowd of an estimated 20,000 people.⁴⁷⁷

From the very beginning Frederick Tucker and his colleagues were extremely motivated and pursued their activities with diligence. A great deal of planning had supported this endeavor, both before they left England and after they disembarked in India. They arrived armed with musical instruments, and a large tent in which they planned to hold their meetings. Their first parade and religious service were advertised in the local newspapers.⁴⁷⁸ The Salvationists even enlisted the aid of other Christian missionaries in Bombay to help them carry out this plan; they were met at the docks in Bombay by Reverends Fox, Northrup, and Gladwyn of the Methodist Episcopal

⁴⁷⁵ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj: or Forty Years with the Salvation Army in India and Ceylon* (London: Marshall Bros., Ltd., 1923), 12.

⁴⁷⁶ H. Williams, 72.

⁴⁷⁷ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 14.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Church.⁴⁷⁹ This early cooperation seems particularly significant given later complaints about the SA from other missionary groups. Perhaps this instance is yet another example of the Salvationists' focus and their subsequent utilization of any available means to advance their work. The willingness of other missionaries to participate in this event might also indicate some level of popular support for the Salvation Army.

According to Tucker the local police had actually given their consent to the Salvation Army's first large open-air meeting in Bombay.⁴⁸⁰ It is unclear, however, whether the authorities ever approved of the Salvationists' activities. If they did, they certainly changed their minds and cracked down on Tucker and his compatriots rather quickly. The same day of their first open-air, Tucker appeared before a police commissioner who informed him that open-air processions were not allowed. However, Tucker was apparently unimpressed by the police threats of arrest. He cleverly referred to the religious toleration upheld throughout the Empire as justification for their actions. The Salvationists argued: "Mohammedans and Hindus held musical processions without let or hindrance, playing their tom-toms at will, and they as Christians claimed the same right."⁴⁸¹

So, even after police warnings, Lt. Norman participated in the outdoor procession by playing his cornet. And he was promptly arrested by the local police and locked up with a drunken European. Lt. Norman recalled that "The jailer was very kind; sent his servant for iced lemonade, and sat and talked to me till bedtime."⁴⁸² Such hospitality on the part of the jailer does suggest that not all colonial authorities were opposed to the

⁴⁷⁹ "The Salvation Army," *Times of India*, 20 September 1882, p. 3.

⁴⁸⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 13.

⁴⁸¹ Mackenzie, 63.

⁴⁸² Elizabeth Swift-Brengle, *Drum Taps* (London: The Salvation Army, 1891), 100.

activities of the Salvationists; that even within the police they may have had some loyal supporters. The next morning, Lt. Norman and his drunk and disorderly cellmate appeared before the local magistrate. The drunk was fined only one rupee, while Norman was fined twenty for disturbing the peace.⁴⁸³ This discrepancy in punishments certainly outraged the Salvationists. But they did have some sympathizers; according to Norman, some unidentified person paid his fine for him.⁴⁸⁴

There were others, however, who felt the rowdy Salvationist deserved his punishment. The *Times of India* wrote: “The arrest will be warmly approved by Europeans as well as natives.”⁴⁸⁵ The local publication even accused the Salvationists of purposely flouting the law to gain publicity: “Perhaps the blowing of the trumpet yesterday, knowing that it was forbidden, was a method adopted for getting newspaper attention.”⁴⁸⁶ The article painted Lt. Norman as an opportunist, stating, “He was offered bail, but preferred a cheap and easy martyrdom and the best of all possible advertisements.”⁴⁸⁷ Whether the SA officer actually intended to have himself arrested is unclear, but it is true that the Salvationists took advantage of any and all publicity. Although the *Times of India* recognized this tactic, the paper continued to print articles on the new missionaries, thereby ensuring the success of the Salvationists in this regard.

Thus Lt. Norman seemed to have survived, and perhaps even benefited from, his first night in an Indian jail. But this was only the beginning of the Salvationists’ confrontations with colonial authorities. Sir James Ferguson, Governor of Bombay, decided to place further restrictions upon the Salvation Army. Tucker later recalled:

⁴⁸³ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 14.

⁴⁸⁴ Swift-Brengle, 100.

⁴⁸⁵ “The Salvation Army commenced operations in Bombay yesterday.”

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Not only was music forbidden, but our Flag was taken away, on the pretext that it might arouse fanatical feelings, and that our motto “Blood and Fire” would probably be misunderstood. We were prohibited even from singing as we marched, and instructions were given that if we refused to comply, we were to be ordered to disperse, and in case of a refusal to do so, we were to be arrested and prosecuted for ‘taking part in an unlawful assembly, which was likely to lead to a breach of the peace.’⁴⁸⁸

According to this account, the Salvationists’ militaristic style and symbols actually seemed to work against them. The items which most clearly paralleled those of a real army, namely the flag and motto, were judged to be most threatening to the peace. Colonial authorities were concerned that the Salvation Army would cause trouble and make the British look foolish, thereby upsetting the stability of the Raj.

Although the local government seemed determined to limit the activities of the Salvationists, Tucker and his group seemed equally determined to ignore the restrictions of the government. Tucker, Norman, and Ms. Thompson led another march complete with the flag and musical instruments and were promptly arrested. According to Salvationist historian Solveig Smith, the altercation included a police commissioner shouting, “In the name of Her Majesty, Queen of England and Empress of India, I order you to disperse.” To which Tucker promptly replied, “In the name of His Majesty, King of kings and Lord of lords, I command you to stand aside.”⁴⁸⁹ While there is no evidence as to the veracity of these words, they certainly fit with the portrait of Tucker as a dramatic hero which the Salvationists had begun to construct even then. As demonstrated by this quotation, whether it was real or simply the product of nearly a century of SA lore, the Salvationists clearly drew the battle lines between their ‘king’ and British imperial authorities, illustrating their willingness to directly challenge colonial power.

⁴⁸⁸ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 14.

⁴⁸⁹ S. Smith, 6.

This arrest brought the three missionaries before another local magistrate who imposed a fine of 100 rupees. When the Salvationists refused to pay, he ordered that their belongings be sold to cover the expense. Apparently a sympathetic police officer then took pity on them, purchasing the items to pay their fine, but then returning the property to the missionaries.⁴⁹⁰ If this story is true, it only serves to further complicate the relationship between the Salvation Army and the authorities. The Salvationists clearly acted in defiance of government restrictions and, furthermore, refused to accept the prescribed punishment, placing them in direct opposition to colonial rule. And yet, even within the imperial hierarchy they appear to have had sympathizers. If they were able to procure assistance from local police while directly violating the law, perhaps even this small group of missionaries was indeed a threat to colonial strength.

Further clouding the issue is the fact that these early conflicts involved not only European authorities, but also native-born Indian personnel. In fact, the magistrate who heard the case mentioned above and levied the 100-rupee fine was a Parsi man named Mr. Dosabhoj Framjee.⁴⁹¹ Perhaps as a member of an Indian religious group, he felt particularly offended by the Salvationists' overt proselytizing. More likely, he was following the British policy of avoiding religious uprisings. According to the *Times of India* he argued: "I say that if the Salvation Army wish to reach the hearts of the people they must avoid noisy demonstrations and, like their great Master, try to bring people to God in all meekness and simplicity."⁴⁹² Even though Framjee himself was a colonial subject of the British, his above statement espoused the imperial concern with keeping the peace and avoiding disturbances. Thus, Framjee represents the local collaboration

⁴⁹⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 15.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁹² "The Police Courts: The Salvation Army Case," *Times of India*, 22 September 1882, p. 3.

which was vital to the success of the Raj; in this case, his condemnation of the Salvation Army also helped to justify the British authorities' claim that the Salvationists' work was upsetting to Indian religious groups.

The Salvationists contended that their proselytizing was not designed to distress anyone or create social turmoil. Tucker was quoted in the *Times of India* as saying: "We never do anything to wound the religious feeling of anybody."⁴⁹³ But their music and open-air meetings were designed to draw attention to themselves, and there were instances in which such activities led the Salvationists into confrontations. In October 1882 the *Pall Mall Gazette* included a report from Bombay that: "The excitement and bad feeling induced by the peculiarly aggressive form of preaching practiced by the Salvationists culminated in a riot on Sunday last."⁴⁹⁴ The Salvation Army tent was reportedly attacked and their personnel pelted with stones by members of a largely Muslim crowd. The fact that the incident received mention in a London paper suggests that the Salvationists' presence in India was indeed incendiary. But while some people found the Salvationists' activities troubling, others—both European and Indian—supported their right to freely practice their religion. The above-mentioned article in the *Pall Mall Gazette* concluded with a reference to a "presentation to the Viceroy, protesting against the conduct of the Bombay Executive in the prosecution of the Salvationists."⁴⁹⁵ In addition no fewer than twenty vernacular newspapers in India wrote articles favorable to the SA.⁴⁹⁶ For example, the *Indu Prakash* accused the magistrate Mr. Framjee of "petulance and hasty rudeness," and criticized the "unnecessarily sensational things said

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ "The Salvation Army in India," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 9 October 1882, p. 6.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ S. Smith, 7.

of the Salvationists by some of their own countrymen.”⁴⁹⁷ Such divided opinion even among the colonized Indian people highlights the complexity of the situation; the activities of the Salvation Army in India would continue to provoke a variety of reactions.

Tucker’s memoir includes the text of a telegram sent to him from Babu Keshab Chandar Sen, leader of a Hindu organization called the Brahmo Samaj. He wrote:

One of the largest meetings ever convened in Calcutta was held in the Town Hall this evening, to protest against the unjust treatment of the Salvationists in Bombay. Every seat was occupied two hours before the time of the meeting. Addresses were delivered by the representatives of various religions and classes, and resolutions were adopted condemning the actions of the authorities, and sympathizing with those unjustly prosecuted. A memorial to the Viceroy was adopted, asking for religious neutrality and equal protection to all. Great enthusiasm prevailed.⁴⁹⁸

According to this text, the Salvation Army received sizeable and dramatic support from the Indian people. The description of this meeting hardly fits with the picture of tense Hindus ready to revolt if Christian missionaries acted too aggressively toward them. By placing themselves in opposition to colonial authorities, the Salvationists now found themselves aligned with Indians, despite their different religions. In this manner, the SA—a group completely antithetical to the concept of religious neutrality—became the focus of a demonstration in favor of “equal protection.” Naturally, there must have been other Indian groups who were in fact quite eager to send the Salvationists home. But if even a few Indians defended the rights of the Salvation Army to freely practice their religion against the colonial authorities, the presence of the Salvationists in Bombay was indeed threatening. To some extent, the activities of the SA provided a forum for Indian protest against imperial rule.

⁴⁹⁷ Quoted in “The Salvation Army,” *Times of India*, 27 September 1882, p. 3.

⁴⁹⁸ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 15.

The observations of British traveler G.C. Dyson reinforce Tucker's claim of receiving support from local Hindus. He reported, "I must tell you how much impressed I have been by finding how universally respected the missionaries in general are by all classes of the Indian people."⁴⁹⁹ Dyson found his preconceived notions that missionaries inevitably caused trouble dispelled by visiting India. In fact, he discovered that the Indians could be more supportive of the missionaries than their British countrymen. He recalled: "Not long after I arrived in India I heard an English officer speak against missionaries, and was surprised to hear a Brahmin gentleman take up their defense."⁵⁰⁰ This evidence is anecdotal, but his surprise does suggest that perhaps the Indians were not quite as upset by the presence of missionaries as the colonial government believed. The Salvationists happily publicized any support they received from local Hindu and Muslim leaders. Demonstrating that these groups were not upset by the Salvation Army's proselytizing would certainly have helped the officers' claims that they were not disturbing the peace. In describing the public sympathy offered upon the occasion of the early arrests in Bombay, SA Commissioner Railton actually wrote: "For the first time Hindoos and Mohammedans were united in defending the faithful followers of Jesus Christ."⁵⁰¹ Thus, in Railton's mind the issue of the Salvation Army's right to freely practice their religion became a focal point for unifying Indian public opinion. The image of such a united defense may be a bit exaggerated, but it does seem clear that even if the Salvationists did not cause disturbances with their processions, they certainly stirred up controversy and public debate, both of which threatened colonial officials.

⁴⁹⁹ "Among the Missionaries, G.C. Dyson, 1913," in *Travellers' India*, H.K. Kaul, ed. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 58.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁵⁰¹ Commissioner Railton, "The Origin of Our Work in India," in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 8.

And so, the conflict with the local authorities continued, and another arrest took place on 20 October 1882; Mrs. Tucker finally arrived in India after having escorted the ill Sister Jennings back to England, only to discover that her husband was in jail. This time *six* Salvationists were charged. The SA had only been on the ground in India for a month, but already the original band of four had increased their numbers with the addition of new recruits such as the Gladwins, a Methodist couple who joined the SA and were given the rank of Captains.⁵⁰² Such rapid recruitment only lent credence to British government fears that the Salvationists would be a disruptive force in India, but it also indicated the potential staying power of the organization. And once again, a stint in jail failed to quell the zeal of the Salvation Army missionaries.

This time Tucker drew upon his legal background to defend himself and the other accused persons. Tucker was evidently quite articulate and persuasive. He argued first that the Salvationists were unfairly charged, as the particular section of the Indian Penal Code cited referred to “persons likely to cause a disturbance,” and there was no likelihood of disturbance as by this time people were quite familiar with the activities of the SA.⁵⁰³ Tucker proved to be still more effective in citing the Queen’s 1858 proclamation of religious neutrality and demanding that the Salvation Army be protected under that law.⁵⁰⁴ Here he used imperial policy against the colonial authorities to suit his purposes, focusing more on the letter of the law than its spirit which was aimed at protecting Hindus and Muslims from Christian missionaries. His impassioned argument included the following: “For ourselves we do not wish to act in any way contrary to the orders of the Government! Far from it! But we cannot consent to be robbed of our legal

⁵⁰² S. Smith, 5.

⁵⁰³ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 17, 20.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

rights in this manner.”⁵⁰⁵ Perhaps Tucker did not *wish* to act contrary to the instructions of the authorities, but he was certainly *willing* to do so.

Nevertheless, something in his argument must have convinced the magistrate, a Mr. Webb. Within a week, the Salvationists were dismissed with merely a warning to comply with police instructions in the future.⁵⁰⁶ There is no clear indication in the historical record as to why the judge made this decision. The Salvationists would have us believe that it was due partially to the rightness of their cause and partially to the brilliance and eloquence of Major Tucker. Tucker’s memoirs also draw attention to the support the accused received from the public including local newspapers. All of this may have factored in the magistrate’s decision, he may have even sympathized with the Salvationists, or he may simply have wanted to avoid prolonging the tension of the situation. But while he did grant them a reprieve, this decision was not the end of the clash between the Salvation Army and the British government in India.

An even larger and more publicized set of arrests came on the 18th of February 1883. By this point the Salvationists had spent several months in India, traveling around, holding meetings, and attracting new recruits. Now a group of four officers including Tucker and 18 soldiers were arrested for disturbing the peace in Bombay and once again brought before the magistrate Mr. Dosabhoy Framjee.⁵⁰⁷ This time, however, they did not rely solely on Tucker to mount their legal defense; Mr. T. Lewis Ingram, an English barrister traveled to Bombay and offered to defend the prisoners free of charge. Meanwhile, Tucker wasted no time in calling public attention to their plight and using the prosecution to promote the work of the Salvation Army. The trial was scheduled for

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 22.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., 22.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 27.

February 23, and a February 21 issue of the *Indian War Cry* included a facetious announcement for the event which read: “Look out! Grand Hallelujah Free and Easy On Friday, 23rd Feb., 1883, at 11:30 a.m. By Special Invitation of the Commissioner of Police.”⁵⁰⁸ Tucker actually delighted in the circumstances of his arrest; it not only proved that the Salvationists were truly within the throes of a war, but it also drew attention and sympathy to their cause.

Meanwhile, the India Office Records from this period reveal the difficulties that the Salvationists were causing the local police and courts. The Bombay Judicial Proceedings for the first half of 1883 contain a number of police reports and correspondence with regard to their responsibilities and authority vis à vis the Salvation Army. A letter from the police commissioner dated 8 February 1883 states that it is absolutely necessary that if the Salvation Army visits a place, “. . . the District Magistrates and the Police should know what action [the] Government desires them to take.”⁵⁰⁹ The Salvationists had become a persistent problem for the authorities, one which required planning and a clear response.

There seems to still have been some debate, however, with regard to exactly what power the police held and what reaction to the Salvationists’ activities was appropriate. A 24 February 1883 report by an official with the title Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, a position which involved oversight of colonial courts, analyzed the various local laws which might be applied to the Salvationists. For example, he cited Section 27 of the Bombay District Police Act, 1867, which authorized the police to “direct, as occasion requires, the conduct of all assemblies and processions on the public roads, or in the

⁵⁰⁸ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 27.

⁵⁰⁹ India Office Records, “Letter from the Commissioner, C.D.,” *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/2177*, 8 February 1883, No. 1684.

public streets or thoroughfares, and to prescribe routes by which, and the times at which such processions may pass.”⁵¹⁰ The issue of processions was certainly relevant to a discussion of the Salvationists’ activities.

But even so, the Remembrancer remained unsure whether it could be applied to the SA directly. He wrote:

I do not think this would be held to justify the stopping of the use of music or singing absolutely; but it would in my opinion justify it temporarily, or in an extreme instance, even altogether, if under certain circumstances, or in certain quarters, the Superintendent of Police or his Assistant had reason to think that a breach of the peace might otherwise occur or that he and his men could not otherwise keep order or prevent an obstruction which it is their duty to keep and to prevent under Section 28 of the Act. The last sentence of Section 27 concerning the regulation of the use of music applies only to occasions of festivals and ceremonies *and* not to such occasions as those of the marches of members of the Salvation Army.⁵¹¹

While he does identify some potential usage of this law to halt the SA, he seems to be reaching for a portion of the law to use against them. Twice in this passage he was forced to acknowledge that Indian law did not fully justify stopping the music of the Salvationists.

The above law, along with several others outlined in his report, relied heavily on the premise that if the police or magistrates had “reason to think” the peace would be disturbed, they had the legal power to act on that concern. And so, based on their perceptions, the authorities had made many arrests during the months following the Salvationists’ arrival in 1882, including this large group in February 1883. But even with their increasingly limited personnel, the Salvationists managed to continue their

⁵¹⁰ India Office Records, “Report by the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs,” *Bombay Judicial Proceedings P/2177*, 24 February 1883, No. 245.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*

missionary efforts. Captain Henry Bullard was ordered to avoid arrest, so that he would be able to carry on with the meetings while others were in jail.⁵¹²

The most important result of the trial of February 1883, or what Tucker called the “Grand Hallelujah Free and Easy,” was the growing attention received by the Salvation Army in India. Despite the work of their lawyer Mr. Ingram, who argued that police orders to suppress the Salvationists were illegal, Tucker and three of his colleagues were still found guilty. It is noteworthy that the rest of the larger group originally charged were released, apparently on the grounds that they were merely following Tucker’s orders.⁵¹³ This mitigating circumstance is one most often applied in military settings, therefore its use in this context suggests identification of Tucker as a military leader on the part of the magistrate; it seems that in this instance he was quite literally viewed as a major in the army.

Tucker and the remaining defendants refused to apologize for their actions, and were sentenced accordingly by the court. Tucker, as the ring-leader, was given a month in jail. The three other gentlemen were issued fines of 25 rupees each; they refused to pay and were then sentenced to one week each in jail instead.⁵¹⁴ Although, officially speaking, this trial may have resulted in a loss for the Salvation Army, the organization once again did its best to promote it as a victory. The refusal to cease their processions or pay their fines enabled the Salvationists to promote themselves as prisoners of conscience, fighting nobly for their cause. Two weeks into his jail term Tucker was again brought before the magistrate with an opportunity for early release if he agreed not to break this law again. Tucker refused, reportedly replying: “My lord, if I had a rope

⁵¹² Catherine Sturgess, *This Quiet Man* (London: Salvationist Publishing & Supplies, 1944), 8.

⁵¹³ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 28.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

around my neck, and were going to be hanged the next minute, I would not make such a promise.”⁵¹⁵ And so, Tucker served out the remainder of his sentence, gallantly playing the role of religious martyr. He emerged from prison greeted by the cheers of his followers. Such a display must have been infuriating to colonial authorities.

Meanwhile, the Salvation Army propaganda and public relations machine continued to work, announcing his plight and working to gain public support in the face of such persecution. According to F.A. Mackenzie, the Salvation Army called upon influential friends in the government at home in England to put pressure upon colonial officials, “until even the mighty Governor of the Province was made to feel that he was treading on dangerous ground.”⁵¹⁶ There is no record of such communication, although Captain Henry Bullard also recalled an incident shortly thereafter in which he was arrested, but the magistrate refused to press charges. Bullard wrote of this event in his memoirs, “We learned later that the authorities in Britain had urged those responsible to cease the prosecution of Salvationists.”⁵¹⁷ Perhaps the magistrate’s decision to dismiss the case was indeed based on pressure from his superiors, or perhaps from concern over public sentiment and the numerous newspaper articles supporting the Salvationists, or simply due to his personal belief that the SA missionaries had the right to hold their marches. Most likely the colonial authorities wanted to limit the Salvationists’ opportunities for drawing attention to themselves as martyred Christians.

There did appear to be some dissent within the ranks of the colonial government concerning the rights of the Salvation Army. Certain members of the police, such as the benefactor who purchased the Salvationists’ goods to secure their release in September

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., 31.

⁵¹⁶ Mackenzie, 79.

⁵¹⁷ Henry Bullard, *A Missionary’s Memories* (London: Salvationist Publishing & Supplies, 1946), 13.

1882 or the magistrate who refused to press charges against Bullard, may have actually sympathized with the missionaries. The February 1883 report of the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs cites “the remarks of Major Babington, District Superintendent of Police, Poona, in which he proposes to treat the Salvationists like any other processionists such as Mahomedan or Hindu.”⁵¹⁸ In this document Major Babington is called to the attention of his superiors for his apparent weakness in dealing with the Salvationists. This report disagrees with his equal treatment of the three religions, stating: “There is this distinction apparent—that the processions of the latter are not aggressive or they would not be allowed, whereas the processions of the Salvationists are decidedly and professedly so.”⁵¹⁹ Thus, although the Salvationists began to make limited progress toward a more friendly relationship with the colonial authorities, they were still largely characterized as “aggressive.”

As such, the prosecutions continued. In April 1883, shortly after Tucker’s release from prison, another 10 Salvationists were arrested.⁵²⁰ By this point, however, there did seem to be some desire on the part of the authorities to finally settle this issue and end the repeated (and much publicized) trials. The magistrate Mr. Cooper and the Commissioner of Police Mr. Souter, asked to meet ahead of time with Tucker, again serving as defense counsel, in hopes of creating a settlement. Here we see Tucker in a unique position for a religious missionary. He actually functioned as a legal representative, negotiating with the government. Working in this capacity, Tucker and the police were able to come to a compromise. The Salvation Army agreed not to hold processions with singing in the Muslim district of Bombay, provided that they were allowed to hold their processions in

⁵¹⁸ India Office Records, “Report by the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs.”

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 33.

non-Muslim areas, “unless some special emergency should arise.”⁵²¹ This stipulation of avoiding the Muslim neighborhoods was likely a response to the earlier anti-Salvationist riot reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. In a sense, by agreeing to this restriction, the Salvationists were admitting that their presence could cause a violent disturbance. At the same time, however, it was in the Salvationists’ best interest to make such a deal with the magistrate; the accused missionaries were acquitted, and in so doing many of the Salvation Army’s legal troubles were brought to a close.

It seems that colonial authorities had come to the realization that the only way to deal with the Salvationists was compromise. The organization was adamant in its purpose and goal, not easily dissuaded by the fines or jail time meted out by local magistrates. If anything, the Salvation Army grew stronger in the face of persecution, using the trials and imprisonments as propaganda to promote themselves as religious martyrs and champions of free speech. They cleverly defended themselves using the Queen’s Proclamation of 1858, demanding the same rights as local Hindus and Muslims, rights which colonial authorities could not easily deny. Meanwhile, throughout all the arrests and trials the Salvationists continued to develop their ministry in India, rapidly gaining converts and public support. Clearly, they had no intention of abandoning their ‘invasion’ of the subcontinent. So, unless colonial authorities were willing to continue with a pattern of public disturbances and potentially unpopular trials it made sense to compromise with the Salvationists. In this case it seemed clear that effectively negotiating with the missionaries would really be the best path to maintaining peace within the Empire, and that was the ultimate goal of British authorities. The police had been so hostile toward the Salvationists’ aggressive proselytizing out of fear that the

⁵²¹ Ibid., 34.

missionaries would provoke uprisings; in England the denomination already had a reputation for challenging religious conventions. Compromise with the Salvation Army now seemed necessary to prevent further threats to the peace of the Raj.

The Continuing Challenges of the Indian Mission Field

Thus, the Salvationists settled into their work India, traveling throughout the countryside setting up missions and gaining converts. Although many of their legal troubles had abated, the missionaries continued to be met by a number of difficulties. First, the foreign environment often posed a challenge. One officer recalled, “in India you are, maybe, fifteen hundred miles from headquarters, and have the climate to fight and the language to learn.”⁵²² Life for the Salvationists in India could be quite isolated, and of necessity, self-reliant. The European missionaries not only had to adjust to the vast scope of the country, but were also forced to handle the potentially life-threatening storms, disease, heat, and famines that were part of the south Asian climate. For example, officers might work hard to erect a hut for their use, only to have it washed out, leaving them forced to rebuild. Cholera was a frequent threat; one which claimed the lives of many, including Louisa Tucker, Frederick’s first wife in 1887. She fell ill while he was away campaigning in Ceylon, and by the time he returned to Bombay she had died and been buried.⁵²³

Any missionary work undertaken in the challenging environment of India often demanded great personal sacrifices from the Europeans. Illness, death, and loss on the part of the missionaries and their families were frequent occurrences. For example, the

⁵²²Swift-Brengle, 104.

⁵²³H. Williams, 99.

first volume in 1896 of the Salvation Army periodical *India's Cry* (modeled after the *War Cry* in London) included a selection entitled "Promotion to heaven of the Commissioner's Baby," offering condolences to the Booth-Tuckers' on the death of their daughter Kristina from dysentery.⁵²⁴ Such reports of personal tragedy were present throughout the run of *India's Cry*. In a September 1900 printing, under the heading "War Notes," there was a tribute to those who had recently died of cholera.⁵²⁵ The choice of title for this column reinforces the Salvationists' belief that these losses were in fact casualties of war; that those who suffered from such diseases gave their life to a noble cause.

As the Salvationists worked to create viable missions in the face of storms and disease, their difficulties were further compounded by their limited resources. Each officer was given a very small weekly allowance from headquarters, but this payment was not guaranteed and they were expected to make their corps self-sufficient.⁵²⁶ Facilities were often completely lacking or in poor repair. One new officer had to deal with a small house composed of three mud walls and a fourth made of sticks, one of which was also home to a nest of deadly cobra snakes. In addition, there were several large holes in the roof. This pathetic building eventually collapsed completely and the officer had to be dragged out from the ruins.⁵²⁷

Besides natural dangers and financial hardships, the Salvationists also faced man-made sabotage. Just as British authorities feared, many Indians were in fact resentful of the missionaries' presence; they did not want a group of Europeans imposing their

⁵²⁴ "Promotion to Heaven of the Commissioner's Baby," *India's Cry*, April 1896, 4.

⁵²⁵ "War Notes," *India's Cry*, September 1900, 4.

⁵²⁶ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 93.

⁵²⁷ Das, 68.

teachings and practices upon them. For example, personnel in Madras had several barracks vandalized and/or burnt down by some local residents.⁵²⁸ A female officer named Catherine Bannister was the victim of physical violence while leading one of her first open-air meetings in Bombay. Someone in the crowd threw a rock which struck her in the head, causing blood to run down her face.⁵²⁹ Another early missionary named Captain William Stevens was attacked, beaten, and left for dead on the side of a road. He managed to crawl to the village hall, but his attackers pursued him. Although he escaped out a window, his assailants vandalized the facility.⁵³⁰ Both male and female officers were subject to such violent harassments, but the same had been true of Salvationists back in England. While Indian attackers may have been motivated by an anti-foreigner impulse reminiscent of the Mutiny, their exploits mirrored the activities of Skeleton Armies in England who simply disliked the tactics and style of the SA.

Even after the high-profile trials of the early days subsided, new converts in India often faced harassment and persecution from the local authorities. For example, in a village in Gujarat several new SA soldiers were detained by local authorities who “only released them on their giving security not to have any dealings with us [the Salvationists] nor attend our meetings nor give us food.”⁵³¹ Likewise, people in this village were fined simply for having anything to do with the Salvation Army.

The Salvationists’ efforts to win souls were further hampered by the fact that in addition to such pressure from officials, Indian converts also often faced criticism,

⁵²⁸ *A Year’s Advance: Being the Eleventh Annual Report of the Salvation Army in India and Ceylon, 1892-93* (Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1893), 27.

⁵²⁹ *The Salvation Army Miniature Biographies No. 10 Catherine Bannister: Given for India* (London: Salvationist Publishing & Supplies, Ltd., 1930), 16.

⁵³⁰ Narayana Muthiah, *Triumphs of the Cross in Travancore* (Great Britain: The Campfield Press, St. Albans, 1946?), 9.

⁵³¹ *A Year’s Advance*, 16.

shunning, and bullying from family and friends. Journalist Harold Begbie recounted the story of a convert from a Brahman family, who ran away to join the Salvation Army and was promptly kidnapped back by his relatives.⁵³² A young man from Ceylon named Arnolis Weeresoriye who eventually became a Colonel in the SA, had an uncle who converted to Christianity and was subsequently beaten to death.⁵³³ Similarly, a young Indian woman named Jivee became a Christian against her husband's wishes and was severely punished for it. "He beat her cruelly, and in every way he could invent he tormented her, in the hope of turning her again to the religion of her people. The neighbors also remonstrated with her."⁵³⁴ For Jivee and her fellow Salvationists, this story had a happy ending in that her husband eventually converted as well, but obviously, that was not always the case. For Indian women in particular, there was often little recourse against the male authority of their husbands and other family members. Such gender dynamics also manifested themselves in other ways. For example, an Indian convert named Narshi refused to live with his wife until they were remarried according to the rules and regulations of the Salvation Army, even though she was legally his wife in both the eyes of the Hindu religion and the British government.⁵³⁵

Thus, the Salvationist missionaries clearly faced significant challenges in terms of Indian cultural practices and family relationships. Much of this was closely related to the Indian caste system; a situation which all Christian missionaries had to confront. In his 1908 history of missions in India, Julius Richter discussed the difficulties the restrictions of the caste system posed for those trying to spread Christianity in India. He argued that

⁵³² Harold Begbie, *The Light of India* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910?), 124.

⁵³³ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Colonel Weeresooriye* (London: International Headquarters, 1888), 3.

