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Welsh Revival

Hannah Whitall Smith

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1983

## **Box 11\_38 (Welsh Revival, 1904)**

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# NO RED COATS WANTED.

## REVIVALISM AS A CHECK TO VOLUNTEERING.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

ABERFAN, Thursday.

Two days of work in Merthyr Vale and Aberfan have yielded six conversions to Mr. Evan Roberts, a number surprisingly small compared with the hundreds he used to achieve in a few hours.

Though his meetings were packed and he had the aid of Mme. Kate Morgan Llewellyn, a superb contralto, and the clear, girlish soprano of Miss Annie Davies, he found little left for him to do.

In the three weeks preceding his advent the local churches have made two hundred odd conversions, and Roberts and his ladies have but gleaned the poor remainder.

His meeting this afternoon in Zion Chapel was the most crowded I have yet seen. Roberts exhorted and smiled. Hymn followed hymn and prayer succeeded prayer, and Mme. Llewellyn outdid herself—all to no purpose. The crowd seemed actually to sulk and to hang back. So marked was this attitude that the young Miss Davies, in the middle of a sacred song which she is wont to illustrate by clasping a Bible to her bosom, laid the big book down and subsided into tears.

An unexpected effect of the revival in the Merthyr and Rhondda Valleys has been to check volunteering. A doctor at Aberfan, who is an officer in the 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the Welsh Regiment, told me to-day that the Free Churches of the district actually denied membership to men in the corps.

"It is simply because they wear a red coat," he explained. "That is regarded here as the devil's brand."

I asked the Rev. Moses Davies, who concludes this month twenty-five years as minister of the Aberfan Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, if, supposing I were a Volunteer and yet desired to join his Church, he would reject me? "No," he replied. "I would take you as a sinner. We are commanded not to reject sinners."

PERCEVAL GIBBON.

Seeing a brewer's van delivering casks and bottles at some cottages in a Vale of Neath village, a Methodist deacon named Thomas knelt in the road and prayed. Overcome by his earnestness, the cottagers refused to take in the liquor they had ordered.

At a meeting conducted at Cardiff by one of Roberts's women helpers a man gave a shout of joy and threw his arms round a penitent's neck. Then a shriek of joy went up from a woman in the chapel. It was their son who had left them after a quarrel years before.