

# George C. Stebbins: Reminiscences...

by Himself

---

## Contents

[Chapter 1](#)—Ancestors — Parents — Birthplace — School Days — Death of Father — Singing School — Musical Awakening — The Singing Master — "Bonaparte."

[Chapter 2](#)—Another George — Their Recreations — Hunting Trips — First Shot And Accidental Kill — The Civil War — Boys' Military Company Formed — Training, Drills and Parades — Grace B. — Abraham Lincoln — On His Way to Washington and His First Inauguration.

[Chapter 3](#)—First Piano — "Sweet Evelina" With Improvised Accompaniment — Voice Lessons in Buffalo Sixty Miles Away — The Studio — The Teacher — Voice Diagnosis — "Vider! Vider!" — Studies in Rochester — Tenor in Quartet — Tenor in Church Choir — Marriage — Removal to Chicago in 1869 — Director of Music in First Baptist Church — With Lyon and Healy — George F. Root — P. P. Bliss — H. R. Palmer — Ira D. Sankey — C. C. Coffin — Charter Member Chicago Apollo Club — B. F. Jacobs — Initiation of Male Voice Choirs — Assisted Sankey in Editing "Male Chorus" — First "Pocket Size" Song Book.

[Chapter 4](#)—Peace Jubilee in Boston — Training in Chicago Contingent of Singers — Chorus of Three Hundred Men — Richard Strauss — Twenty Thousand Singers — Thirty Thousand in Audiences — Military Bands — General Grant — Removal to Boston.

[Chapter 5](#)—Considers God's Claim — Resolves To Be A Christian — "Godly Sorrow For Sin."

[Chapter 6](#)—Dr. A. J. Gordon — Reception in Boston — In Dr. Gordon's Church And Sunday School — Tremont Temple — Dr. Brooks — Dr. Erdman — Major Whittle — First Premillennial Conference at Niagara-On-The-Lake — First Visit To Northfield — "The Ninety and Nine" Sung By Sankey — Moody's Ungovernable Voice — Seeing Moody At Close Range — Singing In Moody's Home — Moody's Love Of A Joke On His Friends — Enters Evangelism.

[Chapter 7](#)—Beginning Of Associations With Moody and Sankey — Organizing Choir For World's Fair Meeting In Chicago — P. P. Bliss — Farwell Hall — With George C. Needham — Charles Inglis — Last Visit with Mr. and Mrs. Bliss.

[Chapter 8](#)—Home — Ashtabula Disaster — Summoned To Chicago.

[Chapter 9](#)—With Dr. Pentecost — Sunday School Parliament — Song

Services, Etc. — With William Rainsford — L. Q. Munhall.

**Chapter 10**—With Dr. Pentecost In Boston — Music Hale — Providence — "Must I Go, And Empty Handed?" — "Evening Prayer" — Mrs. Alexander — Helen Knox Strain.

**Chapter 11**—Incidents Related By Dr. Gordon — "I'll Talk With Brown" — "Are You A Christian?" — Mark Twain — In New Haven — "Wonderful Words Of Life."

**Chapter 12**—In Detroit — Conference At Northfield — Chicago — Minneapolis — "Sweet William" — General Custer's Greyhounds.

**Chapter 13**—Great Men At Northfield — With Moody and Sankey in San Francisco — President Garfield's Assassination — With Pentecost In Brooklyn — In Scotland — Henry Drummond — Aberdeen, Dundee and Other Small Places — In Paisley — In The Castle of Peter Coates — London — Home.

**Chapter 14**—Back To London — Tabernacle Constructed Of Corrugation Iron — Major Whittle — James McGranahan — George Williams — In The Room Where The Y.M.C.A. Was Organized — Windsor Castle — The "Military Tournamout" — Royal Families — Earl of Shaftesbury — Lady and Miss Kinnaird — Exeter Hall — A Characteristic of Moody — "Jerusalem" — Strenuous Days — "Boarding Round" — Lady Beauchamp — Ada Habershon — Happy Days On Country Estates — Moody "At Play" — Drummond and First Corinthians 13.

**Chapter 15**—In Lawrence, Massachusetts — "Throw Out The Lifeline" — On The Pacific Coast — Meetings In Universities — Ten Weeks In New York City — Sail From London For India — Calcutta — Fortress of Gibraltar — Naples — Red Sea — Pompeii — Vesuvius — Ceylon — Madras — Services In The Y.M.C.A. — In India — Missionary Field — Bishop Thoburn — Miss Goreh — Seeing India — Taj Mahal — Bombay — Sail For Egypt And The Holy Land — Ismalia — Cairo — Mosques — Museums — Old Memphis — Pyramids — Palestine — Joppa — Jerusalem — Song Service — Mount Of Olives — Bethlehem — Bethany — Haifa — Nazareth — Tiberias — Mary's Well — Meeting Old Friends — Mount Carmel — The Continent — Naples — Rome — Florence — Galleries Of Art — Venice — Swiss Lakes — Paris — London — Home.