⁵³⁴ Eshwar Das, *Trophies of the Jungles* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888), 46.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

“caste limits the free-will of the individual in such an exclusive manner that, speaking generally, he no longer lives a separate life, but the common life of his caste.”⁵³⁶

Europeans like Richter saw themselves locked in opposition with Indian communities; for the Indians, converting to Christianity often meant breaking caste, abandoning traditional practices, and defying family and friends. Obviously, convincing people to embrace such lifestyle changes posed a considerable challenge for the missionaries. Traveler G.C. Dyson wrote in 1913, “Yet when one thinks of the penalties incurred by a high-caste native of India who forsakes the religion of his race, there is perhaps no reason to wonder that so few accept Christianity.”⁵³⁷

For high-caste Indians, joining the Salvation Army often meant being cut off from their families, not only emotionally, but also financially, unable to inherit their share of family property. For example, south Indian convert Nayarana Muthiah, whose high-caste Hindu family repeatedly attempted to kidnap him from the Salvationists, was ultimately forced to renounce his inheritance and thus became a penniless Christian.⁵³⁸ Likewise, a Gujarati convert known as Poonjah made great sacrifices when he joined the SA. “He gave up his rupees, his reputation, his children’s prospects, to become poor almost to starvation.”⁵³⁹ The Salvationists rejoiced in such dramatic examples of Indian self-sacrifice. The SA looked to these instances of Indians willing to abandon money and social status in favor of Christianity as evidence of valid, non-coerced conversions. In describing the pitiful funds of an Indian SA officer, Eshwar Das wrote: “What a contradiction to the false statements that have been made by some people that we induced

⁵³⁶ Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, trans. by Sydney H. Moore (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1908), 256.

⁵³⁷ “Among the Missionaries, G.C. Dyson, 1913,” 61.

⁵³⁸ S. Smith, 62.

⁵³⁹ Das, 10.

our people to join us by bribery!”⁵⁴⁰ The Salvationists assuredly lacked the resources to bribe anyone to Christianity, but the examples of Indians who gave up their fortunes to join the SA did help to legitimize their accounts of conversions.

In this respect, a high-caste Hindu convert was a very valuable addition to the ranks of the Salvation Army. But the missionaries also had to deal with the relationships between different castes and make choices about where to target their efforts. For example, higher-caste groups often viewed interacting with people of a lower-caste as offensive. So, if the Salvationists were known to be associating with a low-caste group, upper castes would refuse to interact with them. Tucker was aware that many people felt it was best to concentrate missionary efforts among the higher castes.⁵⁴¹ But that was never the style of the Salvation Army. Proselytizing among the lower classes formed the very foundation of their organization in England. They made a name for themselves among the poor and needy in Britain, and Tucker took this policy to India, targeting her lowest groups. This principle would follow the Salvationists as they expanded into the Indian countryside, established social service schemes, and eventually came to work with many so-called criminal tribes.

Meanwhile, the Salvationists did not completely avoid developing relationships with high-caste Indians. They were eager to gain the support of local native elites and princes. For example, on a visit to Dharamsala, Booth-Tucker and his colleagues were “courteously received” by the Maharaja’s Prime Minister. He recalled: “No sooner had we left his court than we were surrounded by a number of officials. They were anxious

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁴¹ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 47.

to know all about the Army.”⁵⁴² In a similar fashion, an 1896 article in *India’s Cry* highlights the attendance of Raj-i-Rajman Raja Shevraj Dharamawant Bahadur and Raja Indu Karan Bahadur, two important noblemen, at a Salvation Army meeting in Bombay, emphasizing that the two dignitaries “are very much interested in the General’s Social Scheme.”⁵⁴³ There is no indication whether these gentlemen actually became converts or even donated funds to the Salvationists, however the mere fact that the missionaries believed the Indians’ interest, however limited it might be, worthy of publication is significant. The SA officers were anxious to gain support wherever they could find it, whether among the British or Indians; and they were quick to capitalize upon any situation that they could possibly use to enhance their public relations and further their goal of attracting new converts.

Salvation Army literature from the period does include several examples of hospitality and charitable donations given to the missionaries by local elites. The booklet *Life Links* said of Tucker: “Natives of all castes and religion have rallied round our commissioner.”⁵⁴⁴ Several wealthy Indians allegedly offered their support, stating: “although they could not agree from a religious point of view. . . [they] greatly admired the devotion and self-sacrifice manifested by the Salvation Army Officers.”⁵⁴⁵ Obviously, this quotation was published by the Salvationists and not the Indians, and as such must be treated with skepticism, but it does appear that at least a few wealthy Indian people supported the SA’s philanthropy. Whatever compliments or donations the organization did receive, they clearly attempted to parlay them into yet another public

⁵⁴² Quoted in *Life Links*, 117.

⁵⁴³ “Personal and Other Pars,” *India’s Cry*, June 1896, 8.

⁵⁴⁴ *Life Links*, 109.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

relations coup, marketing themselves as a group supported by the upper castes of Indian society; an example of the Salvationists' utilization of local culture to further their own religious mission. The missionaries worked within local social structures to emphasize the importance of their organization.

The Salvationists were hardly the only missionary organization working on the subcontinent. Several other groups also managed to increase their efforts overseas in the late-nineteenth century, including the Church Missionary Society, some Methodist missions, and others. A Missionary Census in 1881 acknowledged only 38 missionary societies of various denominations on the ground in India, by 1901 that number had nearly doubled to 73.⁵⁴⁶ This overall increase in British missionary efforts does in some ways suggest that the Salvation Army was typical of Christian churches, and their attempts to work among the subjects of India were representative of British missions in that period. While in certain respects this is true, there are obviously many ways in which the Salvationists' activities were unique.

Contemporary reports do suggest that British missions lacked unity. Just as the religious landscape of the metropole included conflicting denominations, the various missionary groups did not always operate well together, and in fact, often worked at cross purposes. Booth-Tucker did acknowledge that when the Salvationists first set out to expand into the Indian countryside it was difficult to find a place to start as most of the large missionary organizations had already claimed their territories, even if they held these positions with only a few people.⁵⁴⁷ Julius Richter also accused the Salvation Army of "proselytiz[ing] most ruthlessly amongst the already existing Christian

⁵⁴⁶ Richter, 228.

⁵⁴⁷ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 40.

communities.”⁵⁴⁸ There does seem to be some truth to this accusation, at least in the very early days of the SA in India. Henry Bullard recalled, “A small number of Eurasians or backslidden Indian Christians sought Salvation in Bombay and Calcutta, but after more than a year we had not as many Indian Converts as the fingers of one hand.”⁵⁴⁹ Although this does not necessarily mean that these “backsliding” Christians were poached directly from another denomination’s mission, it must have been true for many of them. These Indian Christians who joined the Army may have been converted by itinerant missionaries and then left to live without a church or mission to call home. In describing the SA’s entry into southern India, Booth-Tucker specifically stated that the Salvationists were not interested in Christians who were loyal to another mission.⁵⁵⁰ Obviously this statement could simply be an attempt by Booth-Tucker to defend his organization from criticism, but he does seem to have shown at least some concern for this potential rivalry. There were some missionaries from other denominations who offered support and assistance to the Salvationists. For example, other missionaries were present for their arrival in Bombay in 1882 and even helped to organize and advertise the first Salvation Army meetings. When the Salvationists first traveled to Calcutta they were hosted by a Dr. Thoburn, later Bishop of the Methodist Church in India. The Salvation Army held meetings in the facilities of both the American Methodist Episcopal Church and the Wesleyan Church.⁵⁵¹ In the 1890s Mrs. Major-General Eliza Keer explained the different reactions to the Army as the product of a generational gap. She wrote: “The older, long-settled missionaries seem to misunderstand the Army. Younger ones from England

⁵⁴⁸ Richter, 223.

⁵⁴⁹ Bullard, 14.

⁵⁵⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 99.

⁵⁵¹ Bullard, 16.

don't, and come out in favor of it.”⁵⁵² It makes sense that those missionaries who had been on the ground in India longer would be more defensive of their work and less willing to allow the Salvationists in. Likewise, it is not surprising that missionaries associated with older, more traditional denominations would disapprove of the Salvationists' flamboyant and potentially disruptive style of worship.

So, although the Salvationists did have some supporters among the Indian missionary community, they also had some clear enemies. A Rev. Taylor of the Irish Presbyterian Mission said: “I regard the Salvation Army as Leprosy in the Church of Christ.”⁵⁵³ Colonial authorities had been concerned that the Salvationists would upset the Muslims and Hindus in India; it appeared that the Salvation Army would also disturb the Pax Britannia by fighting with other Europeans. Indeed, this rivalry with the Irish Presbyterian Mission in the village of Ranipur in Gujarat placed Salvationists in prison once again.

In December of 1885 five Salvationists were arrested for holding a procession, complete with singing and musical instruments, at the same time the Irish Mission Church was having its Sunday service.⁵⁵⁴ In this case, the potential disturbance which the colonial authorities so greatly feared would have been a riot between two *Christian* groups. The witnesses for the Irish Mission complained not only that the Salvationists interrupted their meeting, but they also accused the Salvationists of offending them with comments they made and by singing a particular hymn which included the line “Oh sinners, what will you do when He comes?” Upakar Ajubhai, an Indian Christian

⁵⁵² Eliza Keer, *The Salvation Army in India: Letters from Mrs. General Keer* (London: IHQ, 1894), 37.

⁵⁵³ *The Gujarat Prosecutions: Being a verbatim report of the evidence, Col. Tucker's defense and the judgment of J. Fernandez, Esq. City Magistrate, Ahmedabad* (Bombay: The Salvation Army Press, 1886), 24.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

associated with the Irish Mission, testified: “It was one of their hymns and was calculated to hurt our feelings. The reason for this is that they call themselves holy, and say that others who have not got salvation are sinners.”⁵⁵⁵ Another witness insisted that the Salvationists had referred to their own Rev. Taylor when singing, “We shall conquer the big devil.”⁵⁵⁶ These testimonies are fascinating because they make the case that a disturbance of the peace was caused by “hurting the feelings” of another group. It hardly seems the jurisdiction of imperial courts to determine whether one group called another a name, and yet this was the focus of an official legal proceeding. This is further evidence of the Salvation Army’s notoriety; they drew attention to themselves everywhere they traveled. To be fair, the Salvationists probably did refer to people as “sinners.” That was typical of their aggressive proselytizing and not at all uncommon. The response it was intended to provoke was kneeling in prayer, not throwing stones, but if the latter occurred it was likely that the Salvationists would find a way to use the incident to promote their mission. As for the colonial authorities’ viewpoint, this incident was merely yet another example of the Salvation Army disturbing the peace. Whether they be upsetting Hindus and Muslims, or, as in this case, fighting with another Christian denomination, the police were outraged by the Salvationists’ lively and provocative form of worship.

The Salvationists in India had demonstrated a refusal to back down in the face of legal prosecutions, and this case was no different. Once again Col. Tucker took the helm, presenting the defense. First, through careful cross examination he got Upakar, a witness for the Irish mission, to admit: “I am not aware that the Army have ever marched during

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 6.

the time of our service.”⁵⁵⁷ Tucker then offered the testimony of several Salvationist witnesses to indicate that the hymn in question was not used, and they all denied having called Rev. Taylor a devil. Obviously, this could be seen as a simple case of conflicting arguments, but Tucker managed to further discredit the witnesses for the prosecution by associating them with earlier attacks on Salvation Army personnel.⁵⁵⁸

This case could be viewed as a simple rivalry between two missionary groups operating in the same village, but the participants in the trial raised far more complex issues of colonial encounters. This was not merely a debate between two European missionaries. The witnesses for both sides (including the Salvationist defendants) included several Indians. Furthermore, among the accused were *female* Indian Christians, a fact which must have challenged traditional gender roles. This case represented a complicated intersection of race, gender, religion, and legal power. Through their participation in Christian worship these Indian women were placing themselves in opposition not only to the legal regulations, but also to traditional social practices. Furthermore, they were confronting Indian authorities as allies of the European missionaries.

The ties of Christian brotherhood complicated racial identities. In arguing that his people in the village were more restricted than believers in the nearby city, Tucker stated: “But of course the Christians of Ahmedabad are mostly English and we of Ranipur only poor natives,--so they may enjoy their religious liberty, while we are coerced into uniformity with sticks and stones backed up by the strong arm of the law!”⁵⁵⁹ This overly dramatic and sarcastic comment speaks to the complicated nature of the Salvation

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 14.

Army's interaction with the law in India. Here Tucker has both clearly identified himself as an Indian and accused the colonial authorities of racial prejudice.

The Salvationists' case included not only impeaching the other witnesses, and challenging the police's judgment in this matter, but also producing reliable witnesses of their own. As such, most of the Salvationist witnesses begin their testimonies with a statement such as, "I get no pay," or "I am not paid by the Army."⁵⁶⁰ It seems as though the witnesses assumed that the court would not trust them to truthfully discuss the SA, and that they had to demonstrate their credibility by proving that they had not been bribed by the organization. This suggests a commonly held belief that religious authority involved coercion, a presumption which the Salvationists repeatedly tried to dispel. To continue the Salvationists' defense Tucker once again drew on his legal background. Here he blurred the lines between lawyer and preacher offering a lengthy argument to defend the accused that drew on many legal precedents—both from India and the courts of England. For example, he cited a case in the Bombay High Court in which the Police Commissioner had forbidden Salvation Army marches. "The matter was argued before the High Court and it was plainly intimated that he had exceeded his powers. Hence the charge was afterwards dropped under this section in subsequent prosecutions."⁵⁶¹ The Salvationists had defeated the police's authority in Bombay and Tucker believed the same should take place in Ranipur. His arguments challenging the legality of the police efforts to restrict their marches were mostly based on the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. Time and again he held fast to her promise of religious freedom for the people of India. For this case he challenged the magistrate with, "Whether this means anything, or is to be

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 8,9.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 13.

treated as waste paper I leave the Court to judge.”⁵⁶² Given Colonel Tucker’s impertinence, it is really not surprising that local officials found him disruptive. And indeed, such melodramatic statements were by design intended to draw attention to his organization and its work.

Interestingly, in this case the magistrate evidently also found him to be a convincing legal mind. Although the Salvationists in question were found guilty of having disobeyed the local police order and sentenced accordingly, the magistrate’s ruling is full of acknowledgement for Tucker’s argument and support for the Salvation Army. He wrote, “the Salvationists have as much right to liberty of conscience and liberty to practice their religious rites as the Mission Christians.” Furthermore, he stated: “From the evidence on record it seems to me that the Salvationists have been more sinned against than sinning.”⁵⁶³ The magistrate actually believed that the Salvationists’ marches were not likely to cause a disturbance in and of themselves had the people from the Irish Mission not followed and harassed them.

Thus, the legal trials of the Salvation Army missionaries in India drew to a close. A compromise was reached to help prevent further conflict; the Salvationists were punished, yet their position was ultimately vindicated by statements from the magistrate. Once again, the Salvation Army propaganda machine was activated, publishing the court transcript, with all supportive comments from the magistrate clearly underlined for the readers to see. With this pamphlet the Salvationists were not only demonstrating the righteousness and dedication of their efforts, but they were also providing the imperial public with an example of legal validation from colonial authorities. Here was evidence

⁵⁶² Ibid., 11.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 22.

of a local magistrate who had defended their right to proselytize. Thus, even in the face of rivalry with other missionaries and additional arrests, the Salvationists were proving the legitimacy of their endeavor. Furthermore, they could now boast increased support from British authorities.

The arrival of the Salvation Army in India had threatened to disturb the Raj. Even before Major Tucker and his little band disembarked in Bombay, colonial authorities found themselves nervous and preoccupied with the potential menace of these boisterous, lower-class, aggressive missionaries. Although small in number, the Salvationists' invading force was disruptive enough to find themselves repeatedly subject to arrest and prosecution. Their practice of preaching to the lower classes and rowdy style of worship that could provoke Hindus and Muslims into rioting were indeed threatening to the Empire. But Major Tucker and his colleagues stood fast against British imperial authorities. They continued to promote their religion, employing the unusual techniques which had gained them such notoriety at home in England. Despite the arrests of their missionaries, the denomination continued to gain converts. Through Tucker's leadership and legal expertise, the Salvationists were able to turn their difficulties with the law to their advantage, promoting themselves as Christian martyrs and earning free publicity. The growth of their organization on the ground, as well as public sympathy both in India and the metropole, left the colonial authorities little choice but to compromise with the Salvationists. It became clear that the church would not abandon its work in India, and limiting the repeated arrests and public trials would have been less disruptive to the Empire.

In the face of all manner of opposition—political, environmental, cultural, or financial, the Salvationist missionaries displayed their determination to spread their religion in India. As Emma Booth-Tucker wrote, “The Army *still stands apart* in its love and desperate devotion to the one goal—the glory of God and the salvation of sinners.”⁵⁶⁴ The Salvationists worked long hours, not merely to establish a single mission in Bombay, but to spread out, win souls and provide assistance throughout the subcontinent. With limited resources and personnel, they endeavored to create an enormous network of churches and charities. As their organization grew throughout India and Ceylon, the Salvation Army’s relationship with the imperial government became increasingly complex. After their initial period of direct opposition to the Indian police, the Salvationists gradually developed improved relations with local authorities. Over time the SA would prove its utility to the Indian colony and even find itself collaborating with the Empire.

⁵⁶⁴ Emma Booth-Tucker, *The Cross Our Comfort* (London: The Salvation Army Book Dept., 1907), 3.

CHAPTER VI: The Muktifauj Grows

No matter how troublesome they may have been for colonial leaders, the Salvationists, or members of the Muktifauj as the Indians called it, had used the imperial ideology of religious freedom to their advantage in defending their right to proselytize, and proved that they would not abandon their efforts in India. Throughout the 1880s they continued to develop their missionary work, sending more personnel to India and Ceylon, spreading throughout the countryside, gaining converts, establishing churches and other social service facilities. The Salvationists imported their unique ministry from the metropole to the Indian subcontinent, modifying their efforts to accommodate the local climate and culture as they saw fit. Such cultural adaptations helped the Salvationists to win more converts and establish a stronger, more welcome presence among the people of India. Furthermore, the Salvation Army's development of charitable institutions along the lines of those already working in England, such as schools, hospitals, and rescue homes demonstrated the increasing value of the organization to the colonial state. The Salvationists created a number of social service programs which were beneficial to the government of India, and in so doing the missionaries greatly improved their relationship with the imperial authorities.

Cultural Accomodations

Initially many European colonials felt that the tactics used by the Salvation Army in Britain could not be utilized effectively in India—the culture and environment were simply too different. The *Indian Spectator* argued that the Salvationists' focus on

rescuing drunkards and other ‘down and out’ elements of society—a task that preoccupied the ministry in urban England--was irrelevant in India. “The mass of the people in India are certainly not steeped in vices to so appalling an extent as to require this army of deliverance to reclaim them. Hence it is a foregone conclusion that the efforts of General Booth’s quasi-spiritual forces will prove abortive.”⁵⁶⁵ Likewise, another editorial contended, “My own opinion is that the leaders will find it necessary to modify their tactics considerably to meet the changed conditions under which they will find themselves placed in this country.”⁵⁶⁶

The Salvationists’ techniques in ministering to the people of India incorporated a great deal of cultural adaptation. The missionaries worked to connect with the Indians, by utilizing many familiar aspects of their own society including food, language, and dress; a strategy which actually grew out of the Salvationists’ work back in England.

Tucker wrote:

Thus it was on the Army’s principle of adaptation to the roughs, and the working-classes of England, that I followed in adapting our dress, manners, ways of living, &c., to the natives—the working-classes, or roughs of India—trampling upon the traditions of the elders that had so long clogged the wheels of God’s chariot.⁵⁶⁷

The technique, and the focus on the lower classes, directly mimicked the Salvationists’ work in the metropole. These efforts were clearly based on a belief in the righteousness of their purpose, as evidenced by the fantastic metaphor used in the final line of this quotation. Furthermore, this statement draws attention to the subversive nature of the Salvation Army; their work was intended to offset the fruitless, or even counter-productive, efforts of established churches.

⁵⁶⁵ “The Salvation Army in Bombay,” *Indian Spectator*, 24 September 1882, p. 618.

⁵⁶⁶ “Editorial Notes,” *Indian Spectator*, 1 October 1882, p. 629.

⁵⁶⁷ Quoted in *Life Links*, 98.

The Salvationists believed themselves to be in the middle of a war, and if changing their manners and clothing could be of assistance in winning the battle, they were willing to do so. They gradually modified their uniforms to increasingly incorporate Indian styles. When the first group of Salvationists arrived in Bombay in 1882, the *Times of India* reported public disappointment that “‘Native dress’ has not been strictly adhered to by either the lady or the gentlemen of the party. . . The men had on partial Indian dress with a ribbon that said Muktifauj.”⁵⁶⁸ The *Indian Spectator* was even more critical of the first Salvationists in Bombay, describing them as “attired in grotesque non-descript garb.”⁵⁶⁹ Even Captain Henry Bullard admitted that their outfits were “semi-Indian dress.”⁵⁷⁰ While they wore turbans and ribbons with the Indian name for the Salvation Army, they failed to completely adopt local styles; these first missionaries were clearly attempting to form a cultural connection with the people of India and yet there was still a distinctive European aspect to their appearance.

As the Salvationist missionaries met only limited success in gaining converts during their first months in India, they determined that a greater cultural accommodation was necessary. Bullard wrote:

At first we retained shoes and stockings and the style of living considered essential to a European’s existence in India; but experience soon taught us that, even at a risk to health, we must make drastic sacrifices of comfort if we hoped to win the Indians in large numbers.⁵⁷¹

The officers stopped wearing shoes completely. Tucker, Bullard and the other men wore the traditional dhoti, or waist cloth, along with the turban on their heads. Female officers wore saris. The cultural significance of such garments in India is that they were worn by

⁵⁶⁸ “The Salvation Army,” *Times of India*, 20 September 1882, p. 3.

⁵⁶⁹ “The Salvation Army in Bombay,” *Indian Spectator*, 24 September 1882, p. 618.

⁵⁷⁰ Bullard, 14.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

draping and tucking the material, no stitching or tailoring was required.⁵⁷² This meant that although not exclusively, the dhoti and sari were occasionally associated with the poorer classes.

Clothes and dress provided a clear visual marker with which the people could identify. By adopting local styles, the Salvationists were both associating themselves with the Indians, and clearly distinguishing themselves from the British authorities. By the late-nineteenth century the white men in India had fully cultivated an ideology of difference—a distinct physical and cultural separation from the Indians. As Emma Tarlo describes in her book *Clothing Matters*, “Maintenance of differences through dress and other social customs was important both for British self-esteem and as a means of demonstrating British superiority to an Indian audience.”⁵⁷³ Dressed in their local garments the Salvationists were breaking through this established boundary, sometimes in a very dramatic manner.

For example, in 1887 Tucker returned to India from a visit to London with fifty new missionary recruits, all of whom were tremendously enthusiastic about beginning work. “Men and women had stepped ashore barefoot, in full Indian dress; in token of their abandonment of old ways they had thrown all their European clothes overboard the night before!”⁵⁷⁴ In this instance, Tucker actually expressed concern that they had wasted clothing which some needy soul could have utilized, and yet he still appreciated the enthusiasm and intensity with which they approached their new endeavor. The Salvation Army prided itself on recruiting personnel who were prepared to fully immerse

⁵⁷² Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 28.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁵⁷⁴ Unsworth, 15.

themselves in their mission. Yet at the same time that these new missionaries attempted to adapt to the local culture of dress, in other respects they firmly associated themselves with the Empire. They were known as the ‘Jubilee Fifty,’ as their departure coincided with Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887. The Salvation Army commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of her reign by detaching fifty new missionaries (one for each year of her reign) to India.⁵⁷⁵ Again, this was a clever and opportune move. They likely would have sent a new group of missionaries out anyway, but they wisely chose to use the occasion to pay homage to the Queen, thereby both associating themselves with imperial rule and drawing even greater public attention to their activities.

The adoption of native dress served multiple purposes. In addition to providing as a visible cultural marker and means of association with the Indians, such clothing was far more practically suited to the climate than European dress. When visiting Salvation Army facilities in India, Eliza Keer wrote: “Native clothes are a mercy in India! I never could have made that night-and-day railway journey, slept on a railway-platform on a camp bed, and traveled by bullock-bandy for twenty-two hours without great distress in European clothes.”⁵⁷⁶ Truly, such tedious travel was not for the faint-hearted, however they may have been attired. And yet, based on their recollections, the Salvationists seemed to have quite happily confronted any and all hardships associated with their missionary efforts.

Tucker not only advocated cultural adaptation in terms of dress, but he believed that the Salvationists would be most effective as missionaries if they could truly adopt an Indian lifestyle. The General had told them to “Get into their skins.” He said, “This must

⁵⁷⁵ Mackenzie, 120.

⁵⁷⁶ Keer, 33-34.

mean, if anything at all, that to the Indians you must be Indians.”⁵⁷⁷ Whether the Indians themselves appreciated this effort is hard to ascertain. Nevertheless, Tucker and the other Salvation Army missionaries in India did make a concerted effort to truly live among the people. Catherine Bannister, for example, “gloried in wearing Indian dress, sitting upon the floor and eating her food with her fingers.”⁵⁷⁸ By choosing to eat the local cuisine Salvationists were again disassociating themselves from the British and stepping outside the colonial hierarchies. In her work *Imperial Bodies*, Elizabeth Collingham discusses how both diet and dress became important measures of distinction in imperial India. She writes, “Food was a means of claiming membership of polite society. In India British food gave a meal extra symbolic resonance.”⁵⁷⁹

As the SA missionaries traveled throughout India, they not only discarded their European shoes for sandals and began eating with their hands, but they also started sleeping in the open air and using Indian sacking for bedding instead of blankets. When they traveled via train, the Salvationists rode third class and often sat in the Indian car instead of the European one.⁵⁸⁰ These adaptations to the local lifestyle served multiple purposes. First, there was the utilitarian advantage of using certain items more suitable for the Indian climate, such as sandals. Then there was the broader goal of making a connection with the people by adopting many of their customs. By eating their food and sleeping in huts as the Indians did, the Salvationists hoped to ‘get into their skins.’ To this end, they worked to develop closer relationships with the Indian people in order to more easily bring them to Christ. This was another tactic which set the Salvationists

⁵⁷⁷ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, xiv, xvi.

⁵⁷⁸ *Catherine Bannister*, 16.

⁵⁷⁹ E. M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800-1947* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 71.

⁵⁸⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 73.

apart from other religious groups. As Eliza Keer said, “The Army. . .[is] a native thing beyond any other mission in the land.”⁵⁸¹

In addition to the spiritual benefits of facilitating conversions by living like locals, there was also an economic consideration for the Salvationists. It was much cheaper to travel throughout India in third-class, sleeping outside, and begging for food. In such a manner Tucker managed to preach to thousands throughout the Indian countryside, at a very low cost to the SA. These principles were not merely applied to his itinerant wanderings. Established corps officers and Salvationist personnel throughout India were encouraged to eat as the Indians did, live in mud huts, and make do with very few resources. The available budget for the SA in India was extremely small and any attempts at economizing were not only appreciated, but absolutely necessary. Furthermore, every officer was expected to make their corps self-supporting and not dependent on grants from headquarters. Tucker cited adaptation, self-sustenance, and self-propagation as the keys to effective missionary work.⁵⁸² He fully expected his personnel to find a way to financially support themselves and their work. Although many missionaries lived frugally, the Salvationists economy and efforts at financial self-sufficiency did set them apart from other missionaries. For example, in 1887 the Church of Scotland provided male missionaries with an annual salary of £333 while the United Presbyterians received £325 or the rough equivalent of 4,575 rupees.⁵⁸³ These figures dramatically exceed the resources available to Salvationists. For example, a report from a Salvationist settlement for the fiscal year 1908-09 identified only 667 rupees paid for

⁵⁸¹ Keer, 46.

⁵⁸² Frederick Booth-Tucker, *An Ideal Missionary Policy* (Bombay: Salvation Army Printing Press, 1889), 11-12.

⁵⁸³ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 79.

salaries.⁵⁸⁴ Indeed, the Salvation Army's ability to function more economically may have allowed them greater success in their missions than other groups. For instance, Andrew Porter describes the extreme financial difficulties of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in the late-1800s, as donations fell dramatically. Porter cites a statement from the organization's chairman in Bengal who wrote of the group's efforts,

. . . one or two Missionaries doing mixed work, frequently exchanged and never mastering a knowledge of the language or of the manners of the people, is really no more than playing at mission work, very little more than mere waste of time and money.⁵⁸⁵

This Wesleyan Methodist recognized failings in his organization's missionaries, highlighting not only their financial difficulties, but also their lack of the same skills which Salvationists worked to cultivate.

Besides adopting the local clothing and diet, Salvationist missionaries were also encouraged to learn the local language. Before the first detachment of officers arrived in India, Tucker had already created a vernacular hymnal and spent time on the journey teaching his colleagues Urdu. These examples set the standard for all future Salvationists in India. Shipboard language lessons were given to all the major parties of missionaries. Many individuals enthusiastically embraced such studies. Upon her arrival Catherine Bannister quickly learned Marathi, and when she could not find anyone to translate hymns into the local language, she did it herself.⁵⁸⁶ When later appointed to the Punjab Territory she also learned Urdu and a local dialect. Salvation Army services in India were often multi-lingual. For example, at a meeting in southern India Commissioner

⁵⁸⁴ India Office Records, "Memo from Frederick Booth-Tucker to Mr. Gillan Financial Secretary to Government," *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, 10 March 1909, No. 134, 42.

⁵⁸⁵ Quoted in A. Porter, *Religion versus empire?*, 275.

⁵⁸⁶ *Catherine Bannister*, 8, 11.

Booth-Tucker spoke in both Hindustani and English, while another officer translated into Tamil.⁵⁸⁷ The church listings in an 1890 issue of the *Bombay Guardian* included six daily services held by the SA, three in Marathi, two in Gujarati and one in English and Hindustani.⁵⁸⁸ These listings reveal that the Salvation Army was both preaching in more languages and holding more services than any other Christian church in Bombay. As of 1911 the Salvation Army reported the use of 12 different languages in their Indian ministry.⁵⁸⁹

Likewise, many of the officers adopted Indian names which they used instead of their European monikers. Frederick Tucker became known as Fakir Singh—a name which identified him with traditional Indian holy men. His usage of the terms was inexact, however. This title may have been a noteworthy example of a British missionary attempting to create a connection with the Indian people but finding it affected by his own European perceptions. Nevertheless, many Salvationists used Indian names. Fred Grundy became Eshwar Das. Frederick’s second wife, Emma Booth-Tucker took the name Raheeman, or “mercy.”⁵⁹⁰ And Catherine Bannister was called Yuddha Bai, meaning “warrior sister.”⁵⁹¹ These names were used not only in their interaction with the Indians, but throughout Salvation Army publications. Many officers were identified solely by their adopted Indian names.

As with their work at home in England, music was a vital part of the Salvation Army’s ministry. From the moment the first missionaries arrived in Bombay, their

⁵⁸⁷ Staff-Capt. Jeva Kodi, “Trichinopoly,” in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 11.

⁵⁸⁸ “Bombay Church Directory.” *Bombay Guardian*. 4 January 1890, 8.

⁵⁸⁹ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon* (India: The Salvation Army, 1911), 1.

⁵⁹⁰ Booth-Tucker, *The Consul*, 89.

