THE HAPPY ART OF CATCHING MEN: A STORY OF GOOD SAMARITANSHIP

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A STORY OF GOOD SAMARITANSHIP

BY

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Founder of the Catch-My-Pal Movement

"From henceforth thou shalt catch men"

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF MY AUNT,
MRS. HELENA PATTERSON,
THE MANSE, BRAY, CO. WICKLOW, IRELAND,
WHO WAS A LOVING MOTHER TO ME,
AND WHO, BY GOING ABOUT DOING GOOD,
TAUGHT ME, WHEN A BOY,
THE SECRET OF GOOD SAMARITANSHIP;

ALSO TO
MY DEAR WIFE,
WHO URGED ME TO RESIGN
MY MINISTRY IN ARMAGH
THAT I MIGHT GO OUT ON
THIS CRUSADE,
AND WHO, IN LOVING LONELINESS,
IS DOING HER PART
WHILE I WANDER ABOUT THE WORLD

PREFACE

THE story told in this little book is considered one of the most remarkable in the records of social reform. I have told this story hundreds of times all over Ireland, and in many parts of Great Britain and Holland and America. In the summer of 1913 I travelled twenty-one thousand miles in the United States and Canada that I might bring its message of hope to the fallen and to those who are lifting the fallen. The work of the Catch-my-Pal movement is recorded not only in this book, but in countless redeemed lives in places so far apart as Inverness and Sydney, Stratford-on-Avon and Toronto, Armagh and Kingston (Jamaica), Arnheim in Holland and Portland (Oregon).

That there is need for such work in America is testified by the fact that I have been asked to come to America again for a campaign in various districts, including two months in Chicago. Indeed, I have been surprised at the manner in which social reformers in the United States and Canada have taken to the movement.

As far as legislation is concerned America is much ahead of the United Kingdom. Local Option has at last begun to get a footing in Scotland, as the Scottish Temperance Act of 1913, which is a Local Option Act, will be put into operation in that country in 1920. It is hoped that such a revolution will take place there through the Act that the rest of the United Kingdom will rise and demand similar treatment at the hands of the Imperial Parliament.

But while the United States' Legislation is greatly

in advance of that in the United Kingdom is it going too far to say that it seems as if *too much stress is laid on legislation and too little stress on moral suasion?* I have been told by some of the foremost Temperance authorities that the time for pledge-signing in America is long past! In other words, the time for moral suasion is long past, and legislation will now complete the programme of the Temperance Reformers. When I was in America in 1913 I addressed many meetings in connection with Rescue Missions, in which I saw men as low down through drink as any I have ever seen in the United Kingdom. Is it not necessary to get them to sign the pledge? Surely moral suasion is necessary wherever men and women are down or going down? Every time I had an opportunity of going along the streets of American towns, at the close of my meetings, I went to the doors of the saloons to see things for myself. I saw that the saloons were usually well filled and, in many cases, crowded. Wherever there are saloons there is drinking. Wherever there is drinking there is drunkenness. Wherever there is drunkenness there is much need of saving the drunkards. And as long as there is need of saving the drunkards there is need of moral suasion. And as long as moral suasion is applied to the solution of the drink problem there will be need of pledge-signing.

But, where do the drunkards come from? From among the moderate drinkers. In most cases the moderate drinkers require more moral suasion than the drunkards. The drink bill of the United States shows that the moderate drinkers can be counted by millions. All these millions need moral suasion. *A great campaign of pledge-signing among these moderate drinkers is absolutely necessary if the United States are to be saved from the drink curse.*

One Sunday night I addressed an audience of about twelve hundred persons in a "dry" town. I asked every person, who DID NOT KNOW A DRINKER,

to hold up the right hand. One person, an old man, held up his hand. I asked him, "Do you mean to say you do not know a drunkard?" He said, "I don't know one in this town." I then asked him, "How long have you lived in this town?" And he answered, "I'm a stranger here." Naturally I remarked to the meeting, "When you were a 'wet' town you drank in the open. Now you are 'dry' you drink on the sly." Evidently there was much "shipping" of drink into that town. Wherever there is shipping of drink into "dry" towns or districts there is need of moral suasion and, consequently, of pledge-signing campaigns, as well as in the "wet" districts.

The slogan is now being sounded, *"A Saloonless Nation in 1920!"* In seven years what thousands of men, women and children can be slain by drink! Must we wait on legislation? Can we not save thousands before 1920? Will the hoped-for legislation of 1920, if it is practically realised, save the drinkers and drunkards of to-day? Surely NOW is the accepted time for them? Surely NOW is the day of *their* salvation?

I have found that there are hundreds of drunkards who are only waiting for someone to come along and lift them up. Good Samaritanship is not out of date. *As in the United Kingdom, so in the United States, there are great numbers of drunkards who are ready to stand on their feet again if they are only asked to stand.* A campaign of Good Samaritanship among the drinkers and drunkards of the land will turn all those whom it saves from the enemy into volunteers in the fight for a Saloonless Nation in 1920, and, at the same time, it will, perhaps more than anything else, help to form that irresistible PUBLIC OPINION against which the gates of the Licensed National Curse shall not be able to stand.

If the publication of this little book in America tends in any way to bring about such a campaign, I

shall be grateful as one who is "seeing of the travail of his soul."

It is a matter of regret to me that I have had to use the first personal pronoun so often; but I think my seeming egotism will be forgiven when it is remembered that I am telling a story which gathered about myself in a way that is a great and growing surprise to me.

I thank God for giving me the story to tell, and I send it out in the earnest hope that it may help to leave the world at least a little better than it found it.

ROBERT J. PATTERSON.

PITTSBURGH, PA., March, 1914.