

HARDER TO DISSUADE SUICIDES SINCE WAR

Official Says Life Is Held Too Cheaply These Days—Relates Experiences.

London, Oct. 2.—Stevenson's tale of the "Suicide Club" contains no stranger passages than today come from the lips of Bigdler Chapman who for seventeen years has been head of London's antithesis to the Suicide Club—the Anti-Suicide Bureau of the Salvation Army.

Here and there on the walls of his office and on the desk before him lie mementoes of would-be suicides who came to Chapman's office for one last word of advice before taking their lives. Sometimes Chapman succeeded in staying their hand. Sometimes he failed utterly.

"I remember one man who came to me in black despair saying that if I could not find him 100 pounds immediately he would kill himself," said Chapman. "I promised to do what I could for him, and told him to go away and wait until he heard from me. As I left my office an hour later I saw a newspaper headline which read 'Regent Street Suicide.' My man had gone straight out and shot himself."

"But they didn't all end that way," continued Chapman. He picked up a cheap revolver that lay on his desk. "The man who held this revolver to his head and pulled the trigger is still alive. The revolver jammed. The shock of the effort brought the man back to his senses. He came to me with tears in his eyes. Things straightened out for

him and today there is not a happier man in London.

"This knife here cut the throat of a harness maker at Woolwich. But it didn't go deep enough. He pulled through. Today he is happy and at work."

"Yes, I have seen a queer cross-section of London.

"There was the army officer, for instance, who dashed into my office and threw enough cocaine on my desk to kill a dozen men. 'Save me from myself!' he cried, and then fell sobbing into a chair. We pulled him through all right, too.

"Women, as a general thing, are harder to help than men. Most often with them it is a love affair. That is the hardest sort of difficulty to settle. Business troubles, financial troubles, can often be straightened out. At times I have gone into a man's business and run it for him for a time while we sent him away for a vacation. If business has picked up, that works fine. If it hasn't—will, perhaps in the meantime, he changed his mind about killing himself, and the experiment works out all right anyway."

Chapman said it was harder today to dissuade people bent on killing themselves today than it used to be.

"The war seems to have jangled the world's nerves," he said. "People in despair are more despairing than they used to be. The war taught us to hold life too cheaply."

Besides, life is too swift nowadays. Chapman is retiring from his office as head of the Anti-Suicide Bureau. He will be succeeded by Brigadier Gordon.

DRY CLERK RESIGNS

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