⁵⁹¹ *Catherine Bannister*, 9.

tambourine and cornet were utilized. Elizabeth Swift-Brengle's 1891 work *Drum Taps* focuses on the importance of the drum in Salvation Army activities around the globe. In India, possession of a drum was considered vital not only for leading hymn singing, but also as a sort of alarm or signal used to call people to meetings. She quoted one officer, "That's one reason why we need so much money for India—the drum is an essential part of the missionary, and we have to export all in use. I never saw an Englishman yet who could beat a native drum."⁵⁹² The officer gives no explanation for this fact; the Salvationists readily adopted the use of Indian food and clothing, but it appears that in the area of drumming the cultural divide was too great. The missionaries were clearly trying to utilize Indian culture, but they may have still remained more comfortable with British equipment. Despite this apparent limitation, the Salvationists did work to adapt their music for the Indian audience.

Tunes associated with traditional Indian rituals referred to as "devil-dancing" by the missionaries were refit with new lyrics. Upon witnessing this practice, Eliza Keer remarked, "Now all these nice tunes are better for really beautiful Christian words."⁵⁹³ Even before landing in Bombay with the first group of Salvationists, Tucker created a Hindustani hymnal with translated versions of popular hymns which he distributed among Indian converts upon his arrival.⁵⁹⁴ Often the same tune would be used with words from different languages simultaneously. As in the opening of the Coimbatore Temple in which, "'Soldiers of our God arise' was pealed out in Tamil and English with a swing that Salvationists alone can give."⁵⁹⁵ Using the local vernacular certainly made

⁵⁹² Swift-Brengle, 102-103.

⁵⁹³ Keer, 34.

⁵⁹⁴ Mackenzie, 57.

⁵⁹⁵ "Opening of the Coimbatore Temple," in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 13.

the Salvation Army songs more accessible to the Indians. And, much as their lively music helped draw converts in the music halls of London, so the singing, drumming, and flag-waving attracted Indian seekers. Even many members of their rival organization in the village of Ranipur, the Irish Presbyterian Mission, were drawn in by the Army music. One witness reported, “When the Army march, all the Christians go to see them. Some like the music and some don’t. The 100 to 150 people who often gather together to see them like the music and the marches.”⁵⁹⁶ So perhaps the real concern for the Irish Mission was not that the Salvationists disturbed their services with their noise, but the fact that SA music was popular enough to entice others to join the Army.

Drawing upon their use of music and dramatic preaching, the missionaries eventually developed a new strategy for gaining many converts at once—an event which they referred to as a ‘boom march.’ A boom march was essentially a traveling revival meeting. Before the event began, scouts would be sent ahead to local villages to enquire as to whether they would be amenable to a visit from the Salvationist procession, complete with flags and music, sometimes on horses. These dramatic marches would last for several weeks, drawing hundreds of interested people. An 1892 boom march in Gujarat reported 13,328 souls seeking Christ.⁵⁹⁷ There are no reliable statistics as to how many of those reported seekers actually converted to Christianity and/or went on to become members of the SA, but it does give an indication of the attention the Salvationists were able to attract with their lively style of proselytization. Forty-six officers participated in the first boom march in Travancore which took place in May 1892 and claimed 2000 converts within a month. Certainly, not all of these were retained as

⁵⁹⁶ *The Gujarat Prosecutions*, 7.

⁵⁹⁷ Booth-Tucker. *Muktifauj*, 104.

members, but within a year, 800 had been officially enrolled as soldiers.⁵⁹⁸ In 1895, a boom march through the Punjab resulted in the recruitment of 100 new officers and cadets.⁵⁹⁹ Such displays may have threatened to supercede the Empire's own parades and ceremonies.

Practically speaking, these boom marches were the Salvation Army's equivalent of an imperial invasion. Even the term boom march has obvious militaristic connotations. The Salvationists used these campaigns to gain large numbers of converts at once. A 1900 report from South India described a recent boom march "which resulted in several new villages being captured for God and the Salvation Army."⁶⁰⁰ This excerpt refers to the conversion of entire villages. Such mass conversions are certainly questionable, but even if only a small percentage of these converts were legitimate, the Salvationists managed to effectively increase the breadth and scope of their organization through these aggressive marches. Likewise, the use of the term "captured" above really highlights the SA's emphasis on military metaphors and their belief that they were truly in the midst of a war for Christ, although there is no evidence that they used any type of coercion in converting these villages.

The statistics generated by these boom marches and village-wide conversions may have seemed inflated, but the Salvationists took care to address that fact. The SA's 1892 Annual Report for India and Ceylon included the following disclaimer:

Let it be clearly understood that when we report so many souls, so many prisoners, so many saved, so many converted, or by whatever other phrase we express the event, we mean just this and nothing more, that so many persons have professed to renounce their sins, have definitely sought and professed to have obtained salvation. We do not thereupon add them to

⁵⁹⁸ Muthiah, 5.

⁵⁹⁹ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 85.

⁶⁰⁰ "Notes from South India," *India's Cry*, July 1900, 3.

our numbers and say that so many more have become Salvationists, as our traducers say we do; they may become Baptists or Methodists or never even gather courage to face the opposition which often meets a new convert at the outset.⁶⁰¹

The Salvation Army directly addressed the potential accusations of their detractors. They were honest about their shortcomings, although the same publication was pleased to report that, “Last year one out of every 5 of our converts became enrolled as a soldier, this year one out of every 3.”⁶⁰² While their numbers of converts are certainly limited in relation to the overall population of Indian, their percentages of retention are fairly high. Likewise, given relatively limited number of SA personnel in India, their growth rate indicates a certain amount of success in their endeavor.

Tucker’s Continuing Influence

There is no denying that Frederick Tucker was the heart and soul of the Salvation Army’s early foray into India. His personal experiences and ideas had a major impact on the Salvationists’ theory and practice on the subcontinent, and he was extremely devoted to the cause. Serving the people of India was quite literally his life’s work, and he took every opportunity within his own life to support that mission—even his own wedding. In April of 1888, the widowed Frederick Tucker married the General’s daughter Emma Booth in London, following which he took the name Booth-Tucker, a nod to the distinction of the Booth family within the Salvation Army. The wedding ceremony itself was used as a vehicle to draw attention to Tucker’s second great passion—the Salvation Army in India. At the ceremony Emma dressed simply in her Salvation Army uniform

⁶⁰¹ *A Handful of Corn: Being the 10th Annual Report of the Salvation Army in India and Ceylon* (Bombay: The Salvation Army, 1892), 8.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 9.

adorned with a white sash, while Frederick stood barefoot, decked out in his full Indian garb. The several thousand people who attended the service held at the Congress Hall were treated to an international presentation.⁶⁰³ The Salvationists also used the wedding as a fundraiser. Accounts vary as to the actual amount collected, but in a 1903 work Booth-Tucker himself claimed that a fund of \$25,000 was raised for the work of the SA in India.⁶⁰⁴ This money was used to finance yet another wave of missionaries; this time they were called The Wedding Fifty. The Salvation Army in Canada wished to participate in this demonstration as well. They pledged an additional twenty missionaries in honor of the newlyweds, thereby creating the Wedding Seventy.⁶⁰⁵

Likewise, upon the passing of the Army Mother Catherine Booth, Emma led another detachment of missionaries to Ceylon—an area which was included in the Indian territory of the Salvation Army. This lot was known as the Memorial Fifty.⁶⁰⁶ Any significant event, whether joyful or sad, personal or political, was an occasion to support the work of the Salvation Army in India. The Salvationists seemed to find a way to draw attention to their activities in India not only through their reporting of any SA-related news, but also through the publication of *any* British current events. For example, a May 1896 article included the following passage:

We note that a regiment of Indian Native Infantry have landed in East Africa, and that preparations are being made for receiving a body of Indian troops in Egypt. This fact ought to quicken our aspirations and our energies, that a large number of Indian troops should be dispatched to assist in the conquest of other nations while the subjugation of this great Empire for Christ is so slow in its accomplishment.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰³ Mackenzie, 124.

⁶⁰⁴ Booth-Tucker, *The Consul*, 87.

⁶⁰⁵ Frederick Booth-Tucker, "Preface," in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?).

⁶⁰⁶ Booth-Tucker, *The Consul*, 102.

⁶⁰⁷ "Current Topics," *India's Cry*, May 1896, 1.

This fascinating quotation draws a direct parallel between the mission of the Salvationists and the British imperial goals. Both groups were aimed at conquest—one political and one spiritual. In this statement, the Salvation Army was blatantly suggesting that the British Empire serve as an inspiration for the Salvationists; they should try to emulate the efforts of the Indian Army in their own fight to win souls.

Frederick Booth-Tucker neatly articulated the missionary principles he supported in an 1889 work entitled, *An Ideal Missionary Policy*. First of all, he felt missionary efforts required the cultivation of as many recruits as possible, drawn from all ranks of society. The lower classes must be involved, as well as women, and even children. He wrote, “I would admit the Queen herself if she were to volunteer, and I don’t see at all why she shouldn’t.”⁶⁰⁸ While this blithe remark may seem a tad disrespectful to Her Majesty, it is a telling indicator of the focus and devotion inherent in the Salvationist missionaries. Booth-Tucker truly believed that the project of ministering to India was so legitimate and so vital, that even the Queen should realize its obvious importance and willingly volunteer to assist.

Female Officers

The prominent role of women officers constituted another unique aspect of the Salvation Army’s ministry which was transplanted from the metropole to the shores of India. The very first group sent to India by the SA included an equal number of men and women, and female missionaries played a key role in Salvationists’ efforts throughout the course of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and beyond. When Emma Booth-Tucker came to join her new husband in 1888 he wrote: “In the interests of

⁶⁰⁸ Booth-Tucker, *An Ideal Missionary Policy*, 4.

India's 125 million women—so difficult to be reached by any but women—as well as the steadily increasing numbers of women officers, her coming was the most welcome gift.”⁶⁰⁹ It is only natural that Booth-Tucker heaped compliments upon his new bride, however, in praising her arrival he highlighted several important aspects of the SA's efforts. First, they made a concerted effort to reach the women of India. Salvationist missionary Catherine Bannister articulated the motivation behind such work when she said, “. . . it is indeed India's wives and mothers who hold the key to the heavily barred gate of superstition still standing between India and its spiritual freedom.”⁶¹⁰ This concept of female converts as the foundation for widespread religious change through their roles as wives and mothers drew on nineteenth-century gender norms. In her article, “‘Good wives and mothers’ or ‘dedicated workers’?” Jane Haggis discusses nineteenth-century notion that female missionaries among Indian women worked not only to convert the women to Christianity, but to lead them by example to heightened levels of domesticity and femininity.⁶¹¹

Emma Booth-Tucker and Catherine Bannister also represent women's most significant achievement within Salvation Army missions, namely the fact that women served in prominent leadership positions. Frederick Booth-Tucker eagerly anticipated Emma's arrival in India because he expected her to be a leader and example for the other female missionaries. Colonel Catherine Bannister, as a single woman officer, held several significant positions of authority throughout her career in India, including

⁶⁰⁹ Booth-Tucker, “Preface,” *The Consul*.

⁶¹⁰ Quoted in *Catherine Bannister*, 25.

⁶¹¹ Jane Haggis, “‘Good wives and mothers’ or ‘dedicated workers’? Contradictions of domesticity in the ‘mission of sisterhood’, Travancore, south India,” in *Maternities and Modernities: Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific*, Kalpana Ram and Margaret Jolly, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 81.

Territorial Commander of the Punjab and the Marathi Territories.⁶¹² As a TC she would have overseen the facilities and officers within her territory—including male officers. Thus, the Salvation Army was noteworthy not simply because they let women serve as missionaries, but because they let women *lead*.

The Salvationists did not completely ignore gender bias and traditions of the nineteenth century, however. Most of the leadership of the organization was male, and married female officers still deferred to their husbands in their professional context. They worked alongside each other, but the husband was always given official command of the assignment. Although Emma Booth-Tucker adopted her husband's passion for the work in India, much to their dismay she seemed physically unsuited to the climate and frequently fell ill. Ultimately, the Booth-Tuckers were forced to leave India out of concern for Emma's health, shortly after their daughter Kristina's death. Frederick had to abandon the work he personally started, trusting others to continue what he began, while he and his wife served at appointments in England and America. But India remained a vital focus for the Booth-Tuckers and Frederick would eventually return to lead the work there again following Emma's untimely death in a train accident in the US.

Meanwhile, after the Booth-Tucker's departure from India in 1891, another female member of the Salvation Army's first family stepped in to fill the leadership void. The General's daughter Lucy Booth, known in India as Ruhani, took over. Born in 1868 Lucy was just sixteen years old when she first followed her older sister Emma to India.⁶¹³ Still a young woman, she now commanded a large Salvation Army territory. In

⁶¹² *Catherine Bannister*, 40.

⁶¹³ "Lucy Milward-Ruhani." *The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre*. Available: <http://www.www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf>; Internet; accessed 25 July 2008.

describing young Col. Booth's appointment as Booth-Tucker's replacement, one Salvation Army publication wrote:

Great hulking men, who haven't as much sense in all the circumference of their pericranium as some women have in their little finger, are always ready to disparage women, and if they had their way would let them do nothing but make fragrant cups of coffee and work artistic slippers for creation's lord and masters. . . . We, in the Army, know how to value the worth of a God-taught woman, and we have yielded to the Colonel our fullest trust, our loyal service.⁶¹⁴

While this affirmation of Lucy Booth's skills certainly reveals the tendency of early SA authors toward hyperbole, the fact remains that this young woman was entrusted with a significant leadership position.

Lucy's rise to power within the organization was greatly aided by the fact that she was the founder's daughter. Her career was an example not only of the Salvationist policy of gender equality, but also of the strength of the Booth dynasty. Much like the British Empire, birthright meant a great deal for the early Salvation Army; a fact which many Salvationists happily accepted, although others did resent the dominance of the Booth family.

"Native Agency"

The early Salvation Army was notable not only for its use of female officers, but also for its implementation of the motto 'saved to serve.' Mirroring the colonial practice of indirect rule, Salvationists firmly believed that new converts should promptly be trained to convert others and thus ultimately come to hold leadership positions within the organization. This principle was employed not only to poor Englishmen in the slums of London, but to Indians as well. General Booth recognized the value of Indian-born

⁶¹⁴ *A Handful of Corn*, 28.

officers; they knew the land, the people, the language, the climate, and they were available in large numbers.⁶¹⁵ Eliza Keer observed during her 1893 visit to Nagercoil in southern India, “These native officers are the hope of the future.”⁶¹⁶ An 1896 article in the *Indian Christian Herald* on the life of Colonel Musa Bhai, newly appointed Chief of the South India Contingent of the Salvation Army said:

He is a native of India of the Coimbatore district, and we are glad to find the exalted position he has attained in the Army and the trust and confidence the General reposes on him. This is another instance of no race distinction being made in the Army in disposing of its posts of honor and responsibility. It should be an object lesson for the various Missionary Societies to study and benefit by.⁶¹⁷

Here we see not only an indigenous convert working as a minister, but one in a position of significant authority within the organization. Furthermore, other Indian Christians were clearly impressed by the SA’s willingness to utilize people of all races. The Salvationists were held up as a model for other missionaries.

Not all Europeans were anxious to give Indian Christians leadership positions. For example, English traveler G.C. Dyson identified another pitfall of preaching to the lower castes. He believed that: “When Hindus of any class become Christians they think they have become of the same *caste* as the English.”⁶¹⁸ Dyson and many of his contemporaries found this phenomenon upsetting as it threatened established colonial hierarchies; he cited many British complaints against their Christian Indian servants who acted too familiar or above their station. While such sentiments may have been shared by the Salvationists, they certainly never made their way into Army literature. Quite the

⁶¹⁵ William Booth, *The Future of Missions and The Mission of the Future: May Meeting Address by The General of the Salvation Army at Exeter Hall May 1, 1889* (London: International Headquarters, 1889), 33.

⁶¹⁶ Keer, 17.

⁶¹⁷ Quoted in “No Race Distinction,” *India’s Cry*, July 1896, 5.

⁶¹⁸ “Among the Missionaries, G.C. Dyson, 1913,” 61.

contrary, the Salvationists were always anxious to mention the equality with which they treated their Indian converts.

Ultimately, there were many native-born Indians who became leaders and officers within the Indian Salvation Army. For example, in Ceylon by 1888 there were 74 SA officers working, 53 of whom were indigenous, these figures indicate that over 70 percent of the preachers were native-born.⁶¹⁹ In contrast, in looking at more than 8 missionary organizations in the Punjab including the CMS for the year 1890, Jeffrey Cox identifies a total of 50 ordained Indian agents among all the groups.⁶²⁰ While these are two different geographic locations, the fact remains that the Salvationists reported more Indian preachers than several other churches combined. And according to Major Eshwar Das (né Fred Grundy), “They succeed in their work, souls get saved, soldiers get sanctified, and fellow-officers, get encouraged; and—mark this, O ye white men!—*they have succeeded where Europeans have failed.*”⁶²¹ It is this type of argument that makes the Salvation Army’s policies in this regard particularly significant. Not only did they allow, and in fact encourage, Indians to take on positions of leadership, but here we see a white Salvationist suggesting that these Indian officers actually did a better job than European missionaries.

In the early days of the mission, by far the most accomplished and publicized of those who had been “saved to serve” was Arnolis Weeresooriye. Weeresooriye joined the Salvation Army in the fall of 1883 shortly after his own personal conversion experience, becoming a Cadet at the SA Training Home in Bombay. In November he wrote to his father in Ceylon: “I am just now closely attached to the Major [Tucker] of

⁶¹⁹ Booth-Tucker, *Life of Colonel Weeresooriye*, 14.

⁶²⁰ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 49.

⁶²¹ Das, 68.

the Army. That good man has to do a great work.”⁶²² Tucker was impressed with Weeresooriye’s spirit and dedication, and he called upon the new recruit to accompany him on a mission trip throughout the Indian countryside in the spring of 1884.⁶²³ This was part of Tucker’s efforts to truly live and work among the poor of India; walking barefoot, wearing local dress, sleeping outdoors, and begging for food. Naturally, an assistant who hailed from the same part of the world, albeit a vastly different region, would have been valuable in such an endeavor.

But what makes Weeresooriye significant to the history of the Salvation Army is that he did not serve merely as a token native-born officer, he was given legitimate leadership positions. Even during that first missionary excursion into the countryside, Tucker was called back to Bombay, but he left Weeresooriye to carry on, and with great success. Within a week Weeresoriye sent Tucker a telegram asking for reinforcements as he had so many new converts and people from neighboring villages asking that the Salvationists visit.⁶²⁴ The two joined forces and continued to travel through India holding many successful revival meetings.

Weeresooriye proved to be particularly valuable in establishing the Salvation Army’s work in his home region of Ceylon. He knew the locals and they respected him, thus his support of the Salvation Army went a long way in legitimizing the organization. Near his hometown they were able to count several hundred new converts in a span of 4 to 5 weeks. Tucker wrote of this visit, “Hence, he formed a beautiful connecting link

⁶²² Arnolis Weeresooriye, “Letter dated 6th November 1883,” published in “Colonel Weerasooriya,” in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888), 24.

⁶²³ Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Colonel Weeresooriye*, 9.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

between myself and the natives, and during those happy months when we worked together we learned to love and understand one another as never before.”⁶²⁵

In 1886 Tucker brought Weeresooriye with him back to England for the Salvation Army’s International Meetings. Several other converts from India accompanied them as well to demonstrate the effectiveness of the work of the SA in India and to garner more support, both spiritual and financial, for their efforts. This event represents a significant interaction between the metropole and the peripheries of the Empire; a connection made between the Indians and Britain. And yet, placing Weeresooriye and other converts on display for English Salvationists seems rather exploitive. While Tucker may not have consciously been disrespectful to Weeresooriye, whom he genuinely seemed to regard as a friend, there nevertheless remained an inherent orientalism in presenting Indian Salvationists to the organization as though they were part of an exhibit. But even if Tucker’s use of Indian converts in this manner helped to reinforce the British sense of otherness, it more importantly helped to further his own personal goal of extending the SA’s work in India. Over the course of their visit Tucker and Weeresooriye were able to recruit 40 more missionaries for service in India.⁶²⁶

Weeresooriye continued to rise within the ranks of the SA organization. His role was not merely symbolic, but truly active and influential within the Indian church. In 1887 he returned to England to help oversee the departure of yet another larger group of missionaries, the previously mentioned ‘Jubilee Fifty.’ While in Britain, General Booth gave him the rank of Colonel and appointed Weeresooriye second-in-command for the whole Indian territory. Booth-Tucker recalled:

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 13.

This was in itself an unheard of step in the history of Indian missions. Here was a native of the country actually appointed to take charge of our European missionaries, and instead of the latter having complete control of the funds, as has hitherto invariably been the case, a native was placed in charge of the war chest, and had the control of expenditure of our Indian funds.⁶²⁷

Thus, Weeresooriye was given legitimate rank and authority within the Salvation Army, as well as access to and control over funds, thereby giving him significant power within the organization.

Booth-Tucker went on to argue that: “Nothing could have been more beautiful than the way in which our European officers universally accepted the leadership of our dear comrade—everyone felt that he was the right man in the right place.”⁶²⁸ His analysis of the situation is obviously highly suspect; given the admiration high-ranking officials like Tucker and General Booth held for Weeresooriye it seems unlikely that any member of the SA would feel comfortable expressing discontent with his appointment. If other officers grumbled privately, it never appeared in the public record. But even if we acknowledge that surely not every European Salvationist gloried in the leadership of Col. Weeresooriye, the fact that he was entrusted with such responsibility and authority was significant. The Salvationists actually followed through with their claim of placing converts, of any and all nationalities, into leadership positions.

Booth-Tucker also wanted to ensure that all Salvationists were aware that the admiration European officers held for Col. Weeresooriye was reciprocated. His biography of the Indian leader quotes a letter written by the Colonel himself in which he said: “My love to the English officers is growing and very great. I see more and more

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁶²⁸ Ibid., 14.

their value.”⁶²⁹ His choice of vocabulary here might indicate that there was a time when Col. Weeresooriye did *not* see the value of the English officers. This growing alliance exemplifies one of the unique aspects of the Salvation Army’s missionary work: the development of relationships with Indians that permitted them to achieve some measure of prominence and even power within the organization.

Sadly, young Col. Weeresooriye fell victim to the perils of disease which claimed so many in India. He died of cholera in 1888 at the age of 29. His untimely death deprived the Salvation Army of a valuable officer, yet his legacy allowed them to create an inspirational hero for the future work in India. A memorial article published by the SA said the following: “By Indians and Europeans alike he was look upon as almost more than mortal, while to our officers and soldiers he was a constant inspiration and a pillar of strength.”⁶³⁰ Thus, he continued to serve as an important symbol and motivational tool for the Salvation Army in India.

The Salvationists did their best to create examples of other Indian converts as well. In 1888 Major Eshwar Das wrote a booklet entitled *Trophies of the Jungle*. While Das’s work was most likely the product of good intentions, his choice of title again suggests exploitation. He emphasized the foreignness of the Indian environment and referred to converts as inanimate prizes to be won. This pamphlet, complete with its dramatic illustrations, was designed to excite the readers at home in Britain. While his style was questionable, Das did provide short biographies of several India-born converts of the SA, verifying the Salvationists’ success in this regard. He described people like Galla Jetah, a young man who practiced Christianity despite his father’s orders to

⁶²⁹ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Colonel Weeresooriye*, 15.

⁶³⁰ “Colonel Weerasooriya,” in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888), 24.

worship Hindu idols. Galla rebelled against his parents, but was ultimately able to convert several of his family members and eventually became a SA officer himself. Das eagerly and emphatically recounted his story, writing: “Reader, this is but one of hundreds of dark homes that God has made light in Gujarat through the instrumentality of the Salvation Army. These are actual facts recorded by Galla himself.”⁶³¹ Thus Das took care to emphasize the legitimacy of his story to help provide verification of the effectiveness of the SA.

Das also told the story of Gulab, who became an officer in charge of several different stations and eventually, “the first native woman in the Salvation Army in India to hold the rank of Captain.”⁶³² Gulab featured prominently for a variety of reasons including her distinction in rank. As Das wrote, “The genuineness of her conversion has been proved by hard trials and persecutions such as few English women in the present century have been called upon to suffer for Christ.”⁶³³ Missionary stories frequently emphasized the sacrifice and devotion displayed by the Christians. Here we have an example of such sacrifice from someone who was not only an Indian, but also a woman. Das drew a direct comparison between her and European women. Gulab received this praise because she made the particular sacrifice of spending time in prison as a member of the Salvation Army during one of the major arrests in Gujarat.

Das also highlighted the efforts of an Indian officer named Thakor and his wife Jivee, who suffered harsh treatment from her spouse before he joined her in converting to Christianity. Eventually, both husband and wife began proselytizing for the SA. “Jivee used to hold meetings among the high-caste people, who were astonished to see and hear

⁶³¹ Das, 22.

⁶³² Ibid., 37.

⁶³³ Ibid., 37.

a poor native woman preaching.”⁶³⁴ Das thus demonstrated the Army’s willingness to utilize both Indian and female officers, sometimes in the same person as in the cases of Jivee and Gulab. Likewise, the story of Jivee draws attention to the SA’s attempts to reach any and all Indians, regardless of caste distinctions.

The Salvationists were always eager to identify their successes in converting the truly down and out, including members of the lowest classes and even those who had turned to a life of crime. In his book *Darkest India*, Booth-Tucker included several biographies of reformed criminals who were allegedly saved through the ministry of the Salvation Army, including some who went on to become officers themselves. One such man was Hira Singh, formerly a soldier in the Indian Army. “For many years his conduct was excellent, but latterly he took to drinking, got into serious trouble with the police, and was sent to prison for forty days, thus losing his post as well as his claim to pension.” Upon his release from prison he became acquainted with the Salvationists, “gave his heart to God, and has now been an officer in our ranks for more than a year.”⁶³⁵ This story reflects key themes in the work of the SA including their campaign against alcohol and again the emphasis on training converts to preach to others. In this case, Lt. Singh went from a life in the Indian Army to officership in the *Salvation Army*.

Both *Darkest India* and *Trophies of the Jungle* arguably represented Indian officers in an overly dramatized fashion, using hyperbolic language and exciting illustrations to create stories that would fascinate the British reader. This style reveals an orientalism inherent in the Salvationists’ portrayal of their Indian converts that was fairly typical of imperial Britain. The Indians were exoticized as others through depictions of

⁶³⁴ Ibid., 47.

⁶³⁵ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India* (Bombay: Bombay Gazette Steam Print Works, 1891), 89.

their idol worship and descriptions of the “dark, naked forms of the natives.”⁶³⁶ While the Salvationists seemed as comfortable in using such language as other Britons, they did not maintain such a distance between themselves and the people they wished to convert. Indeed, the Salvationists’ version of orientalism was based on a desire to better relate to their target audience. The 1888 SA publication *Our Indian War*, describes Major Eshwar Das, the author of *Trophies of the Jungle*, in the following manner: “What a real Indian he looks! Even his skin seems a bit darker now.”⁶³⁷ The Salvation Army celebrated its missionaries’ abilities to connect with the Indian people. In describing a religious service in Gujarat, the SA wrote, “Not a European near the place, . . . save our officers, who would feel insulted at being considered anything but Gujarati.”⁶³⁸ These missionaries actually wanted to be seen as Indian. Likewise, the purpose of *Trophies of the Jungle* was to rejoice at the number of native-born Indians who had joined the Salvation Army, new converts whom they considered as equals within the organization. Despite the Western bias revealed in their publications, the Salvation Army in India embraced Indian culture and included Indian officers, both male and female, often in leadership positions as part of their recruitment and conversion strategy.

Lingering Tensions

The Salvation Army continued to import its unique ministry to India and Ceylon, complete with cultural adaptations and female leadership. While the missionaries did see improvements in their relations with British colonial officials, several aspects of the Salvation Army’s mission and tactics, some more subtle than others, could still be viewed

⁶³⁶ Das, 17.

⁶³⁷ “‘All the World’ in India,” in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 31.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 33.

as disrespectful to British imperial authority. While the Salvationists were eager to spread Christianity and provide aid to the poor of India, they remained indifferent to the promotion of other aspects of Western culture. For example, in 1889 General Booth gave an address in which he said:

What has European civilization done for the people of India? My own impression is that the millions of India would be very glad to see our backs to-morrow even if we took our boasted civilization with us, and a great many other things into the bargain; and I am not sure whether in such case they would be sufferers to the extent some of us are apt to imagine.⁶³⁹

While the essence of Booth's speech emphasized the importance of Christianity above all else, the form of his protest provided some decidedly anti-imperialist rhetoric. Even as the Salvationists worked to gain more government support and recognition, they remained derisive of any force that challenged the supremacy of religion.

Thus, as the Salvation Army expanded its work throughout India and Ceylon, the organization's relationship with the British colonial authorities grew more complex. Although the Salvationists' legal troubles had largely been eliminated by 1890 and they were beginning to provide a number of valuable social services to the people of India, conflict between the Christian missionaries and the colonial state persisted. A notable example of this tension was the case of W.M. Drysdale, a Salvationist and former member of the Indian police. After 21 years of service Drysdale was dismissed from his post in the Punjab police in 1890 for refusing to follow "Government orders prohibiting all interference with the religions of the Natives."⁶⁴⁰ The police superintendent could not abide Drysdale's preaching Christianity to the Indian people; such activity threatened the colonial state's position of dignified religious neutrality. Drysdale's superior within the

⁶³⁹ W. Booth, *The Future of Missions and The Mission of the Future*, 15.

⁶⁴⁰ W. McG. Drysdale, *Letter to General Booth*, 10 December 1894, File No. 2249.

police “wrote me in reference to my selling the War Cry, that he would not have his officers degraded by so doing.”⁶⁴¹

Interestingly, some contemporary sources that discuss Drysdale’s dismissal question whether he was fired specifically because he was a member of the Salvation Army or merely for preaching Christianity, regardless of his affiliation. The *Bombay Guardian* reported: “The official copy of his dismissal . . . does not contain one word about the S.A. It dismisses him for preaching the Gospel, and speaking of Christ to his subordinates.”⁶⁴² The fact that this Christian newspaper felt it necessary to make such a distinction indicates the commonly held assumption that being a Salvationist was likely to lead to arrest. The newspaper was very sympathetic to Drysdale and believed he was unfairly dismissed from the police; “Christians in heart, lip and life, such as our brother Drysdale, are wanted everywhere in India.”⁶⁴³ But this opinion was given only after the paper clarified that it was defending a general right to preach and not specifically supporting a member of the SA.

Other newspapers also defended Drysdale. The *Indian Standard* found his dismissal “most uncalled for,” while the *Harvest Field* said: “The action of Government, so far as we can judge of it now, seems not only extreme but highly unjust.”⁶⁴⁴ Drysdale’s situation became the focus of a public discourse on the role of Christianity in colonial society, and a debate on whether or not government officials should be allowed to spread their beliefs. While the colonial authorities clearly wanted to maintain distinct boundaries between church and state, they also faced a community of believers—of

⁶⁴¹ Ibid.

⁶⁴² “Weekly Review,” *Bombay Guardian*, 25 October 1890, p. 1.

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ “The Drysdale Case Again,” *Bombay Guardian*, 8 November 1890, p. 3.

whom the Salvation Army was a part—who strongly supported missionary work. Furthermore, according to the *Bombay Guardian* both European and Indian Christians defended Drysdale’s right to preach: “All our Indian Christian contemporaries have now spoken out plainly upon the Drysdale Case. Their united consensus of opinion strongly upholds the right of public officials to preach the Gospel to the Natives of India in their own time.”⁶⁴⁵

Despite such examples of public support for his right to preach, Drysdale still lost his job and the pension he would have received for his 21 years of government service. He petitioned the local authorities, and even wrote to Salvation Army General William Booth asking for assistance in convincing the government to grant him his pension in order that he might be able to support his wife and 5 children, but to no avail.⁶⁴⁶ This fact further illustrates the complex nature of the relationship between the Salvation Army and the colonial government. On the one hand, Drysdale believed he had been fired due to his activities as a Salvationist, on the other he felt General Booth had enough influence to convince the Secretary of State for India to reinstate his pension.

Even after his dismissal from the Punjab police and the elimination of his pension, Drysdale continued to serve as a Salvationist. The 1892 *Annual Report of the Salvation Army in Indian and Ceylon* included the following description of him:

Our old friend Bro. Drysdale, who as teacher and guide and captain of his jungly flock is happy as the day is long, even over such unusual occupations as cooking his own chapaties and dhobying his own dhotis or going round with the begging bowl to collect his modest stipend of coarse grain.⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴⁵ “Weekly Review,” *Bombay Guardian*, 29 November 1890, p. 1.

⁶⁴⁶ Drysdale.

⁶⁴⁷ *A Handful of Corn*, 6.

Far from dwelling on his previous life as an English civil servant, this quotation depicts Drysdale as embracing the most impoverished elements of Indian society. Drysdale not only exemplified the tension that existed between the Salvation Army and the Indian government, but he also embodied the sacrifice and devotion which the SA demanded of its converts.

Further tension with the Empire can be seen in the fact that even as the Salvationists began to identify themselves as a global organization, they implicitly challenged the foundations of the Empire that relied on racial prejudices and national loyalties. In a 1901 Salvation Army service held in Melbourne, Australia an officer observed:

In the ranks of the Salvation Army you can see almost every nationality; you can see members of nations that, though as such they hate each other, yet in our Army they march together in goodwill. You can see the German fraternizing with the Greek, the Englishman fraternizing with the Boer, the Indian fraternizing with their native enemy in the ranks of the Salvation Army.⁶⁴⁸

The speaker emphasized not only the international nature of the organization, but the belief that loyalty to the SA superseded loyalty to the state. The examples offered in this quotation were both timely and dramatic. The British were in the midst of a brutal conflict with the Boers in South Africa; thus, one could argue that by advocating friendship with the Boers the speaker was openly criticizing the actions of the British imperial leadership. Indeed, by highlighting the common goals and fraternization of peoples, the officer implicitly challenged the imperial model, even suggesting that the Salvation Army was capable of a diplomacy superior to that of the British Empire.

⁶⁴⁸ Quoted in "Missionary Meeting: In the Melbourne Town Hall," *India's Cry*, April 1901, 2.

Social Service Work

From the recruitment of new converts to officership to the use of popular music in religious services, Salvation Army policies from England were continually being transferred to India and adapted for use in the colonies. This was true not only for proselytization, but for the various social service programs implemented by the organization. From the earliest days of the Salvation Army in Great Britain, the denomination undertook a variety of charitable endeavors including soup kitchens, shelters, and homes for children. In 1890, General William Booth outlined a massive social service campaign in his book *Darkest England and the Way Out*. In 1891, the Bombay Gazette Steam Print Works published *Darkest India* by the General's son-in-law, Commissioner Frederick Booth-Tucker, outlining his plan for adapting the General's social scheme to serve the poor of India.

William Booth wrote of using the “cab horse charter” to set a minimum standard of food, shelter, and work for all the poor of England.⁶⁴⁹ Booth-Tucker likewise said India needed a “bullock charter.”⁶⁵⁰ While both of these men seem a bit melodramatic in likening the needs of the impoverished to those of pack animals, this is a clear example of how Booth-Tucker transplanted the General's work into the Indian setting. In *Darkest India* Booth-Tucker first outlined General Booth's social scheme, with its City Colonies, Country Colonies, and Overseas Colonies. “His object is to supply the destitute with food, shelter and clothing, to provide them with work and to set them on their feet for

⁶⁴⁹ W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, 27.

⁶⁵⁰ Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*., 4.

making a fresh start in life.”⁶⁵¹ These principles of hard work and self-sufficiency were emphasized throughout the Army’s efforts around the globe.

While Booth-Tucker clearly believed that the philosophies developed in Britain could be applied to India, he did acknowledge the differences in the two countries, particularly with regard to their geography. “Our country is not of limited extent like England. It covers an immense area and includes a conglomeration of nationalities . . . with the special advantage of being united under a single, and that a friendly Government.”⁶⁵² After the early years of tense confrontations and legal debates, this quotation now reveals an attempt by Booth-Tucker to complement the imperial authorities. He cited the colonial government of India as a benevolent force. This comment may be evidence of a generally improved relationship between the Salvationists and the British government. It is also an indication of Booth-Tucker’s astute attention to the strategy of missionary work; he would certainly need the support of the government to get his social scheme off the ground, thus it made sense to publicly cultivate a better relationship with colonial authorities.

Although he drew heavily on the General’s plan, the bulk of *Darkest India* offered Booth-Tucker’s own modifications and innovations for the work in India. Booth-Tucker provided the inspiration, the leadership, and now, the detailed plan for an extensive operation, applying the General’s ideas for city colonies, labor bureaus, food depots, rescue homes, country colonies, etc. alongside elements unique to India. For example, in discussing the creation of a labor bureau to find work for the poor, Booth-Tucker offered a lengthy list of twenty-four different trades in which the poor of India could be engaged.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁵² Ibid., 3.

Following in the Army tradition, he organized these tasks into “brigades,” including the weavers brigade, the ropemakers brigade, the shoemakers brigade, the tanners brigade, the carpenters brigade, the painters brigade, the umbrella makers brigade, etc.⁶⁵³

Booth-Tucker was particularly confident in the efficacy of this system in India given his belief that most Indian people were raised from childhood learning a particular trade, often based on their position within the caste system. In his memoir he wrote, “caste is a sort of gigantic *hereditary trades-unionism* of the most elaborate nature.”⁶⁵⁴ In *Darkest India* he argued: “You can rarely meet the most ignorant and uneducated Native without finding that he is thoroughly expert at some kind of handicraft.”⁶⁵⁵ These comments reveal Booth-Tucker’s often unique and complicated views on the Indian people. On the one hand, he revealed a clear Western bias in referring to the caste system as an organization of trade unions, completely ignoring the religious and cultural elements of the structure. At the same time, however, he showed a respect for Indian craftspeople that many Europeans did not.

Repeatedly Booth-Tucker articulated the Protestant emphasis on the importance of hard work. He wrote, “it is not an indiscriminate system of largely extended charity that we propose to provide. Our object is to find work for these workless multitudes.”⁶⁵⁶ Interestingly, when transferring this concept to India, Booth-Tucker extended the definition of work to include begging. In addition to all the brigades of skilled craftsmen he proposed to organize, he also suggested the implementation of a beggars’ brigade. He argued: “*Begging is hard work*. If you don’t believe it, come and try it! I and many of

⁶⁵³ Ibid., 68-71.

⁶⁵⁴ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 9.

⁶⁵⁵ Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*, 68.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., 48.

my officers have begged our food as religious mendicants.”⁶⁵⁷ In fact, he suggested the professionalizing of beggars, forming them into brigades, organizing their activities, and even honing their skills. He said, “In this we should also take the advice of experienced beggars, from whom we should expect to learn many useful hints.”⁶⁵⁸ This instance is another fascinating example of Booth-Tucker’s efforts to adapt to the local and Indian culture and ultimately use it for the benefit of the Salvation Army.

Darkest India was a plan for a massive social service effort, but it was fundamentally a religious endeavor. Booth-Tucker made it clear “that all will be helped, irrespective of their creed.”⁶⁵⁹ Nevertheless, those carrying out the work would be Christian soldiers with a strong religious focus and sense of purpose. The Salvationists certainly believed that their faith was key to their efforts, but some outsiders expressed a similar sentiment. According to Booth-Tucker:

No less an authority than Mr. John Morley, M.P. remarked when he first heard of General Booth’s scheme, that he considered its combination of religion with the other details of the plan of campaign was its most hopeful feature, and would be most likely to ensure its success.⁶⁶⁰

Here we have a British government official suggesting that the religion of the Salvation Army could be valuable to their society.

The overall significance of Booth-Tucker’s *Darkest India* was multi-faceted. First, there was the application of Salvation Army efforts at home in Britain to the environment of India. Second, his adaptations of Booth’s original plan revealed a keen interest in Indian culture and practices. Most significantly, in outlining such a large-scale social service endeavor Booth-Tucker highlighted the assistance that the Salvation Army

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., 81.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., 74.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 135.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 98.

could potentially offer to the British Empire. Here was a group anxious to work with the most impoverished portion of the Indian population. Furthermore, the SA in India was a “cheap and efficient agency.” Colonial authorities must have been impressed that an organization such as this wanted to address issues of poverty, hunger, and unemployment in India. Booth-Tucker said of the Army, “we are able to supply skilled leadership under devoted and self-sacrificing men and women for a merely nominal cost.”⁶⁶¹

The connections between Booth’s *Darkest England* and Booth-Tucker’s *Darkest India* must also have helped to improve the Indian colonial government’s opinion of the Salvationists. Booth-Tucker concluded his book with over twelve pages of reviews for General Booth’s plan written by dignitaries in both Britain and India. Even His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, “writes to express his interest in the scheme.”⁶⁶² Surely endorsements from royals and politicians back in England would have encouraged colonial authorities to show an interest in the efforts of the Salvation Army abroad. Although neither General Booth nor Commissioner Booth-Tucker were able to see their elaborate plans realized to their full extent, these two manifestos served as a basis for a great deal of social service work for the Salvation Army both at home and in India. In carrying out these activities, the Salvationists were able to display their usefulness to the state, develop an improved relationship with the colonial authorities, and obtain support from the British.

For example, Booth-Tucker pursued his goal of developing self-sufficient ‘land colonies’ in which poor, landless Indians would work together under the leadership of the Salvationists to feed themselves. The first of these was a colony called Muktipur

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., 130.

⁶⁶² Ibid., 140.

(meaning ‘place of salvation’) established in Gujarat. Here the Salvationists were the recipients of British support in the form of 557 acres of land.⁶⁶³ In one of the first instances of collaboration between the Salvationists and the Empire, this facility with the Christian-influenced name was subsidized by the colonial government. Although the missionaries faced some initial difficulties they were eventually able to sink wells and successfully cultivate the land, under the leadership of an Indian officer, Major Naran Prag.

In addition to the land colonies, food distribution and famine relief programs established in keeping with Booth-Tucker’s plans provided great aid when famines struck in 1896 and 1900. In one month during the 1896 famine the SA reported the distribution of 60 tons of free grain, as well as the sale of another 63 tons at a discounted rate, from 41 different depots.⁶⁶⁴ A November 1900 issue of *India’s Cry* gave an account of the continued government efforts to help famine victims, stating: “Regarding the help that the Army has been able to render, it will be a satisfaction to our readers to know that the Cheap Food Depots and gratuitous relief to poor and to school children is still going on.”⁶⁶⁵ Programs such as these helped to draw positive attention, and eventually financial support, from the colonial government.

As part of their missions in India, the Salvationists also established many schools. These institutions were certainly representative of what Harald Fischer-Tiné refers to as the civilizing mission of the nineteenth-century British Empire. Colonial policymakers believed that the Indians needed character development and to be taught proper

⁶⁶³ S. Smith, 53.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁶⁶⁵ “The Famine,” *India’s Cry*, November 1900, 8.

conduct.⁶⁶⁶ Naturally the Salvationists used schools such as this to promote Christianity. For example, Lt. Colonel Matilda Hatcher described her work at a SA school for lower-caste girls in her book entitled *The Untouchables*. In addition to prayers and Bible studies, these young ladies were taught skills including silk reeling, bead work, and embroidery. The school not only aimed at gaining converts, but also at providing these girls with an opportunity to earn a living and become more valuable members of colonial society. A highlight of Hatcher's efforts at the school included escorting several girls to an event at Territorial Headquarters in which products from a number of Salvationist industries were placed on display for government officials. The Vicerine herself even shook hands with each girl and admired their work. Hatcher reported that the girls made a strong impression on the government officials who did not have much experience with "untouchables."⁶⁶⁷

By 1899 the North India Territory alone reported 28 schools, including the Famine Industrial School at Madavaram.⁶⁶⁸ In 1900 this school reported a very positive visit from the Government School Inspector, who observed, ". . . the children are well instructed, and the general condition of the school is very satisfactory, and shows signs of much pains having been taken."⁶⁶⁹ Based on this favorable evaluation, the school was recommended for a government grant-in-aid. This is merely one example of how the colonial government financially supported Salvation Army social initiatives. In proving the utility of their efforts, the Salvationists were able to secure further support from the

⁶⁶⁶ Harald Fischer-Tiné, "National Education, Pulp Fiction and the Contradictions of Colonialism: Perceptions of an Education Experiment in Early-Twentieth-Century-India," in *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission*, Harald Fischer-Tiné and Michael Mann, eds. (London: Wimbledon Publishing Company, 2004), 229.

⁶⁶⁷ Lt. Col. Matilda Hatcher, *The Untouchables* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1928), 58.

⁶⁶⁸ S. Smith, 73.

⁶⁶⁹ "From Madras and Telugu Territory," *India's Cry*, September 1901, 7.

imperial state. In December of that same year, the Salvation Army reported the awarding of British government grants to five of their schools.⁶⁷⁰ By 1911 the Salvationists boasted 409 Village Day Schools as well as 20 Industrial Homes for children, with over 10,000 boys and girls being served.⁶⁷¹ While these schools provided a service to the Empire, they also provided the Salvationists with a forum for spreading their religion.

Job training and the development of local industries was part of the Salvation Army's mission for both children and adults. In keeping with his *Darkest India* scheme, Booth-Tucker worked to open training homes (both spiritual and industrial) and factories for handicrafts. Once again he proved innovative in his efforts. Booth-Tucker decided that raising silk-worms would be a good industry for the people of India and the Salvation Army began producing silk. As he led the SA in carrying out this project, Booth-Tucker repeatedly tried to influence government policy. He urged the British government to study the viability of silk as a local industry and he pressured them to take measures to protect Indian silkworms from disease.⁶⁷² While Booth-Tucker appears to have been frustrated by a lack of success in these attempts, it is fairly significant that he felt himself in a position to promote such endeavors. Once again, he acted like a political leader instead of a religious figure, and he expected Indian authorities to take his views seriously.

Along with silk production, the Salvation Army also promoted the weaving industry in India. In this area, the major innovation came from an officer named Staff-Captain Maxwell. Maxwell, known for his mechanical skill, had been sent to live among weavers of Gujarat to learn from their practices. He later invented a new, faster loom, as

⁶⁷⁰ "South Indian Scraps," *India's Cry*, December 1901, 3.

⁶⁷¹ Booth-Tucker, *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon*, 1.

⁶⁷² Mackenzie, 209-210.

well as an improved warping machine.⁶⁷³ The Maxwell loom earned quite a bit of attention. It was exhibited in several cities and received numerous awards. A factory was established to produce the machines in Bombay. Sir George Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, actually visited the factory, wanting to make the loom available to more poor people in the villages.⁶⁷⁴ By 1911 the Salvationists claimed 7 weaving schools and 130 looms at work.⁶⁷⁵ They managed to make a valuable contribution to local industries, based largely on what Maxwell learned from the Indian weavers themselves.

As the Salvationists worked to develop new industries for the Indians they became aware of another difficulty affecting the financial stability of the local poor, namely the high interest rates of Indian money-lenders. So, the Salvation Army established its own village banking system, which lent money at a low interest rate to help people buy land. A 1906 SA report cited 22 village banks in operation, including one village in which the people were so grateful they took up a collection and purchased a parcel of land that they then donated to the Salvation Army.⁶⁷⁶ Several years after the Salvationists created these banks the British government passed legislation for Co-operative Credit Societies and helped eliminate the problem of high interest rates facing the poor. As such, the Salvation Army banking system died out, but Salvationist historians like F.A. Mackenzie argued that in this area, “Booth-Tucker gave a lead to official India.”⁶⁷⁷ That is, he believed the colonial government passed their legislation based on the work of the Salvation Army. While there is no evidence that the government developed its policy based directly on the example of the Salvationists, this

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 208.

⁶⁷⁴ S. Smith, 90-91.

⁶⁷⁵ Booth-Tucker, *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon*, 2.

⁶⁷⁶ Quoted in S. Smith, 76.

⁶⁷⁷ Mackenzie, 210.

is an indication of increased cooperation in the development of similar programs by both the missionaries and the colonial government.

The Prison Gate Brigade constituted another significant branch of the SA's social work in India. By the time *Darkest India* was published in 1891, the Salvationists had already been working for two years with prisons in the cities of Bombay and Colombo, Ceylon. They operated homes for released prisoners to help them reestablish themselves in society. A Salvation Army annual report included the following description of the Colombo home:

The beauty of the surroundings must be a pleasant contrast to those dull prison walls from which the inmates have just escaped. Still more blessed and cheering must be the change from the Warden's stern commands to the affectionate welcome and kindly attentions of the red-jacketed Salvationists.⁶⁷⁸

The officers of the Salvation Army defined themselves in direct contrast to the Indian police; the jailers were harsh and unkind, whereas they depicted themselves as friendly and helpful.

And yet, in establishing these release homes the Salvationists were ultimately providing a useful service to the colonial government. Their assistance helped prevent at least some freed prisoners from immediately returning to criminal behavior. Statistics for one year in the late-1880s show 230 men admitted to the Colombo home, with situations found for 115 of them.⁶⁷⁹ The Salvationists also happily boasted that many of these residents actually became converts, and some even went on to officership like the above-mentioned Lt. Singh. The Bombay Prison Gate Home reported 134 men admitted in one year of whom 74 professed conversion, 12 of these men then went on to become

⁶⁷⁸ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*, 84-85.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

officers.⁶⁸⁰ Finding employment for the men was of course key to their work, but the Salvationists argued: “The spiritual welfare of those who come to us is, of course, with us the most important consideration of all.”⁶⁸¹ Religion remained of paramount importance to the Salvation Army; helping these released convicts become productive members of society was both a gateway toward their religious conversion, and a benefit to the British Empire.

Success with these prison gate homes drew positive attention from outsiders. In 1890 a reporter from the *Bombay Guardian* paid a visit to SA facilities in Ceylon. He wrote: “I have sometimes formed high expectations of Christian work in particular places and been disappointed when visiting the scenes themselves. My experience with the Salvationists at Colombo has not been of that description.”⁶⁸² He was impressed with the officers in charge and the number of prisoners who that had converted to Christianity and/or been helped to find gainful employment. The colonial authorities were likewise pleased with the efforts of the Salvationists. By 1896, the government was more closely supervising the work of the home in Colombo and subsidizing its operation with a monthly grant.⁶⁸³ As the *Bombay Guardian* reported, “The Government wisely look upon this work as one of crime prevention.”⁶⁸⁴ Clearly, the Salvationists had proven their utility to the colonial authorities and in so doing, merited collaboration including financial support.

By the 1890s the Salvationists had also extended their activities to include yet another valuable service in the form of medical missions. This work began in southern

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 88.

⁶⁸¹ “Prison Gate Brigades.” in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 27.

⁶⁸² “A Day With The Salvation Army in Ceylon,” *Bombay Guardian*, 8 February 1890, p. 3.

⁶⁸³ “Social Progress,” *India’s Cry*, May 1896, 4.

⁶⁸⁴ “A Day With The Salvation Army in Ceylon.”

India in the city of Nagercoil. A dispensary was opened there in 1895; in 1901 the Catherine Booth Hospital was established, much to the delight of local dignitaries including the Prime Minister of the State of Travancore who ceremonially laid out the first stone at the event marking the hospital's construction.⁶⁸⁵ An article in *India's Cry* of November of that year reported that Dr. Percy Turner, the first Salvationist Doctor in India, was not only interviewed by the Maharajah, but also received a donation of 300 rupees for Catherine Booth Hospital. The Salvationists wrote: "May the blessing of the Lord rest upon His Highness for this generous gift."⁶⁸⁶ Narayana Muthiah's history of the SA in Travancore cited numerous donations and visits to the hospital on the part of the Maharajahs.⁶⁸⁷ Medical missions clearly brought the Salvation Army much respect and support from local authorities.

But although the Salvationists certainly saw the physical need for hospitals among the people of India, they were still concerned about the ability of such facilities to address the church's primary goal of winning converts. Dr. Turner's wife was quoted on the subject:

'Hospital work,' she writes, 'while having perhaps a more extensive influence even than ordinary Missionary work, does not always result in a considerable number of conversions. The spiritual side of the work mainly consists in the sowing of seed; but the students and staff of the Catherine Booth Hospital have been granted many an encouraging evidence of spiritual fruit.'⁶⁸⁸

While Mrs. Turner acknowledged the limitations of medical missions, she still maintained the Salvationists' emphasis on religion in all missionary endeavors. Even in

⁶⁸⁵ S. Smith, 78.

⁶⁸⁶ "South Indian Scraps," *India's Cry*, November 1901, 5.

⁶⁸⁷ Muthiah, 21.

⁶⁸⁸ Quoted in: Brigadier Margaret Allen, *Harvests of the East*, The Warrior's Library No.XV. (London: The Salvation Army Book Department, 1909), 49.

the hospital, religious services were held among the wards. Historian Maina Chawla Singh has acknowledged that the practical success of such medical and educational missions among Indian women, helped to lend missionaries credibility in promoting their religion. She wrote, “this [work] enabled them to continue with their evangelical endeavours and weave in the gospel even as they taught and treated local women.”⁶⁸⁹

The pioneer and hero of Salvation Army medical work in India was a young man named Harry Andrews. Orphaned as a child, Emma Booth took him under her wing, and when she married Frederick Tucker and moved to India, 15-year-old Harry accompanied her. Harry became a Salvation Army officer at the age of 17 and was appointed to assist with the work in Nagercoil.⁶⁹⁰ It was Harry’s interest in medicine and his own personal efforts that led to the opening of the first dispensary and hospital. The General sent him back to London for medical training.⁶⁹¹ As a qualified medical doctor he returned to India and assisted in the opening of other Salvation Army hospitals. Young Doctor Andrews further proved himself to be a hero not only of the Salvation Army, but of the British Empire as well when he was killed in action during WWI and awarded the Victoria Cross.⁶⁹²

The Salvation Army also worked to connect with the imperial military, developing a ministry among the Indian Army. In the spring of 1896, they boasted 120 members among the military.⁶⁹³ By September of that same year, membership had increased to 207.⁶⁹⁴ The Salvationists work among the military represents a noteworthy

⁶⁸⁹ Maina Chawla Singh, “Gender, Thrift and Indigenous Adaptations: money and missionary medicine in colonial India,” *Women’s History Review* 5 (November 2006): 703.

⁶⁹⁰ S. Smith, 77.

⁶⁹¹ Muthiah, 19.

⁶⁹² S. Smith, 80.

⁶⁹³ “‘Our Boys’: Civil, Naval, and Military League Mems,” *India’s Cry*, April 1896, 13.

⁶⁹⁴ “Civil, Naval, and Military League Notes,” *India’s Cry*, September 1896, 7.

convergence of empire, authority, race, and religion. In this setting the missionaries were working to bring their ideals directly into the heart of an organization that represented colonial authority; at the same time they were interested in both British soldiers and native-born members of the Indian Army.

Ministering among the military continued to be a priority for the Salvationists. A 1900 news article stated:

The Military side of our work is still going on to with blessed results. There has been a change of companies lately, and some of our lads have gone away to a place where there is no Corps, but in each place they are having meetings on their own account and write to report victory in their own soul and souls won for King Jesus' while others of the new companies have come forward to take their places here and fight beneath the blood stained banner of the Cross. Hallelujah.⁶⁹⁵

This account suggests that not only had the Salvationists managed to win converts within the military, but those converts had actually carried on the fight, so to speak, and continued to worship on their own even in areas where the Salvation Army had no corps. Once again there is evidence of the 'saved to serve' motto in action. Likewise, the parallel between imperial soldiers and soldiers for God is also reinforced. The imagery of these recruits "fighting" beneath the blood stained banner of the cross is dramatic. As a later article indicated, these soldiers "are fighting bravely under our flag as well as the Empire's."⁶⁹⁶

Within a decade of their first invasion, the Salvationists had managed to establish a significant missionary presence in India, with a variety of projects and facilities. In many respects their schools and hospitals are representative of the larger phenomenon of British Protestant missionaries. But in some ways the Salvationists were indeed unique

⁶⁹⁵ "An Interesting Report: Bombay I," *India's Cry*, July 1900, 3.

⁶⁹⁶ "Our Military League," *India's Cry*, January 1902, 13.

in their work. They sent several major parties of missionaries including the Wedding Fifty and the Memorial Fifty. In the two year period between 1886 and 1888 alone they sent eight groups for a total of no fewer than 189 missionaries.⁶⁹⁷ As of September 1893, the Salvation Army reported having 431 officers at work in India, with 10,089 enrolled soldiers.⁶⁹⁸ This number seems extremely limited when compared with the entire population of India, nevertheless it does represent significant progress in obtaining converts and a fairly rapid growth rate. Furthermore, this statistic does not begin to fully express the impact of the Salvation Army's work in India. This is merely the number of fully enrolled soldiers, it does not include the total number of church attendees or those who benefited from Salvationist social service outposts such as schools, hospitals, famine relief depots, and rescue homes. As in England, the Salvation Army devoted more attention to these social programs than many other churches.

Meanwhile, the Salvationists continually worked hard to make their message heard. In addition to the *War Cry* and numerous other publications in England, they created other periodicals in India which were distributed widely—both in English and several local languages. These included *Jangi Pokar* in Gujarat, *Singhanard* in Marathi, *Por Sattam* in Tamil, and *Yuddha Ghosava* in Singhalese. As of 1888, *Jangi Pokar* boasted a monthly circulation of 1,000.⁶⁹⁹ By 1893 the SA reported 30,800 Indian and Singhalese *War Cry*s sold monthly.⁷⁰⁰

As the Salvationists' work in India continued to grow, their relationship with colonial authorities showed signs of improvement. Instead of arrests and prosecutions,

⁶⁹⁷ "Our Missionaries," in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 22.

⁶⁹⁸ *A Year's Advance*, 5.

⁶⁹⁹ "Gujarat," in *Our Indian War* (London: The Salvation Army, 1888?), 20.

⁷⁰⁰ *A Year's Advance*, 10, 35.

they became the recipients of police support. For example, at the opening of the Coimbatore Temple there was a huge crowd crushing the gates to get in, but the SA reported:

Fortunately the crowd was regulated in their rush by a small body of police, who did us good service at the gates till the meeting commenced, when they joined us inside, seeming as much interested in the proceedings as any of the others present.⁷⁰¹

According to this story, the police not only provided the Salvationists with valuable assistance in managing large crowds, but the officers themselves expressed interest in the ministry. Obviously, we have no indication what the police themselves thought of the situation, but even a willingness to calmly allow the Salvationist proceedings to continue shows a great improvement from the first days in Bombay.

Government Recognition

A further sign of improved relations between the Salvation Army and colonial authorities came with the reception of General William Booth when he visited in India in 1891 and 1896. While in India, the General not only ministered to great crowds, but met with many public figures and government officials. While in Madras,

The General lectured in the Government Banqueting Hall to an audience which included H.H. the Maharajah of Mysore and Captain Lawly, Military Secretary to the Governor; and a large gathering of Hindu and Mahomedan gentlemen listened to him with equal delight in a meeting convened in the Victoria Hall.⁷⁰²

Booth was welcomed by both Indian and British authorities, as well as by members of the Indian Hindu and Muslim communities. While we must question whether these men were truly “delighted” by the presence of the Salvation Army leader, the fact that he was

⁷⁰¹ “Opening of Coimbatore Temple,” 13.

⁷⁰² *A Handful of Corn*, 16.

allowed to speak in a government facility to this religiously diverse audience indicates a significant amount of public acceptance and even admiration for General Booth and his Army. In Calcutta, Booth even had interviews with the Viceroy and Lieutenant Governor. Members of the police, magistrates, and other officials attended his religious meetings.⁷⁰³

Shortly following General Booth's first visit to India he was interviewed at his home by a British journalist named Raymond Blathwayt. As a follow-up question to Booth's description of his recent tour Blathwayt asked, "After so many brilliant triumphs I may take it that you are becoming not only a great religious leader but even a great political influence in India?"⁷⁰⁴ Such a query by an independent journalist provides a dramatic illustration of the manner in which the work of the Salvation Army had become increasingly intertwined with British imperial power. General Booth responded to Blathwayt's question in the affirmative, later stating: "Just as in India we are turning the hearts of the natives to regard British rule with affection, . . . so here in England we will aid with all out heart and soul the forces that make for righteousness toward God, and for loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen."⁷⁰⁵ In this statement, Booth identified the Salvationists as virtual ambassadors of the British government. In addition, the General drew a clear connection between imperial efforts and work in the metropole.

In 1896, Booth-Tucker and Henry Bullard traveled ahead of the General, meeting with dignitaries and setting up a schedule for Booth in India. On this second visit the

⁷⁰³ Ibid., 16.

⁷⁰⁴ Raymond Blathwayt, "At Home at Hadley Wood," in *Interviews* (London: A.W. Hall, 1893) quoted in R.G. Moyles, ed. *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007), 2.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid., 5.

General was able to focus more specifically on promoting some of the Army's social service programs. According to Booth-Tucker:

The general outcome of these proposals, however, had a far reaching effect which extended beyond our own borders, and resulted in widespread efforts on the part of the Government itself as well as of the Indian Community at large to ameliorate the condition of the depressed and suffering classes very much along the lines sketched by our founder.⁷⁰⁶

If reports such as this are to be believed, the Salvation Army had by this point not only gained the support of the imperial officials, but now the Salvationists were actually influencing British government policies.

By the close of the nineteenth century the Salvation Army had firmly established its work in India as a key complement to its efforts elsewhere around the globe including at home in Britain. Meanwhile, the Salvationists made a concerted, and apparently successful, effort to develop a mutually amicable relationship with the highest levels of the British government. For example, in December 1896, after his second visit to India, General William Booth met with the former Prime Minister William Gladstone at his home at Hawarden Castle. The preacher and the statesmen apparently had a pleasant conversation in which Booth was able to illuminate for Gladstone the nature and extent of the Salvation Army's activities both at home and abroad. The mere fact that Booth was entertained by so prominent a politician of the era suggests that the Salvationists had clearly established themselves as a legitimate and active religious organization—one which the state acknowledged.

This event was significant not only in that William Gladstone cordially welcomed William Booth, but also in the manner in which the Salvation Army chose to utilize this

⁷⁰⁶ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 141.

fact. Booth didn't simply meet with Gladstone; a month later he published a short book recounting their conversation. The Salvationists were again quick to seize any opportunity to boost their cause. In this case, they produced a pamphlet indicating a friendly, respectful relationship with one of the most prominent statesmen of the century. The booklet's introduction included a letter from Gladstone in which he stated that what he learned from his meeting with Booth, ". . . encourages hearty good will towards all that, under whatever name, is done with a genuine purpose to promote the work of God in the world."⁷⁰⁷ Although in this statement Gladstone really only offers general support to Christian missionaries, not necessarily the Salvationists in particular, William Booth's publication of it is clearly designed to suggest that the Salvation Army had received Gladstone's special backing.

Throughout the pamphlet Booth outlined efforts, accomplishments, and statistics of the Salvation Army, frequently drawing attention to examples in which Gladstone was surprised and impressed by the strength and scope of their work. For example, when Booth informed him that they sent over two hundred British personnel abroad each year, "He [Gladstone] thought that was a very remarkable evidence of the strength as well as the vitality of the movement."⁷⁰⁸ Likewise, when told that most of their budget came from voluntary contributions of the poor among whom they worked, "he said two or three times that it was very remarkable."⁷⁰⁹ Thus Booth was able to count on the public support of a prominent English political figure.

⁷⁰⁷ William Booth, *A Talk With Mr. Gladstone: at Hawarden, December 1896* (London : IHQ Printing and Publishing Offices, 1897), 8.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

But Booth was careful not to merely take advantage of Gladstone's goodwill. In many instances he complemented and praised the Prime Minister. Booth was impressed by his geniality, his earnestness, and his penetrating thought. "Mr. Gladstone's sympathies are as wide as the seas, and no difference of race or language seems to abate his interest in the problems of all nations."⁷¹⁰ Booth's praise of Gladstone helped contribute to a positive relationship between the Salvationists and the liberal government of the time. Booth chose to advertise this rapport both at home and abroad; excerpts of his book on the conversation were also printed in a Salvation Army periodical in India, in an effort to demonstrate political support for the Salvationists' work.⁷¹¹

Booth's associations extended not only to the prime minister, but to the Queen as well. The 1897 Diamond Jubilee celebrating the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign, the longest of any British monarch, was steeped in imperial pageantry. Representatives from throughout the Empire, including soldiers and princes from India, came to London. Grand parades full of pomp and ceremony were held to highlight the strength of the Queen and her Empire. The Salvation Army would not be left out of such celebrations. General Booth sent a congratulatory message to the Queen:

I desire to offer my assurances of the faithfulness of my people in all parts of your empire to your Majesty's throne and person, and their determination to continue to devote their lives to promoting such works of religion and mercy as are calculated to benefit all classes, but especially the least fortunate of your Majesty's subjects, and by binding them together in the love and favor of God, to help extend throughout your empire those principles of truth and righteousness which ensure order and good government, and which are the foundations of lasting prosperity.⁷¹²

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.,41-42, 23.

⁷¹¹ "A Talk with Mr. Gladstone," *India's Cry*, February 1897, 10-11.

⁷¹² "The General's Message to the Queen: London," *India's Cry*, August 1897, 3.

This statement clearly identifies the Salvation Army as present throughout the British Empire, working diligently to create good subjects and help ensure law and order. At the same time, Booth revealed the Salvationists' preoccupation with the lower classes, a feeling which the Queen may or may not have shared.

Even more exciting for the Salvation Army, however, was the Queen's kind reply to Booth's message. She thanked the Salvationists for their thoughtful congratulatory wishes, and offered the group high praise, writing:

Her Majesty fully recognizes the great and varied works so courageously undertaken by The Army on behalf of so many of their unhappy fellow-creatures in different parts of her empire.

The Queen fervently trusts that Divine guidance and blessing may accompany all future efforts of The Army.⁷¹³

In this moment the Queen appeared to wholeheartedly endorse the activities of the Salvation Army throughout the empire. This exchange, which Booth did not hesitate to publish in an Indian periodical, offered written proof that the Salvationists were good citizens, and that they had the freedom to continue their work overseas backed by the highest possible imperial authority.

William Booth also took advantage of another, less happy milestone to both compliment the government and promote the work of the Salvation Army—the Queen's death in 1901. The front page of the imperial Salvationist publication *India's Cry* included a large article on Her Majesty written by the General himself. Again he praised Victoria, complimenting her "wisdom," "courage," "fidelity to the highest interests of the nation," and her "conspicuous example of Moral Courage."⁷¹⁴ He also commended the Queen because, "She has for many years been interested in the Salvation Army, and quite

⁷¹³ Ibid., 3.

⁷¹⁴ William Booth, "Queen Victoria: Letter from the General," *India's Cry*, March 1901, 1.

early in its history she did not hesitate both to manifest that interest and express her sympathy with its work.”⁷¹⁵ In this statement Booth once again managed to both extol the virtues of the Queen and praise his own organization. The implication was obvious that if a woman as wise and virtuous as the Queen was quick to recognize the merits of the Salvation Army, others would be foolish and ignorant not to do so. Furthermore, Booth concluded his eulogy with a call for action. After highlighting Victoria’s achievements he demanded: “What are you going to do with your lives, humble and simple though they may be? . . . Up! Do your work, and be ready for the Master’s call!”⁷¹⁶ Booth played upon the sympathies of a nation mourning its Queen while making a dramatic call for volunteers for his organization.

In keeping with this strategy, the May 1901 issue of *India’s Cry* offered words of introduction and support for Victoria’s son and heir, King Edward VII. “The sympathies of all true Salvationists as of all other loyal subjects of the Crown in all parts of the British Empire go out to the King.”⁷¹⁷ Here the Salvationists firmly identified themselves as loyal subjects and supporters of the Empire. But once again, the article made sure to inform readers that the new King had also shown an interest in the work of the Salvation Army.

Thus, between the 1880s and the transition of power following Queen Victoria’s death, the Salvation Army made a concerted effort to demonstrate its devotion to the British government, while simultaneously drawing attention to the imperial recognition received by the organization. The Salvationists availed themselves of every opportunity to promote their denomination and call for further volunteers. While their flattering

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., 1.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷¹⁷ “King Edward VII of Great Britain and Ireland and Emperor of India,” *India’s Cry*, May 1901, 1.

comments, earnest condolences, and statements of continued support for the monarchs were undoubtedly sincere, it seems clear that William Booth and his Salvationists remained continually focused on their agenda of strengthening their organization and winning new converts.

As their work extended throughout the Empire, the Salvationists' relationship with the British government became increasingly complex and underscored the Salvation Army's ambiguous association with colonialism. In many ways, the Salvation Army genuinely regarded itself as an arm of the Empire, as the following quotation from a speech at a 1901 SA service in Melbourne, Australia suggests:

Take India! . . . Our fathers went through it with fire and sword; . . . confiscated a great portion of its land, and justified themselves in doing it by telling the world that they thought that great nation, with its twenty different languages, and 250 millions, would be happier and more prosperous under the beneficent rule of the British Empire. Now the time has come for us to fulfill their word, and since we have taken this great heritage within the precincts of our great Empire, we are responsible for finding men and women, with hearts and souls fired with the love of Jesus, to go forth and take to these millions the priceless gift.⁷¹⁸

From the far corner of the Empire came this impassioned plea for further missionary service. Here the Salvationist speaker showed clear support for British imperial efforts, anxious that his organization justify their conquests. In his mind, missionaries of the Salvation Army were a clear and necessary extension of imperial influence.

By the turn of the twentieth century the Salvation Army had managed to solidify its position as a successful religious and charitable organization, both at home in England and around the world. A 1907 Salvationist publication offered updates on the SA's various mission fields scattered throughout the globe. Writing the chapter on the work in India and Ceylon, Booth-Tucker summarized the transition the organization had

⁷¹⁸ "Missionary Meeting: In the Melbourne Town Hall," *India's Cry*, April 1901, 2.

experienced since arriving in India 25 years prior and facing numerous arrests and prosecutions.

Now what a contrast! The Salvation Army is looked upon by all classes as a public benefactor. Government officials welcome its leading Officers, and consult with them as to the best methods for helping the people.⁷¹⁹

As evidence of the Salvationists' improved status Booth-Tucker cited an impressive list of imperial officials with whom he had recently met including the Viceroy of India, the Governors of Bombay, Madras, and Ceylon, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and the Maharajah of Travancore. According to Booth-Tucker, "Not only was their attitude friendly, but it was most cordial, and they discussed with evident interest the various plans which The Army has introduced for the social welfare of India."⁷²⁰

The Salvationists repeatedly demonstrated support for the British Empire in their own discussions of the Salvation Army's work in India. Frederick Booth-Tucker's third wife, the former Lt. Col. Minnie Reid, herself the daughter of the onetime Acting Governor of Bombay, extolled the virtues of the Empire in the introduction to a lecture she gave in the early-twentieth century on the Salvation Army in India. Mrs. Booth-Tucker said, "Under the Flag of the British Empire, however, a practical League of Nations had existed amongst the 319 millions of her population. During the last hundred years the Pax Britannica has prevailed."⁷²¹ In setting the context of the Salvationists' efforts in India, she first referred to the Empire, identifying it as an institution that was able to successfully connect the people of Britain with those of the subcontinent. She

⁷¹⁹ Frederick Booth-Tucker, "India and Ceylon," in *More Salvation Army War Despatches: Being a Brief View of Salvation Army Work in Various Countries in the Spring of 1907*, Bramwell Booth, ed. (London: The Salvation Army, 1907), 1.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷²¹ Com. Minnie Booth-Tucker, *India's Millions: Being a Summary of a Lecture on the work of the Salvation Army in India* (Edinburgh: Marshall Bros. Ltd., Undated), 4.

saw the Empire as a benevolent organization and a unifying factor for all its peoples. While it seems highly unlikely that most Britons experienced the sort of imperial unity that Mrs. Booth-Tucker suggested, the fact that she professed belief in such a connection with all the Queen's subjects is significant to our understanding of the Salvation Army missionaries in India. She drew a clear connection between their missionary efforts and the strength of the British Empire, both at home and abroad.

Mrs. Booth-Tucker was quick to identify India as "the most self-governed country in the world."⁷²² She praised the native-run village councils, the authority of the Indian princes, and the number of Indians in the Indian Civil Service as examples of this. Her accolades, however, were most strongly directed toward the British government for establishing such a system, rather than acknowledging the worthiness of Indian personnel in such areas. In fact, she later said, "In a country which is, at present, so saturated with bribery, corruption, and perjury, and so torn with racial and religious feuds, it is difficult to over-estimate the value of the British official, who stands for fairness, justice, and honesty all the time."⁷²³ So although Mrs. Booth-Tucker may in principle have believed in the concept of self-government, she firmly believed that the British offered the best example of such behavior.

With the development of successful social service programs in Britain, the Salvation Army gained increasing respect from the British government. The same was true of their efforts in India. As they extended their activities in India, General William Booth and his followers eventually demonstrated the value of their organizations' charitable endeavors and thereby developed a more positive relationship with government

⁷²² Ibid., 4.

⁷²³ Ibid., 6.

authorities. The disturbances and arrests of their early years in India were long forgotten as the Salvation Army implemented more and more social service projects, proving themselves quite beneficial to colonial authorities. Meanwhile, the Salvationists continued to take every opportunity to draw public attention to any praise and recognition they received, hoping to increase donations and further extend their work.

But while the Salvationists took pride in these relationships with colonial officials and truly considered themselves good citizens of the Empire, advancing their personal, religious cause remained foremost in their hearts. General Booth told his missionaries not to trouble themselves teaching the Indians to eat with silverware or wear trousers or follow other European conventions. He said: “Your mission is not to take civilization to the Heathen, but Christianity.”⁷²⁴ Spreading religion, and not the trappings of British civilization, remained the primary focus of the Salvation Army. Commissioner George S. Railton echoed that sentiment in 1913 when he wrote of Salvationist missionaries: “But, amidst it all, we persist in holding up the same high standards as to close personal intercourse with God and a daily walk well-pleasing in His sight, which have been, and always must be, our strength in every land.”⁷²⁵ But even as religion remained the primary focus of all Salvationists, the organization’s relations with colonial officials continued to improve, ultimately leading to the missionaries’ greatest collaboration with imperial authorities—their work with the so-called criminal tribes of India.

⁷²⁴ W. Booth, *The Future of Missions and the Mission of the Future*, 14.

⁷²⁵ Commissioner George S. Railton, *Some Prophecies Fulfilled: Being a Brief Account of Some Aspects of Salvation Army Work in Various Countries* (London: The Salvation Army, 1913), 94.

CHAPTER VII: THE SALVATION ARMY AND THE CRIMINAL TRIBES

By the early-twentieth century, the Salvation Army missionaries had developed a unique and complex relationship with the Indian police and other colonial authorities. Once viewed as a potential threat to the peace of the Raj, the Salvationist missionaries had weathered arrests and persecution in the 1880s. Eventually, the SA officers found a way to peacefully coexist with the imperial government, and throughout the 1890s they worked to cultivate and expand their missions in India. As their numbers of missionaries and converts throughout the country grew, so did their social service projects. The Salvationists were ultimately able to provide useful services to the state, and in doing so, became the recipients of public subsidies. In many ways the Salvation Army collaborated with the imperial government and helped to reinforce colonial power structures. And yet, their personal religious agenda remained their highest priority—whether the government approved or not. Despite the continued dissenting nature of the SA's activities, by 1908 colonial authorities felt confident enough in their abilities to authorize their undertaking a new and unique social service project, one which would further complicate their relationship with the local government and police. This was the establishment of SA settlements for men, women and children who had been identified by imperial authorities as part of 'criminal tribes.'

These so-called criminal tribes were groups officially designated as such by the colonial government. The British identified certain castes or tribes with histories of criminal behavior; some had actually been convicted of theft and murder, others were merely deemed suspicious due to their social or family connections. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 and similar subsequent legislation gave legal authority to the designation

‘criminal.’ By the early-twentieth century, colonial authorities had employed several strategies for handling these groups that the British viewed as potentially threatening to local law and order. Many of the police efforts were unsuccessful however, and in 1908 they turned to the Salvation Army for assistance.

Hereditary Criminals

To fully evaluate the Salvation Army’s work with the so-called criminal tribes and its impact on the relationship between the missionaries and the imperial state, we must first understand its context. Even well into the twentieth century, policies of the Indian colonial police were heavily influenced by a belief in hereditary crime; contemporary British laws targeting so-called habitual criminals offer evidence of this concept. This belief in the generational transmission of criminal occupations led to the designation of certain groups in India as criminal tribes. Such emphasis on inherited characteristics also coincided with Darwinian theorists of the nineteenth century. Doctors and criminal anthropologists studied the physiological and psychological traits of criminals. Scholars of criminology turned to works like Italian anthropologist Cesare Lombroso’s 1876 book *Criminal Man* in which he discussed the concept of the ‘born criminal’ through “direct physical and psychological study of the criminal.”⁷²⁶ Lombroso published five editions of his landmark work—in 1876, 1878, 1884, 1889, and 1896-97—thus honing his argument over the course of the late nineteenth century.⁷²⁷ Although Lombroso was Italian, his work and the field of criminal anthropology developed throughout Europe, and studies of biological determinism were carried out by a variety of

⁷²⁶ Cesare Lombroso, *Criminal Man*, trans. by Mary Gibson and Nicole Hahn Rafter (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 42.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, ix-xi.

scholars.⁷²⁸ In 1907 American Gertrude C. Davenport even suggested that inherited criminal traits were more powerful than any environmental factors.⁷²⁹ Lombroso's 1911 work *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies* continued to support a belief in hereditary crime, citing a variety of statistical data such as the analysis of a group of 104 criminals of whom 71 showed some hereditary influence.⁷³⁰

These theories and research had an impact not only in the West, but in India as well. Colonial police publications on the so-called criminal tribes clearly reflect a European belief in identifiable physical traits of criminals. For example, a guide written by V.T. Vivian for imperial police emphasized physical characteristics in describing a group known as the Sansias. "The males of the tribe are generally dark in complexion with 'bright sparkling eyes,' while the females are more often fair. Their faces are cast in the aboriginal mould and are said to be 'very foxy' in expression."⁷³¹ Vivian's depiction reveals the influence of nineteenth-century racial science. People could be unfairly branded as criminals simply due to their facial features.

The nineteenth-century belief in the concept of hereditary criminals was common both at home in England and abroad; legislation was enacted in all parts of the Empire to deal with this perceived threat. Lucia Zedner has even drawn a correlation between the late-Victorian status of the Empire and the presence of such criminal activity. She wrote, "'Hereditarianism,' with its concomitant theories of degeneration, provided ready

⁷²⁸ David G. Horn, *The Criminal Body: Lombroso and the Anatomy of Deviance* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 5.

⁷²⁹ Gertrude C. Davenport, "Hereditary Crime," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 3 (November 1907): 402.

⁷³⁰ Cesare Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies (1911)*, trans. by Henry P. Horton (Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1968), 151.

⁷³¹ V.P.T. Vivian, *A Hand Book of the Criminal Tribes of the Punjab* (Lahore: Punjab Government Press, 1912), 23.

explanations for the relative decline of Britain's international status."⁷³² If such viewpoints were commonly held, it is little wonder that British authorities acted to eliminate such criminals. Thus, the Salvationists in India found themselves working in the midst of a system targeting groups believed to be hereditary criminals. While they too may have accepted contemporary notions of inherited traits, the missionaries did however believe that criminal practices could be combated with religious faith.

Indeed, Frederick Booth-Tucker offered his own discussion of hereditary criminals in the 1916 work *Criminocurology: Or The Indian Crim and what to do with him*. In many respects, *Criminocurology* is yet another example of Booth-Tucker's frequent literature and propaganda on the work of the SA, but the publication in which these comments appear was not one of Booth-Tucker's patently religious manifestos, but rather more of a social science treatise on criminal justice in some ways reminiscent of Lombroso and other contemporary scholars. For instance, Booth-Tucker began with a classification of Indian criminals, placing them into six categories: the Incurable, the Habitual, the Hereditary, the Ordinary, the Youth, and the Child.⁷³³ In this manner, Booth-Tucker identified himself with the police and civil authorities who were trying to stop crime. And yet, Booth-Tucker's work also differentiated the Salvationists from the imperial government. First, he revealed some compassion toward the so-called criminals of India. In his discussion of hereditary criminals, Booth-Tucker wrote:

. . . some sympathy must naturally be felt for their present condition. Expropriated from their ancient possessions, watched and harassed by an ever vigilant police, punished, imprisoned and their freedom curtailed,

⁷³² Lucia Zedner, *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 265.

⁷³³ Frederick Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology or the Indian Crim and what to do with him* (Simla: Royal Army Temperance Assoc. Press, 1916?), 3.

they are naturally embittered against those they regard as their oppressors.⁷³⁴

Here Booth-Tucker even acknowledged the manner in which the growth of the British Empire may have driven these groups from their traditional sources of revenue and thus turned them to a life of crime; a viewpoint that is hardly supportive of imperialism.

Criminocurology highlights another aspect of the Salvation Army's work with the so-called criminal tribes unique from that of the colonial police, namely their emphasis on religion. Although Booth-Tucker clearly believed in the existence of hereditary criminals, he also believed that spreading Christianity was the best method to reform them. He wrote: "The Gospel remedy has lost none of its ancient power when applied by those who have themselves experienced its revolutionizing and soul-reforming influence."⁷³⁵ Once again, we see the prevalence of the 'saved to serve' ideology of the Salvation Army. The Salvationists' belief in the importance of religion affected all their work in India, including the development of settlements for the so-called criminal tribes.

In addition to a focus on hereditary criminals, the general growth of police forces and a concern over security were nineteenth-century phenomena both in the metropole and the far reaches of the Empire. From the earliest days of the British Empire in India, security was an important priority for colonial authorities. Both the institutions of the Indian Army and the Indian Police developed first under the East India Company (EIC) and continued throughout the duration of the Raj. David Arnold suggests that the police were in a unique position in terms of their relations with both the imperial state and the native-born Indians. "They were among the few agents of the state with whom the

⁷³⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁷³⁵ Ibid., 33.

peasant, the plantation worker and the factory labourer had direct contact.”⁷³⁶ Thus, the police were a symbol of colonial power; enforcing British laws, and even exercising authority beyond the letter of the law on occasion.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, police institutions on the whole proved insufficient to handle patrolling such a vast country. Arnold cites the inadequacies of the colonial police force. He reveals that within the Madras Presidency there was on average only one police station for every fifty villages by 1901.⁷³⁷ The Indian colonial police force struggled not only due to its limited personnel but also because of the lack of trust between the natives and the authorities. “Most villagers, moreover, with good reason regarded the police as agents of external oppression and exploitation and not as imperial guardians of the law.”⁷³⁸ Local village watchmen frequently operated in collusion with nearby gangs of thieves. Thus, Indians often failed to report crimes or to work with the local police to deal with situations. Perhaps this tension opened the door for an outside party such as the Salvation Army to work with Indians who were so wary of traditional officials.

Again, the 1857 rebellion proved to be a watershed in drawing attention to this problem of colonial security, with the period following the uprising bringing institutional changes. For example, in 1860 a Commission was appointed to overhaul and reorganize the Indian Police. In the years that followed there were efforts to increase and improve police work in India. A desire to keep the empire peaceful and secure was a major motivating factor in this work. Rajnarayan Chandavarkar argues that the more uniform

⁷³⁶ David Arnold, *Police Power and Colonial Rule: Madras 1859-1947* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 4.

⁷³⁷ David Arnold, “Crime and Control in Madras, 1858-1947” in *Crime and Criminality in British India*, Anand A. Yang, ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 79.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, 81.

police force which emerged in the period following the 1860s was heavily influenced by the military. He suggests that, “The police were liable, therefore, to understand crime primarily in terms of rebellion and disorder, public and political security.”⁷³⁹ The interaction between the colonial state, the Salvation Army, and the Criminal Tribes of India in many ways supports this analysis; from the early arrests in Bombay to the creation of SA settlements, maintaining order seemed to be the chief priority of the imperial police.

Meanwhile, one of the noteworthy efforts of the nineteenth-century Indian Police was the campaign against the ‘Thugs,’ roving bandits whose numbers may have reached hundreds of thousands or even millions.⁷⁴⁰ The English term ‘thugs’ was an adaptation of the Hindu word ‘thags,’ meaning deceivers.⁷⁴¹ The terms thagi or thuggee are used somewhat interchangeably to refer to this phenomenon of wandering gangs of robbers and murderers. The word ‘dacoity’ is another Anglicized version of an Indian term referring to robberies committed by a group of criminals or dacoits. Ultimately, Thuggee and Dacoity became a significant department of the colonial Indian police.

Often these gangs of criminals were believed to be part of a religious organization associated with the goddess Kali, carrying out murders as a ritual sacrifice.⁷⁴² Hindu legend said that Kali created the thugs to slay an evil demon, giving them a strip of cloth with which to strangle it; in exchange all future thugs lived under her protection, charged

⁷³⁹ Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *Imperial Power and Popular Politics: Class, resistance and the state in India, c. 1850-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 182.

⁷⁴⁰ Sir Percival Griffiths, *To Guard My People: The History of the Indian Police* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1971), 357.

⁷⁴¹ George Bruce, *The Stranglers: The Cult of Thuggee and Its Overthrow in British India* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 11.

⁷⁴² Martine van Woerkens, *The Strangled Traveler: Colonial Imaginings and the Thugs of India*, Trans. by Catherine Tihanyi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 31.

with the order to strangle other men.⁷⁴³ Thus, strangulation was the method of attack for many thugs. For colonial authorities, emphasizing this connection between violent crime and native religious worship helped reinforce an ideology of difference and categorize the Indians as savage practitioners of violent traditions which needed to be eradicated.

It should be noted that among contemporary scholars there has been serious debate as to whether these so-called ‘thugs’ even existed.⁷⁴⁴ Some revisionist historians feel that the designation ‘thug’ was actually a colonial construct, inaccurately used to associate random criminals with organized crime. Thomas R. Metcalf suggests that, “The discovery of *thagi* afforded the British once again an opportunity to take pride in their commitment to reforming a depraved Indian society.”⁷⁴⁵ The thugs made an excellent target for the British cultural assault, and their largely successful onslaught helped reinforce the Europeans’ feeling of superiority. It cannot be denied that British cultural biases came into play, both in the police activity of the nineteenth century and in the historical analysis of these events written in the twentieth century. However, whether or not the motivations and activities of these criminals were accurately labeled does not change the fact that many robberies and murders occurred in colonial India. Frederick Booth-Tucker cites a single year in which 3.5 million rupees worth of stolen property was reported in one province; police found it particularly difficult to combat these thefts simply because “this kind of crime is very lucrative.”⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴³ Griffiths, 125.

⁷⁴⁴ For an analysis of the historical discourse on this topic, see van Woerkens, and also Tom Lloyd “Acting in the ‘Theatre of Anarchy’: The ‘Anti-Thug Campaign’ and Elaborations of Colonial Rule in Early Nineteenth-Century India.” *Edinburgh Papers in South Asian Studies*. No. 19 (2006).

⁷⁴⁵ Metcalf, 41.

⁷⁴⁶ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 206.

Whether ‘thug’ was a fair or inaccurate term, the British authorities were extremely fearful of such violent crime and determined to address the situation. In 1809 a magistrate in Madras described one such band of roving criminals:

[They] take extensive journeys under the disguise of travelers for the purpose of committing murders and robberies . . . a gang sometimes consisting of from thirty to forty persons. . . [They] received encouragement and protection from . . . Headmen of villages, who shared in their plunder; and fathers brought up their children to murder and rob, which constituted a regular profession, by which many families subsisted from generation to generation.⁷⁴⁷

This depiction includes two of the problems inherent in the activities of thugs—collaboration on the part of local authorities, and the allegedly hereditary nature of the practice.

It is significant that British authorities chose to utilize the framework of the Indian caste system in order to classify criminals—both real and assumed. This is further evidence of the European desire for classification and the establishment of a quantifiable measure of difference between the British and the Indians. This seems to reinforce Nicholas Dirks’ argument in *Castes of Mind* that colonial authorities helped to shape the modern caste system.⁷⁴⁸ While the terms caste and tribe are used interchangeably in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century literature on these groups of designated criminals, Rachel Tolen suggests “the term ‘tribe’ could evoke qualities of savagery, wildness, and otherness in a way that ‘caste’ could not.”⁷⁴⁹ While her point is well taken, there is also still a strong association between the term caste and the foreign, Hindu culture. Ultimately, both terms suggest an otherness, separating the ‘criminals’ from the British, and reinforcing the European belief in their superiority over these natives.

⁷⁴⁷ Quoted in: Griffiths, 122.

⁷⁴⁸ Dirks, 5.

⁷⁴⁹ Tolen, 109.

Data collection and classification were two of the key strategies employed in the first major campaign against thagi. In the 1830s a British colonial soldier and official named William Sleeman led the charge to eradicate these bandits from India. His techniques included compiling lists and plotting family trees of gang membership, recruiting spies and informants, and detailing maps of criminal activity.⁷⁵⁰ Identifying both criminals and potential criminals was the focus of this work. Sleeman was generally regarded as a hero of the British Empire for his diligent and dedicated efforts to fight thagi. An 1852 statement in the *Bengal Chronicle* said, “Sleeman, and his unflinching lieutenants, ought, in every history of India, to have honourable mention.”⁷⁵¹ Ultimately, Sleeman and his associates were able to identify and prosecute numerous bandits, greatly reducing the incidents of thagi in India. By 1838 he had captured and tried over three thousand thugs, with 1400 hanged or transported for life to the Andaman Islands.⁷⁵² And yet this issue of wandering, ‘hereditary’ criminals remained.

While these thugs were often associated with nomadic tribes, many scholars dispel the notion that a life of crime was automatically equated with itinerancy. Radhakrishna discusses the prejudices faced by unsettled groups. “Firstly and most importantly, the nomads’ lack of property, and supposed lack of due regard for others’ property, is seen to be a threat to the established order, and their independence from rigid norms and constraints of sedentary societies is found highly objectionable.”⁷⁵³ Society did not trust wanderers—unknown people who were perceived as disrespectful of others’ property. Whether they were actually involved in criminal activity or not, itinerant tribes

⁷⁵⁰ Sir Francis Tucker, *The Yellow Scarf* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1961), 69.

⁷⁵¹ Quoted in Tucker, 182.

⁷⁵² Ferguson, 143.

⁷⁵³ Radhakrishna, 9.

remained the subject of much concern and suspicion by the police; forcing them to settle became a key focus of the anti-thagi movement, even after Sleeman's tenure.

Despite his success in the 1830s, the issues of thagi and dacoity continued to plague the Indian authorities into the late-nineteenth century. They were particularly concerned because outbreaks of banditry were often associated with larger-scale rebellion. Suppressing such crime helped to legitimate colonial rule. In order to address the problems of gang crimes, intensive and systematic research was once again employed. The police fought the thugs by collecting information and creating dossiers on anyone suspected of or associated with banditry; again using the caste system to identify potential thugs.

Imperial authorities took new measures to deal with these bandits when they issued the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, in order "to provide for the registration, surveillance, and control of certain criminal tribes."⁷⁵⁴ First the legislation required that members of communities officially identified as 'criminal tribes' register with the local police. While this law targeted legitimate criminals, the broad nature of its classification meant that many people were unfairly categorized by the government. Furthermore, the Act stipulated, "Any tribe, gang or class which has been declared to be criminal, and which has no fixed place of residence, may be settled in a place of residence prescribed by the Local Government."⁷⁵⁵ In this stipulation we see evidence of the colonial authorities' fear of itinerancy; they believed that if the groups were more settled, they would be less likely to commit crimes. This criterion also reveals the extent to which the government intended to restrict the activity of these communities, for the subsequent

⁷⁵⁴ "Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Act XXVII," 348.

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 351.

paragraph of the law actually gave the local authorities the right to relocate groups. In addition to forcibly resettling tribes, this Act gave the colonial government the power to restrict people from leaving their assigned location, except with a pass whose issuance and duration local police could also restrict. They were also required to regularly report for roll-call, and their homes and villages could be subject to search by the police.⁷⁵⁶

This law was designed to severely restrict those who were identified as criminals, but it also assumed criminality. It allowed the government to regulate where they worked and lived, forcibly moving them when deemed necessary. Consequently, these policies also placed a lot of power in the hands of village headmen who were responsible for keeping track of those registered in their villages.⁷⁵⁷ Once again, this left those who were designated as criminals vulnerable to local authorities, with little or no recourse against corruption and unfair treatment. Furthermore, the indiscriminate designation of entire tribes as criminals meant that many of those who were subject to the regulations of the CT Act had not actually committed any crimes. In some cases, simply being identified as a criminal reduced individuals' opportunities for legitimate work and may even have pushed them to criminal behavior.

One police report actually acknowledged culpability on the part of the colonial state in this regard, writing of one tribe:

. . . if there is foundation for complaints of their thieving propensities, the blame cannot be said to rest entirely with them. Between lack of land and industrial opening on the one hand, and rigid restriction of movements on the other, the people have been driven into seeking a means of subsistence by crime.⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid., 352.

⁷⁵⁷ Radhakrishna, 47.

⁷⁵⁸ Hari Kishan Kaul and L.L. Tompkins, *Report on Questions Relating to the Administration of Criminal and Wandering Tribes in the Punjab* (Lahore: Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, 1914), 18.

Such an admission on the part of the police is notable given that much of the government literature on these groups rather indiscriminately describes them as born criminals. But even while acknowledging societal causes for the activities of some tribes, the police remained concerned with limiting their movements and reforming their characters.

Not only did the Criminal Tribes Act impose some stern restrictions, but the punishments for breaking the rules were also dramatic. Anyone caught violating the above regulations could be subject to “rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with whipping, or with all or any two of those punishments.”⁷⁵⁹ A second conviction could extend the prison term up to one year. Ultimately, even the harsh penalties of the 1871 CT Act could not effectively eliminate the robberies and murders throughout the Indian countryside. A later report from the India Office Records argues that the act “failed to effect that control over the tribes which was its intention.”⁷⁶⁰

The principle behind the Criminal Tribes Act reflected a belief also expressed at home in England that crime could actually be reduced if potential habitual criminals could be prevented from committing the acts in the first place. The 1869 Habitual Criminals Act allowed British magistrates to imprison people for up to twelve months for being ‘suspicious persons.’⁷⁶¹ In 1908 the British introduced a program of preventive detention for young criminals who were seen as likely repeat offenders under the

⁷⁵⁹ “Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Act XXVII,” 353.

⁷⁶⁰ India Office Records, “Report of the Criminal Tribes Committee,” 26 July 1938, 2.

⁷⁶¹ Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England 1750-1900* (London: Longman Group, 1987), 2.

Prevention of Crime Act.⁷⁶² This same year, the Salvation Army established settlements for so-called criminal tribes in India.

Working under the auspices of the Criminal Tribes Act, and in the spirit of Sleeman's data collection tactics, the Indian Police created a variety of guides to assist in the identification of such criminals. Policemen collected and published a great deal of information not only on the illegal activities, but also on the appearance and lifestyle of these groups. For example, A.E.M. LeMarchand's *A Guide to The Criminal Tribes* offered data on a variety of tribes, organized under the following categories: general appearance and composition, language and residence, dress, jewelry and marks of identification, and mode of begging and habits. Thus members of the Mina tribe could be identified by the fact that they wore small earrings and did not have tattoos.⁷⁶³ The crimes committed by those described in LeMarchand's guide included house breaking, highway robbery, cattle theft, counterfeiting coin, and kidnapping.⁷⁶⁴ These are serious offenses; the communities LeMarchand studied did indeed include dangerous criminals, although his descriptions were very generalized. While there is no doubt that many of these people were indeed thieves and kidnapers, LeMarchand did not give a clear indication of what percentage of the people studied were actually guilty of such exploits.

The police themselves were not completely unaware of the shortcomings of this classification system. A police report from the United Provinces admitted, “. . . it is generally speaking only the vagrant members of a tribe that are addicted to crime, and in the case of a large tribe or class—as for instance the Pasis—it is impossible to say what

⁷⁶² V.A.C. Gatrell, “Crime, authority and the policeman-state,” in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950*, Vol. 3 Social agencies and institutions, F.M.L. Thompson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 308.

⁷⁶³ A.E.M. LeMarchand, *A Guide to Criminal Tribes* (Nagpur: Indian Police, 1915), 4-5.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

proportion of the tribe is criminal.”⁷⁶⁵ However, Superintendent of Police Hollins also cited a group of 119 people fingerprinted from 1908-1910, of whom 106 were convicts with 207 convictions against them.⁷⁶⁶ Crimes perpetrated by individuals or groups in these communities thus may have constituted a legitimate problem for the police, but their can be no denying that the broadly categorizing nature of their strategy in handling the situation led to numerous unfair classifications and restrictions.

Late-Victorian efforts to deal with habitual criminals were influenced by the following principle, “strict and effective control over the worst tribes must be accompanied by the provision of opportunities for them to earn a living in their restricted area.”⁷⁶⁷ Thus, there was a clear recognition on the part of the authorities that the groups identified as criminals needed a way to support themselves; a somewhat surprisingly progressive notion, given the widely held belief that their crimes were hereditary. The British did seem to believe that these Indian criminals could be broken of their bad habits. Likewise, there is an obvious link between this principle of rehabilitation, and the creation of settlements like those eventually run by the Salvation Army. Rachel Tolen suggests that the British were particularly disgusted with these tribes because they appeared lazy—an affront to the traditional Victorian work-ethic. She writes, “Criminal castes in India, like vagrants in Britain, represented an obstacle to the institution of the British ethic of work-discipline.”⁷⁶⁸ Here Tolen identifies not only a key value of Victorian society, but also a correlation with similar values in the metropole.

⁷⁶⁵ S.T. Hollins, Superintendent of Police, *The Criminal Tribes of the United Provinces* (Allahabad: Government Press, 1914), iv.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁷⁶⁷ Griffiths, 359.

⁷⁶⁸ Tolen, 112.

Calling Upon The Salvation Army

In the decades following the passage of the Criminal Tribes Act, British government authorities attempted to create their own settlements to deal with these tribes. These facilities included agricultural establishments where criminals were employed to cultivate new land, as well as industrial settlements where the residents were encouraged to work in local factories or businesses. However, most of these schemes met with limited success at best. For example, in 1884 the police created a settlement for the Korachas of North Arcot, but it made very little progress. A second settlement for the tribe was started the following year, but it too was short-lived. In 1910, the government attempted yet again to create a successful settlement for the group, but within a few years the Inspector-General of Police was forced to acknowledge yet another failed endeavor.

He wrote:

There are still 17 males at the settlement, but it is not a successful one and under present conditions never will be so. Seven of them have recently been under trial for the murder of a receiver of stolen property, and one is under sentence of death. The failure of the settlement has been partly ascribed to undue Police interference partly to want of proper supervision by anyone else.⁷⁶⁹

This memorandum reveals that the government-run settlement failed not only economically, but also morally; they were unable to prevent the settlers from continuing their life of crime. Furthermore, the explanation for this failure lies in the inability of the police to effectively deal with the situation; they failed to provide adequate supervision and at the same time interfered with the creation of an efficient, profitable settlement.

⁷⁶⁹ India Office Records, "Letter from the Hon'ble Mr. H.F.W. Gillman, I.C.S. Acting Inspector-General of Police to Chief Secretary to Government," *Government of Madras Judicial Department Proceedings P/9294*, 26 March 1913, No. V.

Generally, the industrial settlements proved to be more successful than the agricultural institutions. The land schemes failed for several reasons including the poor quality of the land, the lack of adequate tools, the inexperience of the settlers, and the overt opposition to the system on the part of local landlords.⁷⁷⁰ One police officer wrote of an agricultural settlement for a tribe known as the Doms in 1892, “To call the present state of affairs a scheme is a mere euphemism. It is nothing of the kind, but a hand-to-mouth scrambling arrangement which ensures the worst possible results.”⁷⁷¹ The tone of this comment is decidedly negative; his words suggest that the police system for dealing with this group was completely inadequate. The government appeared both frustrated and overwhelmed. There is an obvious link between sentiments such as these, and the decision to allow religious groups such as the Salvation Army to try their hand at administering the so-called criminal tribes.

This question of why the British government agreed to use missionaries at the settlements instead of other personnel is very significant in terms of helping us to understand the complex nature of the relationship between colonial authorities and Christian churches. A quote from Sir John Hewett, Lt. Governor of the United Provinces suggests a genuine appreciation for the religious and moral leadership missionaries could provide. He said,

I had the opportunity of reading all the reports from different parts of India with regard to the operation of the Criminal Tribes Act, . . . and before I left I came to the conclusion that when people who not only had criminal instincts, but were devoid of elementary ideas of decency and morality, were being dealt with, official action was of no use whatever. It was necessary to employ some organization of religious zealots with infinite patience and unflagging enthusiasm.⁷⁷²

⁷⁷⁰ Radhakrishna, 101-102.

⁷⁷¹ Quoted in Yang, 124.

⁷⁷² Quoted in Mackenzie, 218.

In this passage, Hewett argued not merely in favor of personnel with some religious affiliation, but he actually believed “zealots” should be employed. His word choice does appear to at least partially reference their religious devotion and high moral character, but more than that, Hewett identified the intense work ethic and motivation of the missionaries. His statement appears to acknowledge that conventional police methods had failed to adequately deal with this issue, and thus the government might now resort to the use of missionaries, who were willing and eager to take up the challenge.

Likewise, in 1914 Superintendent of Police for the United Provinces S.T. Hollins observed:

During recent years the Salvation Army has been singularly successful in its efforts to reclaim and colonize some of the tribes that were tentatively entrusted to its care by Government. It may be the novelty of the experiment that appeals to these tribes, but it is most probably the healthy moral tone and the strong personal element of the Salvation Army Settlement system that have induced these erstwhile vagrants to abandon their life of crime for a settled and honorable occupation. Be this as it may, we can but hope that the Salvation Army will continue its noble work amongst these tribes and that it will prove successful where repressive legislation has failed.⁷⁷³

Hollins cited the morality and personal interest of the missionaries—two elements associated with their religious beliefs—as the keys to the Salvation Army’s success in working with the criminal tribes. Furthermore, Hollins praised the Salvationists for succeeding where all others, including the police, had failed.

Thus, the above comments by colonial officials seem to reinforce late-imperial scholar Arthur Mayhew’s argument that by the close of the nineteenth century there was an acceptance of Christian ideals as the natural result of education and enlightenment. He suggests that in India,

⁷⁷³ Hollins, v.

it became possible for the Government without fear of criticism or resentment to take its stand on admittedly Christian principles, with the conviction openly expressed that these principles were universally recognized by educated men and accepted by men of good will irrespective of race or religion.⁷⁷⁴

Thus, colonial authorities may have felt perfectly comfortable turning to religious personnel if their practices could be “universally recognized” as beneficial. It seems evident that by the turn of the twentieth century, the post-Mutiny fear of religious upheaval had faded. The police seem much less worried about the problems Christian missionaries could cause, and more concerned about propagating British values in India.

Meena Radhakrishna gives the following explanation for the government’s willingness to subsidize the Salvation Army:

The official reason giving for preferring missionaries was that, unlike government officials who were frequently transferred, these organizations were expected to provide continuity in the work of reclamation. An important consideration was economy, as the government were convinced that they could not get more skilled and devoted personnel for the remuneration paid to such agencies. . . the work would be treated as a mission, whereas government servants were likely to view it as just another post in their careers.⁷⁷⁵

While the strength of the missionaries’ personal devotion would certainly have aided in the efficacy of such settlements, it seems like that the greatest motivation for the British authorities was a financial one. If the missionaries could run the settlements at less of a cost to the government, that would have made them very valuable indeed. Commissioner Frederick Booth-Tucker’s ideas and experience helped craft a plan which could be offered to the British at an obvious economic benefit. “Booth-Tucker’s long years of frugal living and administration meant a bargain in costs.”⁷⁷⁶ A man who had previously

⁷⁷⁴ Arthur Mayhew, *Christianity and the Government of India* (London: Faber and Gwyer Ltd., 1929), 217.

⁷⁷⁵ Radhakrishna, 79.

⁷⁷⁶ H. Williams, 178.

ministered to India with very few financial resources, traveling the country barefoot and begging for food, could be extremely inventive in creating viable settlements with both limited funds and personnel.

In his memoir *Muktifauj*, Booth-Tucker suggested yet another advantage the Salvation Army held over the police in working with the so-called criminal tribes—their female officers. While listing the weaknesses of the police in dealing with these populations, Booth-Tucker wrote:

Nor is his wife as a rule capable or desirous of bringing her reformatory influence to bear on the women and children of the tribe, as is the case with the wives of our Officers. That is really the key to the position in any reformatory effort that may be made.⁷⁷⁷

The wives of policemen were not partners in their husbands' work in the manner of the wives of Salvation Army officers, and Booth-Tucker revealed a belief that a female influence was very valuable in reform efforts among women and children.

For the Salvationists, both male and female, engaging in this new project made them more closely aligned with the Indian police than ever before. In many respects they became more overtly part of the imperial hierarchy, exercising control over groups of colonial subjects. At the same time however, the Salvationists maintained their own interests and religious motivations beyond any imperial loyalty. Furthermore, their missionary tactics often led to greater agency for the Indian people whom they worked to convert, potentially challenging colonial authority. In agreeing to administer settlements for these so-called criminal tribes the Salvationists were implicitly, sometimes even overtly, accepting the imperial view of these people as depraved criminals. However, the attitude with which the Salvationists treated the so-called criminals and the opportunities

⁷⁷⁷ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 206.

the missionaries provided reveal some rejection of such imperial categorization. For example, a Salvation Army officer who worked with a tribe called the Berias described initial difficulties with the settlers, but he wrote, “before long they discovered that their fears were unfounded, and that we were really their friends and had come to help them.”⁷⁷⁸ His choice of vocabulary here suggests a much different relationship with the so-called criminals than that of the Indian police. The Salvationist refers to the missionaries as *friends* of the settlers.

A similar example of the Salvation Army’s complex reaction to orientalist views can be found in Booth-Tucker’s description of work begun with a group in Orissa known as the Pans. Booth-Tucker wrote that these people, “resembled in general characteristics . . . other aboriginal tribes.”⁷⁷⁹ He clearly classified them in a racialized manner consistent with British imperial notions of the Indians as others. Yet, Booth-Tucker goes on to describe a plan to send SA missionaries to live among the Pans, because “it was believed that our adoption of Indian dress and names and customs would help to gain their confidence.”⁷⁸⁰ Booth-Tucker took pride in the fact that the Salvationists worked to form such relationships with the Indian people, even these outcast tribes; this is very different from the colonial government’s treatment of such groups.

Modern historians vary in their opinions of the Salvation Army’s work with the criminal tribes of India. Rachel Tolen seems generally impressed with their efforts, but Anand Yang suggests that the Salvationists found little more success than the non-

⁷⁷⁸ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 210.

⁷⁷⁹ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 220.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 220.

religious personnel who administered criminal settlements.⁷⁸¹ Anand Pandian refers to the Salvationists as practitioners of the “Gospel of Compulsion” in his dissertation on attempts to reform the so-called criminal tribes through agriculture.⁷⁸² Kevin Rushby offers the most extreme criticism of the Salvationists, describing their criminal tribes’ settlements as “nothing but forced labour camps.”⁷⁸³ While Rushby’s argument is certainly provocative, it is somewhat lacking in substance. It is true that members of the criminal tribes really did not have many choices in finding work and housing, but at least the settlements gave them an option other than jail or unemployment. Booth-Tucker’s memoir actually describes efforts by the Salvation Army to prevent the so-called criminals from being overworked by the government; the Salvationists argued for Sundays off, shorter work days, and sick leave for the settlers.⁷⁸⁴ Furthermore, although many settlers were forcibly relocated, others voluntarily entered the Salvation Army facilities.

The overall message of Meena Radhakrishna’s work *Dishonoured by History* is also critical of the treatment of the so-called criminal tribes, however, she does acknowledge the relative success of religious personnel including the Salvation Army. “Deemed to be relatively more successful [than government settlements] were settlements run by missionary organizations, with some government assistance.”⁷⁸⁵ Likewise the final chapter of her book discusses her visit to the Yerukulas—a group formerly designated as criminals—in the 1980s. Radhakrishna seemed shocked and

⁷⁸¹ Anand A. Yang, “Dangerous Castes and Tribes: The Criminal Tribes Act and the Magahiya Doms of Northeast India,” in *Crime and Criminality in British India*, Anand A. Yang, ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 127.

⁷⁸² Anand Sankar Pandian, “Landscapes of Redemption: Cultivating Heart and Soil in South India” PhD. Diss. (University of California, Berkeley, 2004), 254.

⁷⁸³ Kevin Rushby, *Children of Kali* (New York: Walker and Company, 2002), 177.

⁷⁸⁴ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 225.

⁷⁸⁵ Radhakrishna, 72.

dismayed to discover how the collective memory of the community had been influenced by the SA and that the songs they sang and the stories they told included references to “how the Salvation Army had worked tirelessly and selflessly for them for decades.”⁷⁸⁶ Radhakrishna’s surprise at these positive collective memories is clearly the product of her belief that the so-called criminal tribes were treated unfairly by the British Empire, and that the Salvation Army was complicit in such practices. While Radhakrishna is certainly correct in criticizing the colonial system that designated these people as criminals and forced them into settlements, that does not mean that their positive memories of the Salvation Army’s work are totally inaccurate. Many Yerukulas may have had genuine fondness and appreciation for the SA’s assistance, willingly incorporating the Salvationists into their oral traditions.

Simhadri Yedla lived among the Yerukulas in the 1970s while working on his dissertation on the development of the ‘tribe’ over the course of the twentieth century through the post-colonial process of declassification as criminals. Yedla, however, was much less critical of the Salvation Army’s work than Radhakrishna. Of their early-twentieth century settlement in Dharmapur he wrote: “The manager was the friend, protector and priest to the people and worked for the benefit of the Yerukulas.”⁷⁸⁷ Yedla’s study of the post-colonial Yerukulas reveals how this group benefited from the work of Salvation Army missionaries relative to other local tribes and castes. His data shows that by the 1970s the Yerukulas overall owned more land than other groups in the area; they also owned more houses. Yedla was most impressed that the Yerukula community boasted 60 college graduates. He wrote, “no other caste in the village has

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., 147.

⁷⁸⁷ Simhadri Yedla, “The Ex-criminal Tribes of India: A Community Study” (PhD. Diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1973), 94.

attained this level of education. Obviously this is due to the efforts of the Salvation Army.”⁷⁸⁸ Overall Yedla found that the Salvation Army’s administration of such settlements under the Criminal Tribes Act notably helped to curb the number of crimes committed. However, they did not completely eliminate thefts, robberies, etc. In fact, Yedla suggests that the efforts of the Salvationists led the Yerukulas to adapt their methods. For example, due to the restrictions of life in the settlement they could not travel in sizeable groups and had to stop working in large gangs to commit robberies. Yedla even argued that the education provided by the missionaries led to more sophisticated, ‘white-collar’ crime by the Yerukulas.⁷⁸⁹

So, we must ask how significant was the work with these groups to the overall imperial mission? Did the Salvationists merely oversee an administrative nuisance for the British government, or was their work with the so-called criminal tribes more vital to the strengthening of the British Empire? Rachel Tolen suggests that “the criminal caste reformatory was part of the more far-reaching dream of imperial rule.”⁷⁹⁰ According to Tolen, work with these tribes was intended not to merely restrict their criminal activity, but to actually subjugate them, and transform their character, homes, and traditions into those more in keeping with British ideals. Salvation Army publications support much of this notion. Salvationist goals included first and foremost, religious instruction, but also, “winning these men and women back to law-abiding citizenship.”⁷⁹¹ Religion was definitely the primary focus of the Salvation Army, yet they frequently cited their efforts to more generally instill European behavioral norms and a strong work ethic in the

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., 112.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid., 160.

⁷⁹⁰ Tolen, 122.

⁷⁹¹ Major Albert Mabe, “The Gang Made Good,” *All the World*, December 1942, 13.

settlers. Creating good “citizens,” or at least obedient colonial subjects, out of these convicts was clearly part of the Salvationists’ mission.

While many Salvationists were willing participants in such imperialist programs, Jeffrey Cox actually cites examples of several Salvation Army missionaries in India who found themselves frustrated by work which was not as religious in nature as they had anticipated. Cox argues that although Salvationist rhetoric was “drawing clear distinctions between government policy and Salvation Army policy, pointing out the distinctive motives, purposes, and goals of their cooperative work,” it was impossible for the Salvationists to effectively reinforce that distinction when working with the criminal tribes.⁷⁹² Cox’s analysis highlights a picture of an increasingly complex relationship between the Salvation Army and the British Government, while acknowledging that the Salvationists’ primary concern was religion.

Booth-Tucker’s Influence

In discussing the Salvation Army’s motivations and practices in establishing work with the criminal tribes, Meena Radhakrishna highlights the influence of William Booth’s 1890 work *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. She compares the Indian Criminal Tribes’ settlements to the English farm and city colonies outlined in *Darkest England*.⁷⁹³ In his 2005 dissertation, Andrew Mark Eason agrees with Radhakrishna, also lending great weight to the impact of Booth’s social scheme upon the Salvation Army’s work with the criminal tribes in India.⁷⁹⁴ While it is certain that Booth’s philosophy as expressed in this dynamic book had a major influence on Salvationist activities of the

⁷⁹² Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 242.

⁷⁹³ Radhakrishna, 73-75.

⁷⁹⁴ Eason, “Christianity in a Colonial Age,” 273.

late-Victorian era, the projects among the criminal tribes of India were really more the result of the efforts of Booth's son-in-law, Frederick Booth-Tucker. Booth-Tucker took the General's Darkest England scheme and transplanted it to the subcontinent, writing his own social rehabilitation manifesto entitled *Darkest India*. He wrote, "What is possible in Europe is no doubt possible in India."⁷⁹⁵

As his biographer Harry Williams suggests, "Here it was entirely Booth-Tucker's unique personality and experience which made it possible."⁷⁹⁶ While it may have been during Booth's tenure as General that the Salvation Army first commenced its work in India and later began their criminal tribes' settlements, it was really the passion of Booth-Tucker that fueled their efforts. As he recalled, "I had in my soul a desperate determination to break down at any and every cost all barriers that divided us from the peoples of India."⁷⁹⁷ Booth-Tucker's description of himself as "desperate" reveals the intensity with which he approached Indian missions, and his desire to break down barriers suggests a connection with natives far beyond that typical of British authorities.

Frederick Booth-Tucker's background was particularly significant in helping facilitate the creation of the Salvation Army criminal tribes' settlements. His youth in India helped him develop a great passion for the land and her people. Although he abandoned his career in the Indian Civil Service for a life as a pastor, his early employment in the ICS left him with valuable experience working within the British colonial government, as well as a variety of important personal connections. By the early- twentieth century when the settlements were founded, many of his former colleagues had worked their way up through the ranks of the ICS to positions of greater

⁷⁹⁵ Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*, 29.

⁷⁹⁶ H. Williams, 178.

⁷⁹⁷ Quoted in Harold Begbie, *Other Sheep* (Cincinnati: Jennings & Graham, 1912), 4.

authority. For example, Sir John Hewett and Sir Louis Dane, now Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, were old friends who had started in the ICS with Booth-Tucker back in the 1870s.⁷⁹⁸ Dane was very supportive of Booth-Tucker's work; in 1909 he helped the Salvation Army to secure a government grant of 2000 rupees for equipment and a continuing allowance of 150 rupees per month for the next three years.⁷⁹⁹ His patronage was duly honored by the existence of two Salvation Army institutions named after him, including "The Sir Louis Dane Weaving School for the Punjab."⁸⁰⁰ Booth-Tucker's personal relationship with the British authorities clearly helped to facilitate a beneficial alliance between the government and the institution of the Salvation Army.

The books and pamphlets of Frederick Booth-Tucker reveal a reciprocity in this relationship with the government. The Salvation Army did not merely benefit from the support of colonial officials like Hewett and Dane; Booth-Tucker also championed the efforts of the British authorities. In his work *Criminocurology*, Booth-Tucker complimented the imperial laws of India, specifically the Criminal Tribes Act, identifying these items as "the outcome of the combined experience of good, earnest, and skillful men." He went on to argue that "The Indian Penal Code, and the Criminal Procedure Code are based on the best models, and are well fitted themselves to become the model of Criminal Jurisprudence in any Eastern nation."⁸⁰¹ Interestingly, with this statement Booth-Tucker seems to suggest that criminal justice in India was different from that in the West. In this sense he seems to have aligned himself more with British

⁷⁹⁸ H. Williams, 179.

⁷⁹⁹ W. Bramwell Baird, *The Call of the Jackals*, Unpublished 1970s, The Salvation Army, International Heritage Centre, London, 83.

⁸⁰⁰ Booth-Tucker, *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon*, 45.

⁸⁰¹ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 19-20.

definitions of the Indians as others, and yet throughout his career in India that was not always the case.

A completely different incident from Booth-Tucker's past also influenced his work with the so-called criminal tribes—his own experience in an Indian prison for disturbing the peace during the early days of the Salvation Army in India. In his book *Darkest India*, Booth-Tucker outlined his dismay at the accommodations in local jails. In describing the prison diet he wrote,

That the quantity is insufficient to satisfy the cravings of hunger I can myself testify, having spent a month inside one of Her Majesty's best appointed Bombay prisons, and having noted with which every scrap of my own coarse brown bread, that I might leave over, was claimed and eaten by some of my hungry, low-caste fellow prisoners!⁸⁰²

Booth-Tucker went on to lament the lack of blankets, clothing, and other necessities within the prisons. Surely his first-hand experience must have opened his eyes to the needs of criminals within India, and made him sympathetic to their plight. He came to the conclusion that many of their crimes were acts of desperation rather than malice, writing:

I suppose that nine-tenths of the thefts and robberies, besides a large proposition of the other crimes committed in India, are prompted by sheer starvation, and until the cause be removed, it will be in vain to look for a diminution of the evil, multiply our police and soldiery as we will.⁸⁰³

Over a decade before the Salvation Army created its first settlement for criminals, Booth-Tucker's views were clear. In a manner consistent with his analysis of poverty and working-class life in Britain he viewed poverty in India as the root of much crime, and believed that the Salvationists could bring about reform. It was these beliefs that led him to organize the settlements for those designated as part of the criminal tribes.

⁸⁰² Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*, 5.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, 6.

The First Salvation Army Settlement

The first, and one of the most successful, of the Salvation Army criminal tribes' settlements was created at Gorakhpur in the United Provinces in 1908, for a tribe known as the Doms. One police official said of the tribe, "In their present condition they are likened to 'humanity in its extremest degradation' and 'scum and filth.'"⁸⁰⁴ Another police text identified a typical Dom: "He is a social outcast, and is regarded with fear and abhorrence. He subsists by theft and burglary."⁸⁰⁵ The authorities had quite clearly revealed their dislike or criticism of the Doms in choosing to designate them as criminals, but quotations from civilian writers reveal a strong prejudice against the tribe as well. Imperial journalist and author Harold Begbie described the group in the following manner, "In no race of men I have ever encountered was the feeling stronger with me of a soullessness and absence of mentality which seem sometimes to separate uncivilized people from the human species."⁸⁰⁶

According to Begbie, a former reporter for the *Daily Chronicle* and columnist for the *Globe*, the Doms themselves harbored a great resentment toward the government for their present situation. A previously mentioned Dom agricultural settlement had been established by the British, but it failed and the authorities reclaimed the land they had offered to these Indians. Thus the Doms, "feel that a great act of injustice has been perpetrated against them."⁸⁰⁷ Begbie did not seem entirely sympathetic to the Doms plight in this regard, but rather acknowledged the government's justification in rescinding

⁸⁰⁴ G.W. Gayer, *Lectures on Some Criminal Tribes of India and Religious Mendicants*, 2nd Edition (Nagpur: Police Training School, 1910), 60.

⁸⁰⁵ Hollins, 50.

⁸⁰⁶ Harold Begbie, *The Children of India* (London: Salvationist Publishing & Supplies, 1913?), 84.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

land offers due to the Doms' poor behavior. However, by including this discussion of the Doms' eloquent expression of their resentment toward the government, Begbie was in fact giving these outcasts a voice and perhaps revealing some sympathy to them. This brief anecdote reveals the tension inherent in the Salvation Army's position vis à vis the criminal tribes. They continued to proclaim support for the authorities, and yet, at the same time, sympathy for the so-called criminals was exposed.

In Begbie's work we find other, more blatant defenses of the British authorities. For example, in sympathetically recounting one Dom's cruel and unpleasant prison experience, Begbie was quick to assure readers that the government could not possibly be at fault. He wrote, "What he narrated is probably true, but the Government, of course, have no hand in the shameful part of it. It is the Indian who is hard on the Indian. Let the English chief turn his back, and Native afflicts Native."⁸⁰⁸ Although Begbie was willing to acknowledge the horrors experienced by a convict in jail, he refused to admit to any culpability on the part of the British. Instead, he offered further racist criticism of the people of India. Such jingoistic literature is apparently typical of Begbie, whose other works include a collection of patriotic poems on the Boer War.⁸⁰⁹

In 1908 Commissioner Booth-Tucker and the British authorities successfully negotiated a plan for the settlement at Gorakhpur. The government would provide land, an initial start-up grant of 2000 rupees for materials and supplies including looms, and a monthly maintenance grant as well.⁸¹⁰ The settlement was also the beneficiary of government buildings. In fact, in 1911 Gorakhpur received buildings formerly used by

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid., 98.

⁸⁰⁹ R.G. Moyles, ed. *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007), 69.

⁸¹⁰ India Office Records, "Memo from Frederick Booth-Tucker to Mr. Gillan Financial Secretary to Government," 39.

opium agents, a rather ironic location for an organization known for its purity of body and soul.⁸¹¹ Perhaps this is yet another small example of the Salvation Army's impact on the British Empire.

Certainly many of the Doms were reluctant to reside under the supervision of the Salvation Army. But Booth-Tucker wrote that the group reached the conclusion that, "the Salvation Army could not be any worse than the police, and they might possibly be a little better."⁸¹² In the facilities at Gorakhpur the Doms did find an improved situation than what they might have experienced in prison. The criminals and, notably, their families were given accommodations and trades to perform, including farming, weaving, rope-making, needlework, and other occupations. In this manner, the Salvation Army's approach to the criminal tribes was also significant in that it dealt with their wives and children as well. In identifying these so-called criminal tribes, the colonial police had also designated women and children as criminals. The Police Superintendent of the United Provinces wrote: "Dom women are nearly all prostitutes, and at the same time they act as spies for the men. They are of fine physique and have a much readier wit than their masters."⁸¹³ It appears that in some instances of criminal activity female Doms may have been even more culpable than their male counterparts. Other women may have been innocent, but subject to restrictions simply as victims of family ties and the caste system. Furthermore, if their husband/father was imprisoned, the women and children may have been incapable of supporting themselves. Whether guilty or innocent, Booth-Tucker saw the assistance and rehabilitation of the entire family as a key part of this

⁸¹¹ India Office Records, "From: Secretary to Government United Provinces," *Government of the United Provinces Proceedings P/8653*, 22 February 1911, No. 26.

⁸¹² Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 208.

⁸¹³ Hollins, 51.

ministry. He suggests that, “Our Settlements would form a safe and cheap harbour for such families.”⁸¹⁴ The Salvation Army settlements offered housing for entire families, jobs for the women, and schools for the children.

But even Booth-Tucker admitted that not all the Doms were eager to engage in the jobs offered. Many of them simply laughed at the notion that they should work. According to Booth-Tucker these unwilling settlers argued, “Even if we could get a rupee a day, it would be nothing to us when we can secure Rs. 1,000 in a single night by one of our dacoities.”⁸¹⁵ Ultimately, the combination of police restrictions and the Salvationists’ dogged efforts managed to get the Doms to work legally. Within seven months, 17 looms were established, 8 run by women; the cloth produced had been sold and the profits put toward wages and supplies.⁸¹⁶ Thus, the settlement showed early signs of potential self-sufficiency.

This concept of self-reliance was a major theme of the Salvationists in their work to feed India. Their goal was not to function purely as a charitable organization offering benevolent handouts, but to teach the natives to care for themselves—both physically and spiritually. As Booth-Tucker described the situation, “There are no charitable doles. On the contrary out of their scanty earnings we teach them to contribute to the support of their officers and teachers.”⁸¹⁷ Such economic principles would have fit in well with nineteenth-century British ideals; perhaps this capitalist philosophy helped to convince imperial authorities to approve the Salvation Army’s administration of the settlements. Later reports suggest that the payment of a daily wage led to greater self-respect among

⁸¹⁴ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 26.

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁸¹⁶ India Office Records, “Memo from Frederick Booth-Tucker to Mr. Gillan Financial Secretary to Government,” 39.

⁸¹⁷ Booth-Tucker. *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon*, 4.

the so-called criminals, and they began to take better care of themselves as their self-sufficiency grew.⁸¹⁸ Although this account comes from a Salvationist missionary, and as such is not wholly reliable, there is no denying the fact that the Salvation Army did provide opportunities for these groups to actually earn wages and become self-supporting. It is highly likely that such a practice would indeed have had a positive effect on the community.

With these early industrial successes in place, Commissioner Booth-Tucker's report to the British authorities also included several suggestions for new programs at the settlement. First, he proposed the creation of a weaving school, which could potentially be utilized by others in the district eager to learn a new trade. Furthermore, he indicated that government orders for the cloth produced in the settlement would help as they worked to develop their products and potential markets.⁸¹⁹ This was a clever method for ensuring financial support from the government without asking for further grants; the settlement would get funds from the authorities, but the government would actually get a usable product in return.

Booth-Tucker next suggested that the settlement begin cultivating cassava. He cited several benefits to the crop including its utility as a "famine food," the fact that it could be used to feed cattle and would thus avoid any caste prejudices, the potential creation of jobs for women in grinding the flour, and an expected 10% profit overall.⁸²⁰ Here Booth-Tucker revealed his understanding of Indian culture and its interests; many British officials would never consider caste concerns when making agricultural decisions.

⁸¹⁸ Baird, 29.

⁸¹⁹ India Office Records, "Memo from Frederick Booth-Tucker to Mr. Gillan Financial Secretary to Government," 40.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

His argument for the use of cassava also included an economic argument the British authorities would be sure to appreciate. He wisely demonstrated the financial advantages of developing this crop.

Booth-Tucker's final suggestion was based upon his belief that education and the prevention of children from entering into a life of crime were a vital part of their mission. He wrote, "It will be readily seen that the children are in a peculiar sense the key to the situation in any serious effort for the reclamation of this tribe."⁸²¹ As such, he wanted to build an industrial school where the Doms might voluntarily send their children. This suggestion was somewhat controversial in that Booth-Tucker really favored removing the children from their parents and any potential negative influence, to the confines of a boarding school in which they could receive proper moral training along with their industrial skills. The colonial police agreed, "Provision for the education of the children, so as to wean them in early life from their hereditary criminal traditions and open them to fresh fields of thought and occupation. The ultimate reclamation of tribes must be effected through the children."⁸²² However, the principle of forced removal of children was one of the most controversial and criticized elements of colonial rule. The ramifications of such policies among Aboriginal families in Australia are still being felt today.⁸²³ In this situation Booth-Tucker tempered himself by suggesting a voluntary school at the settlement, but the question of child separation is one that would cloud the criminal tribes' work.

This single memorandum is extremely telling with regard to the Salvation Army's efforts among the criminal tribes. The missionaries began work quickly, with an intense

⁸²¹ Ibid., 41.

⁸²² Kaul and Tompkins, 53.

⁸²³ Johnston, 172.

effort, and within the first several months were already eager to expand. Booth-Tucker's ideas reveal creativity and innovation. Rather than focusing merely on subsistence agriculture, he was constantly formulating plans for new industries and potentially profitable schemes. His memo fails to acknowledge, however, any difficulties encountered in creating this settlement. This may be indicative of Booth-Tucker's efforts to prove the utility of his organization to the colonial authorities. Likewise, he was careful to close his missive with thanks to both the Magistrate and the police, "for their unfailing co-operation and assistance, which have greatly facilitated our task."⁸²⁴ Booth-Tucker used this letter to help reinforce the new collaboration between the Salvationists and the police.

The India Office Records reveal the passion with which Booth-Tucker and his subordinates like Brigadier Hunter, the officer in charge of Gorakhpur, approached the work with the criminal tribes. However, the documents also reveal the repetition and inefficiency of the British authorities. Booth-Tucker's report on Gorakhpur is dated March 1909. The Police Department Proceedings for the next 6 months include no fewer than 15 memos or letters discussing his suggestions, often with no conclusion.⁸²⁵ Thus, there was obviously the potential for tension in the relationship between the Salvation Army and the civil authorities. The Salvationists' needed government funds to support their work, but such delays must have been frustrating.

The convicts at Gorakhpur did face fewer restrictions on their behavior than they had in prison, although they were still held accountable to the settlement authorities. Each night a roll call was held and anyone missing was searched for until they were

⁸²⁴ Ibid., 41.

⁸²⁵ India Office Records, *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*.

found. But perhaps the greatest difference between settlement life and prison life is that following the evening attendance a Salvationist meeting was conducted, complete with scripture and music.⁸²⁶ Although industry was often the chief focus of life in the settlement, religion was always there; the Salvationists' attitudes and beliefs created the atmosphere at Gorakhpur. In describing the difficulties encountered by colonial authorities in attempting to deal with the criminal tribes, Booth-Tucker wrote, "Again, his official position prevents the District Officer from making any use of religious influences to persuade the people in whom he is interested to turn from their evil ways."⁸²⁷ Clearly, Booth-Tucker saw the lack of religious teaching as a major weakness in the Indian criminal rehabilitation system. For the Salvationists, religious faith and instruction were fundamental to their work with the criminal tribes. Christianity was integral to all their efforts.

While Booth-Tucker and his subordinates preached Christian charity and rehabilitation for the so-called criminal tribes, they were not overly sympathetic in their treatment of the settlers assigned to their facilities. In *Criminocurology*, he makes it very clear that a firm, authoritative stance is necessary in dealing with convicts. Booth-Tucker wrote, "It cannot be too strongly insisted that a weak, vacillating, goody-goody policy in dealing with the criminal, especially of the dangerous classes, can only invite failure."⁸²⁸ It is unclear what exactly he means by the term "goody-goody," for in the modern vernacular this wholesome epithet would likely be ascribed to missionaries. In this case, it seems likely that Booth-Tucker used the term to designate excessive friendliness toward the criminals; an interesting warning, one that seems to suggest the Salvationists

⁸²⁶ Mackenzie, 221.

⁸²⁷ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 206.

⁸²⁸ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 23.

should act more like police and less like cheerful hymn leaders. In this statement he further associates himself with the police by making no distinction between those settlers who had actually been convicted of crimes and those who merely held the designation of criminal tribesmen.

While many Salvationist publications praise their success in working with the criminal tribes, we do also find acknowledgements of their shortcomings and clear references to the challenges they faced in their attempts. In his description of the work among the Doms, Harold Begbie wrote, “for the most part to attempt to teach religion to these people is like trying to teach a dog to sing or a parrot to paint.”⁸²⁹ Here Begbie’s derogatory phrases not only referred to the Doms as uncivilized, but actually compared them to animals. Clearly some were still prone to European prejudices. His statement also reveals a lack of success by the SA in actually converting the natives to Christianity.

Among the Doms themselves there was obviously some resistance to the Salvationists and their proselytizing. Many did not want to live in the settlements and learn a trade; these Doms believed that they could make a better living by stealing. While some voluntarily entered the Salvation Army program, many were ordered into the settlement by the government.⁸³⁰ There are those, however, who seemed grateful to the Salvation Army for their assistance. A government report from 1909, just seven months after the settlement was founded, suggests a positive response from the residents:

The Doms have thoroughly appreciated the effort made on their behalf and have readily availed themselves of the advantages of the settlement. In fact it is impossible to accommodate large numbers of those who, both in

⁸²⁹ Begbie, *The Children of India*, 89.

⁸³⁰ H. Pimm Smith, *Capturing Crims for Christ* (London: The Salvation Army, 1945), 4, 11.

the city and districts, have clamoured for admission and pleaded for an opportunity to be provided with work.⁸³¹

This document argues that there was a great demand for access to the settlements; far from attempting to escape they were begging to be a part of the work. Obviously this report does not come directly from the Doms themselves and as such must be treated with some skepticism, but the rapid growth of the settlements does indicate some level of interest on the part of the settlers.

Positive reports also came more directly from the settlers' mouths. One Dom convert named Chitra revealed,

The Doms are proud of themselves because they know that other people fear them. . . . But they are now tired of a life which is never safe from the police, and they are coming to The Salvation Army in considerable numbers, begging to be taken into the Settlement and taught a trade, or at any rate protected from police interference.⁸³²

Here we see not only a clear native appreciation for the Salvationists, but a disassociation between the missionaries and the police. To these Doms, the Salvationists did not represent the local authorities, but rather, protection from their potential mistreatment. The SA's commanding officer of the establishment said that the Doms see "that we are not agents of the police, but Christians trying to be kind and helpful."⁸³³ In fact, when describing the early settlements of the Doms, Booth-Tucker wrote, ". . . we are able to dispense entirely with the presence of Police inside the settlements although we are glad to have them in the neighbourhood, to appeal to in case of trouble."⁸³⁴ Here we see a real effort to separate the settlements from other penal institutions.

⁸³¹ India Office Records, "Memo from Frederick Booth-Tucker to Mr. Gillan Financial Secretary to Government," 39.

⁸³² Begbie, *The Children of India*, 95.

⁸³³ Begbie, *The Children of India*, 100.

⁸³⁴ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 51.

One startling aspect of the Salvationists' success with the criminal tribes' work, and a key to the cost-effectiveness of their operation, was the fact that they managed to carry it out with amazingly few personnel. Most settlements had only one or two officers in charge. At the Doms' settlement, "alone with all these dangerous criminals, is a Scotsman and his wife."⁸³⁵ Only two Europeans, and one of them female, were able to control several hundred men who had been identified as criminals and were only recently under the care of a large police force. Although this fact may merely provide evidence of the arbitrariness of the Criminal Tribes Act and the reality that these men may not have been criminals at all, it nevertheless reveals that the Salvation Army was able to handle a situation that the British civil authorities could not. Likewise, in 1914 a large group of criminals needed to be moved several hundred miles en masse to make way for a new military installation. The police feared that a considerable force would be needed to monitor such an undertaking, and yet, according to an officer involved, the Salvation Army handled the entire transfer with only two officers, and not a single convict went missing.⁸³⁶

The opportunities to earn a wage and support their families within the Salvation Army settlement apparently had an impact on crime rates in the area. A 1912 article in the SA publication *All the World* reported that the number of prisoners in the Gorakhpur jail had decreased from over eighty-six to only fourteen since the creation of the Salvationist settlement.⁸³⁷ Thus the presence of the Salvation Army appears to have not only cut down on the number of crimes, but also saved money for the police in terms of housing and monitoring criminals.

⁸³⁵ Begbie, *The Children of India*, 83.

⁸³⁶ Baird, 75.

⁸³⁷ Staff-Captain Hatcher, "Our Doms," *All the World*, May 1912, 236.

The British authorities acknowledged the value of the Salvation Army's work with the criminal tribes. One government official remarked of the settlement at Gorakhpur, "The Salvation Army had done more in two years than the Government, with all the forces of law and order at its disposal, had been able to do in twenty-five years."⁸³⁸ The Salvationists were praised not only for their character, but also for their business sense. A 1911 report from the police stated, "the advantages to the authorities of employing their agency are not only that admirable work is being done, but that it is done at a minimum cost."⁸³⁹ And after visiting a settlement, one Superintendent of Police remarked, "If I can acquire a fraction of the success which have been achieved with the Maghaya Doms, my visit will not have been in vain. This excellent work deserves every support and encouragement."⁸⁴⁰

New Settlements

The success of Gorakhpur quickly led the British authorities to consult the Salvation Army on other ventures with the so-called criminal tribes. Government reports from 1908 and 1909 reveal great problems at a settlement established in 1884 by an official named Mr. Spedding for two tribes known as the Harburahs and the Bhatu. He had failed to make much progress in helping the groups to effectively cultivate the land, and the Magistrate of Moradabad wrote to the police commissioner on the sorry state of affairs, "Mr. Spedding was evidently an enthusiast and I have [searched] in vain through

⁸³⁸ Quoted in Begbie, *The Children of India*, 102.

⁸³⁹ India Office Records, "Report from L. Stuart," *United Provinces Proceedings P/8653*, 10 March 1911, No. 20.

⁸⁴⁰ India Office Records, "Gorakhpur Copies of Entries Made in Visitors' Book: R.E. Bradley Superintendent of Police," *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, 16 February 1909.

the papers of the last 22 years for the smallest corroboration of this opinion.”⁸⁴¹ The snide tone here suggests that the Magistrate was not the least bit impressed with Spedding’s work, despite his apparent enthusiasm for the task. He seemed particularly concerned with the amount of funds wasted on this endeavor. His report contains several mentions of the government expenditures for this settlement. He wrote, “Much money has been spent in an attempt to make cultivators of them and the attempt has failed.”⁸⁴² Likewise, he was concerned by the fact that, “The colony was expensive to start and has never been self-supporting.”⁸⁴³ After reading the Magistrate’s report, Police Commissioner G.A. Tweedy suggested consulting the Salvation Army.⁸⁴⁴ It is obvious that Frederick Booth-Tucker and his subordinates had quickly earned the respect of government officials. These memos reveal that Booth-Tucker himself was now regarded as something of an authority on the rehabilitation of criminal tribes. The police actually approached him to request a consultation.

Commissioner Booth-Tucker and his wife visited the settlement and then offered their opinions to the Magistrate. Booth-Tucker advised against continuing the settlement along its present lines, as the farming was simply too unproductive. He said, “To do so without the expenditure of considerable sums of money would expose the settlers to the melancholy choice between stealing and starving.”⁸⁴⁵ Booth-Tucker’s revelation of the

⁸⁴¹ India Office Records, “From F.J. Cooke, Esq. Magistrate of Moradabad to Commissioner,” *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, 12 December 1908, File No. 35, No. 2045.

⁸⁴² Ibid.

⁸⁴³ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁴ India Office Records, “From Mr. G.A. Tweedy Commissioner to Secretary to Government United Provinces,” *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, 9 January 1909, File No. 35, No. 802/XX-252.

⁸⁴⁵ India Office Records, “Report from Booth-Tucker to Financial Secretary to Government, United Provinces,” *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, April 1909, File No. 35, No. 7.

settlers' "melancholy choice" may have played upon the sympathies of the police, but it is likely they were most influenced by his analysis that it would require a great deal of money to keep the settlement viable.

Subsequent police correspondence reveals much debate over how to handle the Haburahs and the Bhatuhs, and whether or not to follow Booth-Tucker's advice. Memos were sent back and forth discussing a variety of suggestions: Should farming be abandoned entirely? Should one tribe be moved? If so, which one?⁸⁴⁶ Thus, while it seems clear that Booth-Tucker's opinion was respected by the authorities, the police still felt compelled to make their own analyses and decisions. The state relied on advice from religious personnel, yet again there appears to be a determination to exert civil authority above that of the missionaries. Although, F.J. Cooke, the local Magistrate, did conclude that "probably the Salvation Army is the only organization that could take them in hand with any chance of success."⁸⁴⁷

By February 1911 the local British authorities had finally consented to an annual grant of 1800 rupees to establish a Salvation Army run settlement for the Haburahs to be named Hewettpur—a nod to one of the Salvationists' strongest supporters, Sir John Hewett.⁸⁴⁸ The donated facilities for this new settlement also included an old fortress, originally built by the French.⁸⁴⁹ This is only one of many examples of outdated or unused imperial buildings, fortifications, and railroad lines being recycled or reused by

⁸⁴⁶ India Office Records, *Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces 1909 – Police Department P/8110*, 8 May 1909, File No. 35, No. 1801/XX-252, and 30 April 1909, No. 560.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁸ India Office Records, "From: Secretary to Government United Provinces," *Government of the United Provinces Proceedings P/8653*, 18 February 1911, No. 1.

⁸⁴⁹ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 52.

the Salvationists in their settlements. They actually took former materials of the Empire, and utilized them for their own purposes.

Agriculturally, the settlers at Hewettpur sunk wells and were able to successfully cultivate the land. Interestingly, this was accomplished under the leadership of an Indian-born Salvation Army officer, Major Jivanandham.⁸⁵⁰ In this case, by trusting the care of this settlement to the Salvation Army the British authorities were actually subsidizing the authority of Indian personnel. Within a few years the Haburah settlement had grown from 200 persons to 800, and they were described as “well-fed, well-dressed, bright, intelligent families.”⁸⁵¹

In his work *The Children of India*, imperial journalist Harold Begbie lauded high praise on namesake of this settlement for his efforts in supporting the Salvation Army. He wrote, “It is a unanimous opinion in India that Sir John Hewett, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, stands first among the little group of able men directing the government of India.”⁸⁵² With this statement Begbie suggested that not only did Salvationists respect Hewett for his decision to back their work, but that in fact all of India sang his praises, and by extension applauded the work of the SA settlements. Begbie also described Sir John Hewett as a paragon of strength; “a man who carries himself like soldier, has in his eyes the soldier’s hard and penetrating scrutiny, and in his mouth the soldier’s set and resolute determination.”⁸⁵³ Military imagery was a key feature of Begbie’s description. He continued, “he is a man . . . committed to business,

⁸⁵⁰ S. Smith, 105.

⁸⁵¹ Unsworth, 24.

⁸⁵² Begbie, *The Children of India*, 78.

⁸⁵³ Begbie, *Other Sheep*, 275.

conscious of power, used to obedience, and the sworn foe of sentimentalism.”⁸⁵⁴ In idealizing this politician, Begbie chose not to use language associated with religion or charity, but rather terms of strength and militarism. In so doing, he was further reinforcing the military metaphor of the Salvation Army and reaffirming a connection between the religious organization and the British authorities. Overall Begbie’s depiction of Hewett is rather hyperbolic, and perhaps even a little suspect, as Hewett was another of Frederick Booth-Tucker’s old ICS chums. However, such flowery admiration does reinforce the notion of how important these relationships were to the Salvation Army’s work. As a supporter and a benefactor within the government, Hewett was worthy of the Salvationists’ admiration. He helped to ensure the success of their work. Likewise, the Salvation Army provided Hewett and the rest of the government with a valuable service.

The Hewettpur settlement received additional high praise from visiting dignitaries. The Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces wrote of the two Salvationists in charge, “The enthusiasm of the Superintendent and his wife, and their kindness to the poor waifs in their charge are beyond all praise, and I wish them all continued prosperity and success.” In this statement the Lt. Governor seems to have viewed the settlers simply as impoverished children. His use of the term “poor waifs” hardly suggests that these people were violent criminals. When Edwin P. Montague, the Under Secretary of State for India, visited Hewettpur he said of the same couple, Ensign and Mrs. Mabe, “The sympathy and enthusiasm of the Superintendent and his wife produce confidence and content and demonstrate how much depends on personality.”⁸⁵⁵ Both of these quotations cite the “enthusiasm” of the Salvation Army officers. This sense

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid., 275.

⁸⁵⁵ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 53-54.

of passion and zeal was frequently highlighted in descriptions of the Salvationists. Once again, their personnel were identified as uniquely capable in body and spirit to undertake this project.

Salvationists working among the so-called criminal tribes often found themselves in difficult surroundings, not only due to the presence of potentially dangerous criminals, but also because of the wilds of the physical environment. One visitor wrote that “it requires an unusual amount of pluck and nerve” to live at the Sahibganj settlement, established for members of the Sansia tribe near the Nepal border.⁸⁵⁶ The facility was surrounded by jungles that were home to tigers and other predatory animals; in addition to their other concerns settlers often lost goats or other small domestic animals to these natural hunters.

Be it jungle or seacoast, wherever the Salvationists established a settlement, the officers were innovative, taking on new projects and experimenting with different ideas on how to both reduce crime and better the lives of the settlers. For example, at Sahibganj there had been an outbreak of thefts on the part of young men who could not afford the expensive dowries necessary to obtain a wife. In order to cease this spree of thefts, the Salvationists took it upon themselves to find wives for the young men. A female officer was appointed to find young women and negotiate the marriages, leading to at least nine couples happily united according to Booth-Tucker.⁸⁵⁷ This is a fascinating example of the Salvation Army not only recognizing the importance of native culture and traditions, but finding a way to help the Indians within the boundaries of their cultural expectations.

⁸⁵⁶ H. Williams, 187.

⁸⁵⁷ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 55.

Successful settlements in the United Provinces led to the establishment of facilities in other regions. For example, in February 1910 government officials in the Punjab met with Salvation Army personnel to discuss the creation of a settlement at Kot Mokhal for a group known as the Pakhiwaras, to whom “more heinous offences have been traced.”⁸⁵⁸ In a letter to the Secretary to Government for the Punjab Police Commissioner Lt. Col. C.G. Parsons gave the following endorsement for the project:

I strongly recommend the experiment being made. It will be identical in essential features with the experiment in Gorakhpur with the Doms. . . . It will in the long run, be cheaper, if the experiment succeeds, than would the act be of giving away good canal land to these Pakhiwaras and financing their agriculture.⁸⁵⁹

The police commissioner repeatedly referred to the Salvation Army settlements as “experiments.” This suggests that perhaps the government was not totally convinced of the viability of such a scheme. However, he did appear to acknowledge success at Gorakhpur and display optimism for the potential new settlement. Thus, while Parsons may not have been totally won over by the Salvationists’ activities, he too seems desperate enough to give them a chance. But again, the most telling element of this communication is his belief that allowing the Salvation Army to take over would ultimately be more cost effective than for the police to administer the land themselves. He seems frustrated by the Pakhiwaras and prejudiced against their ability to use the land profitably.

For Lt. Col. Parsons the potential financial benefits of working with the Salvation Army make the most compelling argument. Parsons’ above comments were based upon

⁸⁵⁸Kaul and Tompkins, 15.

⁸⁵⁹ India Office Records, “Letter to the Secretary to Government, Punjab from Lt. Col. C.G. Parsons, Commissioner Lahore Division,” *Punjab Home Department Proceedings P/8395*, 25 February 1910, File No. 10.

recommendations offered by his subordinate, a Deputy Commissioner who advised that “it [would] be much less expensive” to go along with the currently proposed scheme than for the government to give up land elsewhere for a new settlement. While economics clearly seem to have been the greatest area of concern for these officials, this note also includes the following statement, “. . . it may safely be left to the representatives of the Salvation Army to work out the salvation of these Pakhiwaras on their own lines.”⁸⁶⁰ So in this instance there appears to be official acknowledgement of both the overall competence of the Salvationists and the religious nature of their work. The police commissioner referred specifically to the “salvation” of the Pakhiwaras; presumably he meant their physical and material salvation, but using that term in connection with the Salvation Army he had to have considered the spiritual element as well. Thus, the government was, if not fully endorsing, at least offering their tacit approval of Christian missionary efforts. He was suggesting that the police might wash their hands of the project and “safely leave” it to the Salvationists knowing full well that religion would be a part of their efforts.

The local government officials also seem to have been particularly eager to accept the Salvation Army’s proposal here, as the Pakhiwaras had been posing a great deal of difficulty for the authorities. The police believed that this group, “ha[d] the criminal instinct far more strongly than any other criminal tribe in the district and [we]re far more daring in their exploits.”⁸⁶¹ In addition to this generally negative characterization, the government had already experienced problems with the Pakhiwaras’ protests and demands for land. Lt. Col. Parsons wrote, “the case of Kot Mokhal is most pressing, as

⁸⁶⁰ India Office Records, “Note of 18 February 1910 by Deputy Commissioner, Sialkot,” *Punjab Home Department Proceedings P/8395*, 18 February 1910, File No. 11: 80.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

the settlers were constantly complaining that they could not live honestly unless they had more land.”⁸⁶² The Pakhiwaras had evidently become a great nuisance for the British authorities who were quite eager to delegate responsibility for the tribe to another organization. This quotation may even suggest some threats and manipulation on the part of the Indians. They seem to be demanding more and more land, intimating that otherwise they will be forced to turn to a life of crime. Perhaps in this case the Pakhiwaras actually used their colonial classification as a criminal tribe to their advantage. They did not have to carry out the crimes, but could merely threaten to do so in order to gain concessions from the police. The whole system built around the Criminal Tribes Act was based on fear; imperial authorities were concerned that the peace and order of the Raj might be threatened, and as such attempted to deal with it preemptively by identifying potential criminals. Perhaps in this instance the Pakhiwaras were playing on these British fears to get land for themselves.

Whether or not they were so calculating, the Pakhiwaras and their demands posed enough of a problem that the police were willing to let missionaries handle it. But although there may have been an element of desperation in the government’s decision to utilize the Salvation Army, there was also relief and trust in the Salvationists’ ability to handle the difficult situation. In fact, in a later memo Com. Booth-Tucker actually told the Secretary that there should be no problem with the Pakhiwaras’ complaints over land, as the Salvation Army officers will have taken hold of the settlement.⁸⁶³

⁸⁶² India Office Records, “Letter to the Secretary to Government, Punjab from Lt. Col. C.G. Parsons, Commissioner Lahore Division,” *Punjab Home Department Proceedings P/8395*, 25 February 1910, File No 10.

⁸⁶³ India Office Records, “From: Commissioner Booth-Tucker, To: Secretary to Government, Punjab,” *Punjab Home Department Proceedings P/8395*, 1 April 1910, File No. 4.

The proposed plan for a settlement at Kot Mokhal included a government grant of 5000 rupees to the Salvation Army to cover building expenses, as well as a monthly grant to help pay for staff of 200 rupees for the first year and 150 rupees per month after that time.⁸⁶⁴ The initial amounts of these grants were not totally insignificant, yet they were not particularly burdensome.⁸⁶⁵ The monthly fees could represent a potentially large savings to the government. In *Darkest India* Booth-Tucker quoted an 1887 report from the Bombay Presidency stating the average monthly expenditure for a prisoner was 6 rupees per month.⁸⁶⁶ Even allowing for inflation over the intervening decades, a settlement that could house a few hundred prisoners with a subsidy of only 150 rupees per month represented a great value to the government. But what is most noteworthy about these arrangements is not the individual amounts specified, but the idea that part of the government subsidy would only be given once and that the monthly allowance would decrease over time. It was clearly to the authorities' advantage to support a program that was designed to become increasingly self-sufficient, and thus less and less of a financial burden to the state over time.

The trade-off for Salvationists' creation and administration of this settlement was that the Salvation Army gave overt support of the British Empire. In fact, the formal opening ceremonies for the new facility were to be held on Empire Day.

The manager shall seek to inculcate a spirit of loyalty to the Government by celebrating the occasion with due honors, arranging for a flag-hoisting and combining it with the launching of some useful work. . . . Some district official should be invited to preside on the occasion, and special prayer be

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁵ See Lawrence H. Officer, "Exchange Rates Between the United States Dollar and Forty-one Currencies," *MeasuringWorth.com*, 2008. According to Officer's calculator, in 1922 1 U.S. dollar was equal to 3.48 rupees. While this does not fit exactly with this time period, these figures can give some indication of the amounts involved here.

⁸⁶⁶ Booth-Tucker, *Darkest India*, 6.

offered for the prosperity of the British Raj, of the Indian Empire and of the settlement.⁸⁶⁷

This quotation from Booth-Tucker's memoranda is rife with images and activities of imperial loyalty. He drew an obvious connection between the Salvation Army settlement and the British authorities, and one of mutual respect—members of the settlement should be loyal to the government and likewise the government should send someone to preside over this special event. Furthermore, religion was clearly emphasized in his statement on the importance of prayer for the Raj. This quotation suggests that it was in fact the responsibility of good Christians to support the Empire.

Although Salvationist literature on the subject of these settlements was generally very optimistic, there were examples in which they were willing to recognize the challenges they faced. While many of these so-called criminals were unfairly identified as such, many others had engaged in a life of crime including theft, cattle rustling, and picking pockets. Booth-Tucker described the facility for the Pakhiwaras saying, "The Settlement here has undoubtedly been our most difficult and discouraging one."⁸⁶⁸ When the first Salvation Army officers arrived and took control of the settlement they were promptly robbed. This type of crime is not particularly surprising, given the histories of the settlers as thieves, and the likely trusting nature of the missionaries. But even as he acknowledged this very real problem in dealing with the criminals, Booth-Tucker refused to admit defeat. Of the theft he reported, "This is a very rare experience for us," and within a few days the thieves felt remorseful and the money was returned.⁸⁶⁹ Obviously, Booth-Tucker and the Salvationists wanted to put forth as positive an image of their work

⁸⁶⁷ India Office Records, "Memorandum of Instructions for Officers in Charge of the Pakhiwara Settlement at Kot Mohal, Sialkot, Punjab," *Punjab Home Department Proceedings P/8395*, 30 April 1910, File No. 3.

⁸⁶⁸ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 61.

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

as possible, and we must bear that in mind in reading their accounts of the settlements. A government account of this theft stated: “one of the men concerned was detected and the property retrieved.”⁸⁷⁰ The police record offers no indication of remorse on the part of the thieves, although the document did acknowledge that “This checked any further mischief and the Pakhiwaras began to undertake work.”⁸⁷¹

Thus, as the Kot Mokal settlement developed, police officials became convinced that criminal tribes such as the Pakhiwaras could indeed be rehabilitated. A 1914 police report articulated the following principles of criminal tribes’ reclamation,

a healthy paternal influence, enforcing discipline and at the same time affording encouragement and help to the people, is capable of producing most beneficial results among the tribes, and we are further fortified in this conviction by what we have seen of its effect upon the members of the tribes, who have been sufficiently long in the Salvation Army settlements to benefit by it.⁸⁷²

Again, the efforts of the Salvation Army were held up as an example for the colonial authorities. The Salvationists had demonstrated the benevolent paternalism of the British Empire, and helped to cure a social problem by leading the Pakhiwaras to discipline and gainful employment.

In 1913 two settlements were established in the Madras Presidency, Sitanagaram and Bethpudi. Sitanagaram’s name was later changed to Sainyapuram or Armytown; Bethpudi was later renamed Stuartpuram after Sir Harold Stuart, the Governor of the presidency. Stuartpuram eventually became the largest of all the Salvation Army settlements, with 3,000 settlers and 2,000 acres of land.⁸⁷³ It was known as a good

⁸⁷⁰ Vivian, 127.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁸⁷² Kaul and Tompkins, 53.

⁸⁷³ S. Smith, 107.

conduct settlement; if the residents misbehaved they were sent to Sitanagaram.⁸⁷⁴ Before either of these settlements became stable or productive, however, a period of adjustment and job training was necessary. Booth-Tucker said of the early days of the settlement, “It is literally Pandemonium let loose. The fighting, quarrelling, shouting, drinking, and gambling are indescribable.”⁸⁷⁵

As evidenced by the name bestowed on Stuartpuram, much of the history of the Salvation Army’s work with the so-called criminal tribes indicates an amiable relationship with the British government. The colonial officials were often all too happy to delegate responsibilities to the SA. And yet, there was still the question of authority. The British authorities ultimately held rank above the missionaries. For example, a draft of policies for settlements in the Madras presidency stated the following: “Rules for the management, control and supervision of the settlement shall be made by the officer of the Salvation Army in charge subject to the approval of the District Magistrate.”⁸⁷⁶ Thus, Salvationists were given authority over the designated criminals, but their work was still subject to government approval. Furthermore, it was also decreed that, “The settlement shall be open to inspection at any time by the District Magistrate or Superintendent of Police or any other officer specially empowered by either of them.”⁸⁷⁷ The British authorities made it clear who held the ultimately authority in these endeavors. While the Salvationists were certainly entrusted with a great deal of responsibility, that trust was not

⁸⁷⁴ V. Lalitha, *The Making of Criminal Tribes: Patterns and Transitions* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1995), 50.

⁸⁷⁵ Booth-Tucker, *Criminocurology*, 62.

⁸⁷⁶ India Office Records, “Draft Rules,” *Government of Madras Judicial Department Proceedings P/9294*, 10 May 1913, File No. 917, 8.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

without limits. Although, this fact is not surprising, it is significant to acknowledge the persistent hierarchy inherent within the British Empire.

At the large settlement of Stuartpuram, education of the children was once again seen as a key element to the reclamation of the criminal tribes. There were two day schools and the Salvationists believed,

Here it is that the tremendous asset which the Settlement represents to the community is most strikingly shown, for in these schools the children of the erstwhile criminals, who would assuredly have followed their parents' evil practices had no such Settlement existed, are lifted to a plane where they are able to appreciate the beauty of right living.⁸⁷⁸

Clearly, this statement reveals the Salvationists' fundamental belief that their values and ideology were "right." Furthermore, they capitalized upon the fact that the youth were most easily indoctrinated with their religious teachings. Through these means, the Salvationists found a way to lay the ground work for a Christian community among the Indians. In this respect the work at Stuartpuram was further significant as an example of the Salvation Army policy of 'Saved to Serve.' That is, here Indian converts took on leadership roles. The Stuartpuram settlement schools eventually became staffed with men and women who had themselves actually been raised in the settlement, gone on to further training, and returned to teach.⁸⁷⁹

But not all settlements were free of conflict. At the Saidpur settlement violence threatened when the Salvationists decided to create a boarding school for the children, again believing that they would be best taught when separated from their parents' negative influences. By creating such schools among the so-called criminal tribes of India the Salvationists were aligning themselves with the most authoritarian aspects of

⁸⁷⁸ "Curing India's Criminals," *All the World*, October 1922, 398.

⁸⁷⁹ S. Smith, 107.

British imperial government. Yet, according to SA Commissioner Baugh, the families eventually accepted the separation. His later report maintained the children graduated from the school “bright, happy and healthy . . . well capable of taking their places in the community as a whole.”⁸⁸⁰ While it is possible that the schools were as effective as he and other Salvationists suggest, it seems doubtful that the Indians gladly accepted the separation from their children. It is more likely that they felt there was no alternative, or perhaps that they were willing to make a sacrifice in order for their children to receive an education.

In 1913 the Salvation Army made arrangements to establish yet another settlement, this one for a group known as the Vepper Pariahs in South Arcot. The government agreed to fund the following items for this settlement called Kammapuram: a road, a well for clean drinking water, a school for the children of the settlement, and a dispensary in which the Salvation Army would provide medical care.⁸⁸¹ It appears as though the British authorities were increasingly willing to support Salvation Army programs, likely inspired by the success of earlier settlements that now boasted functioning farms and handicrafts. Kammapuram was further significant in that the police negotiated with the Salvationists to release Vepper Pariahs from jail under the condition that they live in the settlement. Here we see the authorities placing even further responsibility in the hands of the Salvationist missionaries. Their settlement was actually replacing the local prison within the colonial system of law and order. This facility was not created solely for coerced residents, however. Upon its opening Kammapuram

⁸⁸⁰ Baugh, 9.

⁸⁸¹ India Office Records, “Letter from M. Aziz-ud-din Sahib Bahadur, Khan Bahadur, District Magistrate of South Arcot to Chief Secretary to Government,” *Government of Madras – Judicial Proceedings P/9296*, 9 October 1913, No. 1686.

welcomed 13 men who were conditionally released from jail to the settlement, as well as 9 voluntary residents.⁸⁸² The fact that others willingly chose to enter the facility suggests that the situation was indeed preferable to life in an Indian jail.

The Salvationists in India accepted work wherever it was presented to them. In addition to the numerous criminal tribes' settlements scattered throughout the subcontinent, in 1913 work began in the even more remote location of the Andaman Islands. The Andamans, a set of islands in the Bay of Bengal, had been the home of a penal colony throughout much of the history of the British Empire in India. When this new Salvation Army settlement began, the residents were not simply people who had been designated as criminals by an antiquated system, but over one hundred men who had been convicted of robbery and murder along with their families; criminals who had spent much of the previous two years of their lives chained in irons.⁸⁸³ Such extreme punishment suggests that the colonial authorities viewed these men as particularly threatening. Major Edwin Sheard recalled that a local police officer offered a piece of friendly advice: sleep with a revolver under your pillow.⁸⁸⁴ Christian missionaries like Sheard did not employ the use of handguns as part of their strategy, but perhaps that makes their efforts all the more impressive. Working with convicts who had been treated so poorly and in such an isolated location, the Salvationists must have faced some very real risks. Men such as Sheard were willing to undertake a massive reformation project with a group of people that made even experienced police officers nervous, armed only with the Holy Bible, without any physical protection or actual police presence. Sheard

⁸⁸² India Office Records, *Government of Madras – Judicial Proceedings P/9296*, 10 September 1913, No. 1837.

⁸⁸³ Major Edwin H. Sheard, "Reforming Robbers in the Andamans," *The Officers' Review*, November 1937, 536.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 535.

welcome these men directly from prison into a cooperative society heavily influenced by Christian teaching.

Perhaps even more remarkable than the confidence with which the Salvationists approached their missionary endeavors in the Andamans was the success they discovered. They put the criminals to work farming and weaving, encouraging them to become economically self-sufficient, and according to Sheard, “with few exceptions, they responded well.”⁸⁸⁵ From a financial standpoint, Sheard cited a number of achievements—their weavers and seamstresses received a government contract to supply clothing for convicts, industrial profits were put into a development fund for the colony, and people were able to repay government loans for the purchase of cattle.⁸⁸⁶ In these instances the reformed criminals were not only able to support themselves, but they actually performed useful services and even generated revenue for the government.

While once more the Salvationists seemed to have done quite well in their efforts at social rehabilitation, they did again acknowledge their difficulties in fully achieving their ultimate goal of winning Indian souls for Christ. The missionaries confessed that in this regard the work was particularly slow going. However, they did manage to convert a number of Indians, and Sheard recalled that at their first enrollment of new soldiers such a huge crowd gathered that they were forced to cut down walls so that more people could witness the ceremony.⁸⁸⁷ So although the Salvationists did not succeed in overcoming all cultural and emotional barriers and converting all convicts to Christianity, they did manage to reach many of them, while providing extremely valuable social services to many more. One government official remarked on a visit to the Andaman settlement that,

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 537.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 537-538.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 538.

“the Criminal Tribes under Army control gave far less trouble than was experienced with the ordinary population of the Islands.”⁸⁸⁸ His use of the phrase “under Army control” does suggest a level of authority for the Salvationists commensurate with the police, once again identifying the Salvation Army as an agent of empire. At the same time however, life in the SA settlement was notably different from life in jail. The Salvationists had no interest in punishing these people, but were very eager to teach them their beliefs.

Given the lack of evidence from the voices of the settlers, it is difficult to fully assess the so-called criminals’ views of the Salvation Army and their lives in the settlements. There were obviously those who felt frustrated, restricted, and resentful; those who wanted nothing to do with Christianity, and those who even ran away from the settlements. And yet, there were clearly many designated as criminals who chose to stay, some who even begged to be accepted into a settlement. A government report from the Punjab found that “the privilege of being placed in an Agricultural Settlement has come to be eagerly sought after.”⁸⁸⁹ Likewise, in his interviews with the Yerukulas Simhadri Yedla discovered that, “Since the Salvation Army provided food and shelter and distributed lands to each Yerukula family according to its size some Yerukulas came voluntarily.”⁸⁹⁰

While the evidence does seem to suggest willing residence in the settlements, at least for some, as well as improvements in industry and behavior more in keeping with British norms on the part of the settlers, whether they actually converted to Christianity remains unclear. Concerning the Salvationists’ efforts at proselytization at the Hewettpur

⁸⁸⁸ Baugh, 9.

⁸⁸⁹ Hari Singh, *A Note on the Administration of Criminal Tribes Punjab 1917 to 1919* (Lahore: Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, 1920), 6.

⁸⁹⁰ Yedla, 181.

settlement, Booth-Tucker wrote, “The Haburahs never made any objection to our religion. They enjoyed the meetings . . .”⁸⁹¹ While this quotation does indicate some positive response to the Salvation Army’s teachings, it is hardly a convincing testimonial. Even the religious indifference depicted in the above statement is not reliable given the fact that its author is the man who most wanted the people of India to embrace Christianity. There were settlers who genuinely converted, but overall the success of the missionaries appears to be more accurately described in terms of the improved character and work ethic of the Indians, rather than dramatic religious conversions.

The Salvationists did boast some success in converting the Yerukalas to Christianity. By 1922 the settlement including a corps with 40-50 adult soldiers and 300-400 registered adherents (that is regular attendees of the church who have not been fully enrolled as soldiers); meetings were routinely held in two large halls capable of holding 1000 people each.⁸⁹² A Salvation Army periodical was proud to state: “Not only have the waste acres of Stuartpuram been cultivated and made to grow rich crops, but the waste soil of men’s hearts has been sown with good seed and the harvest gives promise of being abundant.”⁸⁹³ The imagery of this quote neatly identifies the two main goals of the Salvationist missions, namely economic self-sufficiency and religious conversion so that they in turn might teach others. At Stuartpuram the SA was reporting both a profitable farm and a profitable church, both of which they expected to continue.

⁸⁹¹ Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 214.

⁸⁹² “Curing India’s Criminals,” 399.

⁸⁹³ *Ibid.*, 399.

Other Efforts

The Salvationists were not the only religious personnel whom the British government subsidized to work with the so-called criminal tribes. Other settlements were under the control of a variety of groups including the American Baptist Mission, London Mission, and Canadian Mission, as well as a number of native Hindu and Muslim organizations. After studying and visiting the settlements in the 1910s and 20s, John Lewis Gillin discovered that “The reports seem to indicate that most of these societies were doing rather poor work.”⁸⁹⁴ Gillin himself was not associated with any particular missionary movement, but his observations of the various settlements do come through a Western lens. The numerous settlements faced a variety of difficulties similar to those of the government-managed facilities in terms of viable land, funding, leadership and motivating the settlers to work productively. They also faced issues with controlling the residents and preventing them from absconding.⁸⁹⁵

V. Lalitha did compliment the efforts of two Baptist missionaries, Rev. Bullard and his successor Rev. Bawden, who ran the Kavali Settlement. However, he was still forced to acknowledge that the facility “was not a total success.”⁸⁹⁶ The India Office Records from 1913 reveal that, “The Government observes that the rates of grant asked for by the Rev. E. Bullard in paragraph 4 of his letter are higher than those sanctioned in the case of the Salvation Army.”⁸⁹⁷ Although, the British did bestow the Rev. Bullard and the American Baptist Mission the grant they requested, the public record recognized

⁸⁹⁴ John Lewis Gillin, *Taming the Criminal: Adventures in Penology* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1931), 148.

⁸⁹⁵ Lalitha, 46.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁸⁹⁷ India Office Records, “Memorandum from A.J. Curgenvon, Deputy Secretary to Government,” *Government of Madras Judicial Proceedings 1913 P/9293*, 18 March 1913, No. 654-A/2.

that this was not as beneficial as the arrangement offered by the Salvationists. Greater costs were not the only reason these settlements fell short of those of the Salvation Army. Government records show that the Kavali settlement had problems with well-boring and Rev. Bullard lacked the requisite engineering skills; the local Magistrate acknowledged, “Mr. Bullard is a very estimable gentleman but is very old.”⁸⁹⁸

One advantage the Salvationists appear to have had over other groups was consistency in their staff. There are several examples of settlements run by other missionaries that seemed to be functioning well, but ran into difficulties when a change in personnel was made. For instance, two settlements were established by the London Mission for a tribe known as the Koravars. A police memo from 1913 stated, “These settlements were started and managed by Mr. Robinson, a missionary of strong personality who has been successful in dealing with such people. He has now gone away and it remains to be seen how the settlements fare under his successor.”⁸⁹⁹ With the Salvation Army, however, the government seemed confident that any officer would perform just as well as his/her predecessor. A police report from the United Provinces argued,

They have the advantage of possessing a trained and effective organization which will continue, and which is not dependent on the exertions of any individual, possessing as it does an inexhaustible supply of workers of the same qualifications, of whom, as far as can be seen, one generation will succeed another.⁹⁰⁰

⁸⁹⁸ India Office Records, “Letter from M.R. Ry Diwan Bahadur R. Ramachandra Rao Avargal, District Magistrate to Chief Secretary to Government,” *Government of Madras Judicial Proceedings 1913 P/9293*, 11 March 1913, No. V.

⁸⁹⁹ India Office Records, “Letter from the Hon’ble Mr. H.F.W. Gillman, I.C.S. Acting Inspector-General of Police to Chief Secretary to Government.”

⁹⁰⁰ India Office Records, “Report from L. Stuart.”

The British appear quite impressed, not only with Booth-Tucker, but with all Salvation Army personnel in India, citing their training and numbers.

When allowing non-governmental agencies to establish settlements, the British authorities faced not only the question of whether to utilize religious organizations, but also whether they should use Indian groups or only European personnel. Although some Indian organizations have been mentioned in connection with the settlements, John Lewis Gillin argued that local Hindus and Muslims showed little interest in the work.⁹⁰¹ A 1911 report from the Police of the United Provinces argued that a married Salvation Army officer received only 50 rupees per month, and suggested that no Indian would be willing to do this work for such a paltry sum. The report responded to the complaints of Indian leaders that the Salvation Army had been given so much authority over the settlements by saying, “opposition based on any such grounds from those who have never given any help, deserves in the opinion of the Lt. Governor, no consideration of any kind.” Furthermore, he argued that if any group wanted to help with this project as much as the Salvation Army did and possessed as good credentials as the Salvationists, he would be glad to let them.⁹⁰² A 1914 police report raised the possibility of Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh societies undertaking work such as the SA, but acknowledged that one such group was “not prepared to undertake the duty,” and two other Indian organizations were “considering the question, but have presented no practical proposals yet.”⁹⁰³ Other charitably societies simply did not display the same enthusiasm for this work as the Salvation Army.

In 1922 Sir John Hewett gave the following account of the situation:

⁹⁰¹ Gillin, 149.

⁹⁰² India Office Records, “Report from L. Stuart.”

⁹⁰³ Kaul and Tompkins, 83.

Very shortly after certain tribes in the United Provinces were made over to the Salvation Army, some Hindu members of the Local Council raised a debate on the question. They contended that it was unfair to employ a Christian agency in preference to Hindu agencies. But these opponents were in a minority. The Indian members, with few exceptions, were firmly of opinion that no Hindu or Indian agency was so fit to have control of the criminal tribes as the Salvation Army.⁹⁰⁴

In this regard Hewett is something of an unreliable source, as we have seen his repeated support for the Salvationists and their work. However, the local councils that voted to approve the Salvation Army projects included Indians, although they were likely collaborators with imperial authority rather than spokesmen for the poor of India. The Salvationists clearly met with some resistance, but it appears that both the British authorities and local Indian leadership acknowledged the Salvation Army's willingness and ability to handle the settlements.

Thus, of all the groups who worked with the so-called criminal tribes, "the Salvation Army was perhaps the most influential."⁹⁰⁵ John Lewis Gillin declared: "It can be said without fear of contradiction that some of the best work being done in the settlements is done in those under religious organizations, especially under the missions and the Salvation Army."⁹⁰⁶ Throughout his book, Gillin repeatedly complimented the Salvationists and acknowledged their leadership and innovation in working with the criminal tribes. The Salvationists' successes may have earned them not only the respect of the British authorities, but even the clout to actually sway the government. Sir John Hewett said, "their [the Salvation Army's] efforts show the way to a hitherto unsolved problem."⁹⁰⁷

⁹⁰⁴ Quoted in Booth-Tucker, *Muktifauj*, 214.

⁹⁰⁵ Tolen, 114.

⁹⁰⁶ Gillin, 151.

⁹⁰⁷ Quoted in Mackenzie, 223.

From an economic perspective, the Salvationists succeeded in providing employment and fostering self-sufficiency in the so-called criminals through a variety of programs, both agricultural and industrial. Furthermore, these gains were a welcome relief to the state; the work of the Salvation Army officers in the settlements saved the government time, administrative hassles, and most importantly—money. Well-known newspaper editor and supporter of the Salvationists W.T. Stead wrote in 1912, “various governments have found it sound economy to grant subsidies to the Army in consideration of its undertaking the performance of certain duties to the poor and the outcast, which the state found itself incapable of adequately performing.”⁹⁰⁸ SA settlements in India certainly fit this description.

In many areas the Salvationists not only saved the British government money, but they actually managed to reduce the number of crimes committed. For example, in the area surrounding the Moradabad Settlement, during the year 1910 only one of the nearly three hundred criminals registered under the CT Act was actually convicted of a crime; this represents a crime rate significantly lower than any government expectations.⁹⁰⁹

It seems that the greatest disservice done to the members of these tribes was not so much sending them to the settlements, but rather having designated them as criminals in the first place. In this regard, the Salvationists were actually able to offer some assistance to them. Frederick Booth-Tucker’s plan for reformation of the tribes included changing their official classification. All children of these groups were listed in local registers under the heading “badmash,” indicating criminality. But Booth-Tucker coined a new term: “nekmash,” meaning good character, and young people in the SA settlements

⁹⁰⁸ William T. Stead, “A True Great Heart,” in *Fortnightly Review* (Dec. 1912) quoted in: R.G. Moyles, ed. *I Knew William Booth: An Album of Remembrances* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2007), 93.

⁹⁰⁹ India Office Records, “Report from L. Stuart.”

could earn certificates bearing this distinction.⁹¹⁰ While some incarnation of the Criminal Tribes Act remained in place through the mid-twentieth century, it is significant that the Salvationists were seriously working to eliminate this categorization.

The above-mentioned settlements are really only highlights of the Salvation Army's activities among the population of the subcontinent. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Salvationists had experienced a radical departure from the persecutions following their arrival. A 1911 SA report identified an impressive number of programs and facilities (for the criminal tribes and others) within India and Ceylon. In addition to over 2500 corps and outposts, the Salvationists also maintained schools, hospitals, farms, and banks.⁹¹¹ By this time they also ran eight agro-industrial settlements for criminal tribes, with 1409 cultivated acres of land and 130 looms at work.⁹¹² Within another five years the Salvationists reported a total of 34 criminal tribes' settlements with over 7,000 inhabitants, spread throughout India including the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the Madras Presidency.⁹¹³ Their work among the so-called criminal tribes grew with an astonishing breadth and speed. Through their settlement work, the relationship between the Salvation Army and the British government became one of mutual benefit and even admiration. Government authorities publicly demonstrated their support for the Salvationists by attending functions and openings of new institutions. Col. Henry Bullard acknowledged the Viceroy and Vicerine, as well as the Governors of both the Bombay and Madras

⁹¹⁰ Unsworth, 24.

⁹¹¹ Booth-Tucker, *What the Salvation Army is Doing in India and Ceylon*, 1-2.

⁹¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹¹³ "To the Governor of Madras," *All the World*, February 1916, 80.

Presidencies for attending openings and purchasing goods made in Salvation Army facilities.⁹¹⁴

Through the success of their settlements, the Salvationists even managed to affect colonial legislation. In 1911 yet another Criminal Tribes Act was passed; this legislation was apparently heavily influenced by the work and ideas of the Salvation Army. Following the success at Gorahkpur and other early settlements, in 1910, William Booth had written to the Governor-General in Council urging the creation of a system of rehabilitation and employment for the criminals—not just one of punishment. Likewise, Frederick Booth-Tucker had communicated directly with the Governor-General in Council and given him proposals for industrial settlements.⁹¹⁵

Such influence with the British authorities is made all the more significant by the fact that the Salvationists in India had not always had such a positive relationship with the government. The early years of the SA work in India were marked by conflict, persecutions, arrests, and trials. And yet now, the two groups worked with such mutual admiration. Col. Henry Bullard was particularly awed by the change, having lived through the transition. He wrote in a 1914 article,

One of the most remarkable changes observable is the difference in the attitude of the Government and officials towards us. Thirty-one years ago I was privileged to be one of the first party of four officers who landed in India with Com. Booth-Tucker. Then we were misunderstood, opposed, persecuted, and imprisoned by the authorities. How very completely this has changed! They are now everywhere kindly disposed, sympathetic, and assist us with grants of land, buildings, and money, recognizing that our work, especially the various social branches of it, is of considerable assistance to them.⁹¹⁶

⁹¹⁴ Col. Henry Bullard, "Great India From Within: Settlements for Criminals," *All the World*, June 1914, 350.

⁹¹⁵ Radhakrishna, 73-75.

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 350.

Bullard's comments speak to the essence of the Salvation Army's development in India. Between 1882 and 1914 a dramatic transition occurred and the government completely reversed their position on the Salvationist missionaries. The above quotation also identifies what brought about this transformation—the realization that the work of the Salvation Army could be “of considerable assistance” to the government.

With their criminal tribes' settlements the Salvationists were able to effectively handle a problem that the British authorities could not, and they were able to do so at a much lower cost to the government. As a 1914 police report on the reformation of the criminal tribes concluded: “In the case of the Salvation Army, Government would gain an exceedingly cheap agency imbued with philanthropic zeal, which is admirably suited to the work of reforming the tribes by personal contact and influence.”⁹¹⁷ By 1914 colonial officials had clearly recognized the benefits of the Salvationists—their economy and Christian discipline.

The unique efforts and complicated nature of the relationship between the Salvation Army and the imperial authorities are highlighted by the following quotation from a 1918 article in the Salvationist publication *All the World*:

Salvation Army statesmanship is confronted with serious problems in essaying to deal with projects and problems which have baffled the best efforts of painstaking and skilful civil servants, and were it not for the introduction of the spiritual element, . . . the enterprise would have been foredoomed to failure.⁹¹⁸

In this statement, the author referred to the Salvationists as “statesmen,” associating them with the government and the task of empire-building. He complimented the efforts of the Indian civil servants, but at the same time managed to subtly criticize them for their

⁹¹⁷ Kaul and Tompkins, 85.

⁹¹⁸ “Light & Shade in Palmland,” *All the World*, February 1918, 81.

failures in dealing with the so-called criminal tribes. Once again we see the Salvationists both supporting and undermining the government simultaneously. Finally, this quote highlighted what the Salvationists believed to be their most valuable asset—their ability to win converts to their faith.

CONCLUSION

In the case of India, empire and religion were inextricably linked, and a greater comprehension of this complex relationship is a necessary component in any discussion of empire. For the nineteenth-century British people, Protestant Christianity was part of their national identity. This was clearly evident at home in England, and subsequently transported throughout the Empire. It seems only logical that if Protestantism was a defining force for Britain, this should be true of its colonies as well. And in some instances, this was indeed the case. Christian missionaries working to convert indigenous populations were part of the British 'civilizing mission,' acting as agents of empire, spreading their culture across the globe. Missionaries from numerous churches and organizations including the Salvation Army collaborated with colonial authorities on many social service endeavors including schools, hospitals, and settlements.

But the relationship between missionaries and the British Empire as exemplified by the Salvation Army was far more complex than this friendly collaboration on social service projects. By 1914, the Salvation Army in India had created a mutually beneficial relationship with the imperial government of the Raj. Salvationist programs and facilities received land grants and subsidies, and in return the Salvation Army offered an economical solution to the administration of the so-called criminal tribes. But such cooperation was only evident after a dramatic shift in the relations between Salvationist missionaries and colonial authorities.

The history of the Salvation Army in India was initially one of disruption and even contempt for colonial authorities. When Booth-Tucker and his tiny band of missionaries first landed in Bombay in 1882 they were disruptive and threatening to the

tenuous post-Mutiny peace that existed between the British colonists and their Hindu and Muslim subjects. The Salvationists displayed contempt toward imperial regulations as they blatantly disregarded police orders to cease their processions. In the streets and in the court room, they stood in opposition to colonial authorities.

But in the subsequent decades, the Salvation Army managed to gain public support and establish its presence within India; the arrests and prosecutions came to an end. As time went on, the relationship between the Empire and the missionaries improved from one of toleration to collaboration, culminating in the creation of the criminal tribes' settlements in the first decade of the twentieth century. Several factors contributed to this transition. First, the Salvationists refused to abandon their activities, even after persecutions. Second, the Salvation Army advocated a policy of cultural adaptation which appealed to some people in India. The missionaries' efforts to follow General Booth's advice to 'get into their skins' and live among the people, preaching in local dialects, allowed them some success in gaining converts.

Furthermore, as the Salvation Army mission in India grew, so did its social service endeavors. The Salvationists provided food to famine victims, schools for children, and hospitals for the sick. Such work earned the missionaries not only the respect of the Indian people, but also that of the British government. The Salvation Army could provide a number of valuable services to the state. Ultimately, in working with the criminal tribes' settlements the Salvationists proved that they could not only be of assistance to the government, but that they could do so at a lower cost than other organizations, including the Indian police. This economic benefit helped to finalize the

Salvationists' transition from being arrested themselves, to working directly with the police to reform others identified as criminals.

Although their work with the so-called criminal tribes' dovetailed nicely with that of the government and the Salvationists truly seemed to be agents of empire, this was not always the case. Even as they cooperated with imperial authorities, the Salvationists failed to fully embrace British notions of superiority. They readily interacted with the Indian people, calling them 'friends.' Although Salvationist publications such as *Trophies of the Jungle* revealed the influence of British orientalism, they also indicated a belief in Christian brotherhood and equality before God. Even among the so-called criminal tribes, the missionaries worked to convert the Indians to Christianity with the aim of cultivating them as future proselytizers. According to the Salvation Army, anyone, regardless of race or caste, could be an officer.

In the Salvation Army William Booth created his own Christian empire, reaching out from the metropole with its militaristic symbols and authoritarian structure. His son-in-law Frederick Booth-Tucker played a key role in bringing this unique ministry to the far reaches of the British Empire, particularly India. As an individual, Booth-Tucker clearly represented the complex interaction between Christianity and the colonial government. He served as both a British civil servant and a missionary. His flamboyant preaching and legal background helped him lead the charge against early prosecutions, while later his social service experience and government contacts helped him to negotiate the development of an entirely new branch of Salvation Army work with the so-called criminal tribes. Meanwhile, Booth-Tucker's fascination with the local culture and his

ability to speak Indian dialects, lead to the creation of a unique missionary endeavor that incorporated Indian practices.

In many ways the Salvation Army was representative of Victorian-era British Protestantism, while at the same time distinctive in its practice, in the metropole as well as the peripheries of the Empire. With its lively music and flag waving, the organization was able to attract converts in both Britain and India, often utilizing popular culture. Many nineteenth-century missionaries such as Henry Venn preached the importance of native agency in developing a successful church, but the Salvationists were more effective in putting this principle into action than most churches. Indian converts such as Col. Weerasooriye rose to positions of authority within the hierarchy of the SA, even supervising European personnel. Likewise, the Salvation Army gave female officers both at home and abroad opportunities to preach and lead which many other churches denied women. Catherine Bannister became a Territorial Commander in India, and young Lucy Booth oversaw the Salvation Army's operations throughout the subcontinent. Such practices distinguished the SA from traditional nineteenth-century hierarchies.

The Salvationists were also masters at utilizing the growing print culture of the nineteenth century, issuing numerous publications both in Britain and India, taking every opportunity to paint their mission as heroic and successful. When faced with persecution in Gujarat, for example, the Salvation Army published court transcripts highlighting comments from local magistrates sympathetic to its activities. Imperial milestones such as the death of Queen Victoria and the coronation of her successor King Edward VII were used not only to paint the Salvationists as loyal subjects, but to promote their efforts

at proselytization. While Salvationist rhetoric included patriotic tributes to the Queen and the Empire, the Salvation Army remained first and foremost devoted to its goal of saving souls.

The relationship between the Salvation Army and the British Empire was complex and fluid—changing dramatically over time. When the Salvationists’ mission of proclaiming the Gospel and winning converts came into conflict with the British imperial priority of maintaining a peaceful, productive Empire, the missionaries refused to back down. Their desire to preach and sing outweighed their loyalty to colonial authorities. Even when they found themselves in jail, the Salvationists refused to stop their proselytizing. But as the Salvation Army’s work in India developed, their relationship with the colonial government improved. Eventually the missionaries and the Indian police were not only able to coexist, but to cooperate on imperial projects. By the early twentieth century the relationship between the missionaries and the Empire had undergone a noticeable shift.

The year 1914 represents the high water mark of the European age of imperialism. After 1914, the British Empire faced the challenges of two world wars and growing nationalist movements within its colonies; by the mid-twentieth century the Raj was no more and extensive decolonization was underway throughout Africa and Asia. The legacy of the Salvation Army in India, however, extends well beyond the boundaries of the British Empire. Indeed, as Jeffrey Cox writes, “Embedded within all missionary efforts . . . was a countervailing recognition that their work must transcend the temporal realities of empire.”⁹¹⁹ This was certainly true for the Salvationists, who managed to create a thriving mission in India that far outlasted the temporal limitations of British rule

⁹¹⁹ Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 15.

in the subcontinent. Even as the SA provided valuable social services to the Empire in the early twentieth century, spreading Christianity remained the missionaries' primary concern as they worked to create a lasting church in the colony. In the 1930s a spokesman Punjabi village Christians told a SA reporter that "Christianity had brought them many benefits."⁹²⁰ Even today, in the opening decade of the twenty-first century, the Salvation Army remains active in India. The Salvationists still operate churches, schools, shelters, and hospitals throughout the country, which is currently divided into six territories for administrative purposes. Today there are approximately 328,000 soldiers of the Salvation Army in India.⁹²¹ The principle of native agency has been upheld. In India today the Salvation Army is lead by many locally born soldiers and officers who preach the gospel in numerous languages. Meanwhile, these Indian Salvationists are still part of the larger international organization of the Salvation Army. There is an International Secretary for India who serves at the Salvation Army International Headquarters in London, England. Although the British Empire is no more, William Booth's religious empire still exists, continuing his ministry in over 110 countries around the globe.

⁹²⁰ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, 129.

⁹²¹ "Soldiers," *The Salvation Army: India*, Available:http://www1.salvationarmy.org/ind/www_ind.nsf/vw-sublinks/80256E520050A2E280256CAF0026A0B8?openDocument (Accessed: 7 June 2008).

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