**Chapter 16**—With Moody In Great Britain — Campaign In Spurgeon's Tabernacle — Beginning Of Moody's Breakdown — In Dublin — Mr. Moody's Story of Shipwreck — "Thy Will Be Done" — Major Whittle — May Whittle — Dr. Bonar — Visit To West Point — Gen. O. O. Howard — His Capture Of Chief Geronimo — In Chicago — Meeting In Forepaugh's Circus Tent — Little Girl Lost — Moody Failing — Breakdown of McGranahan — Sankey's Health Waning — Work Among The Churches — "Saved By Grace" — First Sung In Providence — Ecumenical Foreign Mission Conference — Christian

Endeavor Convention — Fiftieth Anniversary Of The Y.M.C.A — William McKinley — Theodore Roosevelt — Helen Montgomery — Christian Endeavor Convention Of 1895 In Boston — Booker T. Washington — Death Of Drummond — Last Winter Abroad — Major Whittle With The Soldiers — His Death — Closing Words.

#### [Reminiscences of Celebrated Writers and Singers of Gospel Songs](#)

—Dr. George F. Root — Philip Paul Bliss — Ira D. Sankey — Philips Phillips — James McGranahan — Reverend Robert Lowry D.D. — Dr. William Howard Doane — Dr. H. R. Palmer — Dr. Daniel B. Towner — Edwin O. Excell — Major D. W. Whittle — Fanny J. Crosby — William F. Sherwin — John R. Sweney — William J. Kirkpatrick — Hubert P. Main — Charles M. Alexander — Mrs. George C. Stebbins — Dwight L. Moody — Prospective

## **Chapter 1**

My ancestors were English. Rowland Stebbins located first in Springfield, Massachusetts, [United States] in 1634, but subsequently removed, with his family, to Northampton, a town of which he was one of the founders.

It is related of him that his will was the first one to be probated in that town, and that, after disposing of household possessions and personal effects to members of his family, he bequeathed his soul to Jesus Christ.

My mother's family name was Waring, a name that is found in early English history, and among her ancestors, on her mother's side, was John Carver, of Colonial fame. There is thus some of the "blood of the martyrs" and of the pilgrims in my veins.

My father and mother were born near Rensselaerville, in Albany County, New York, a little town that nestles among the northern foot-hills of the Catskill mountains. Soon after their third child was born they moved to Orleans County. There being, at that time, no railroad west of Albany, travel was made comparatively comfortable by "Packet boats," which were used exclusively for passenger service on the Erie Canal. It was by that means, therefore, that they found their way "West," as their destination was considered then to be a long way in that direction.

They located on a farm north of the Canal, midway between Rochester and Niagara Falls, which became my birthplace a few years afterward, as well as that of a sister who, beside myself, is

the only surviving one of five children, of whom we were the youngest. The eldest was a sister who died in 1863; the next a brother who passed away in 1912, honored and loved in the community where he spent his three-score and ten years, and the next a sister who died in 1861.

My father inherited much of the force and strength of character of the Puritans, and of their loyalty to convictions, for he spent the years of his brief life in seeking fearlessly to do the will of God and to advance His cause. He was known throughout the section of country in which he spent his last years, as a Christian of great zeal for his Master, and a wise leader in all forms of Christian enterprise. I was too young to appreciate these facts then, but in succeeding years, when engaged in Christian activities myself and coming in touch with men of prominence, I began to realize the inheritance I had in my father's strong, manly Christian character; and never have I thought of him in the years that have followed, except with a consciousness of gratitude to God for such a heritage.

My mother was cast in a different mold, but was none the less valiant in faith and in good works than was my revered and honored father. She lived to a serene old age to bless her children and friends, and at the call of her Lord, whom she had served long and faithfully, passed on to the reward that only such mothers receive.

I was born February 26, 1846, in Orleans County, about fifty miles northeast of Niagara Falls, and four miles from Lake Ontario. It was then a thickly settled community, though not many years removed from what had been called the "backwoods." Our nearest village was Albion. The school district in which my father's farm was located contained about twenty-five families, the most of whom were living on the main road which ran north and south, leading, in the northern direction, to Lake Ontario.

The other was a Singing School, which was held that winter in the red brick school house already mentioned. No one, except those living as remote from the village as did we, can appreciate what a real event a singing school could be. It was not only the occasion for neighborhood sociability, but was the only opportunity afforded residents of isolated districts for the study of music. Hence it is no exaggeration to say that that was one of the

outstanding experiences of my early life. Up to that time I do not recall any consciousness of having any more love for music than others in the community; the fact that I possessed it to an unusual degree, however, was revealed to me during that winter, for I entered into the exercises of learning to read "Doe, Ray, Me" with the greatest interest and pleasure.

I was placed with the alto singers through the winter, and before the season ended I could sing by note very readily, which was a great delight to me.

The teacher, Dexter Manly—called "Dec" for short—was the only vocal instructor in that section of the country, and was so much in demand through the winter season that he had a school somewhere every night in the week. He was paid the munificent sum of three dollars a night, which was thought in those days to be a great salary. He was, therefore, looked upon with envy as one of the aristocrats of the country who was destined to amass a fortune. He was a well groomed man, as we say in these days, clean-cut, clean-shaven, and quite above the average in intelligence among men of his age.

He was a man, too, of fine character, few words, and possessed a tenor voice of unusual quality and purity, which he used well, though untrained in the art. Pianos and organs were quite unknown in those days, and Mr. Manly always carried with him an "Elbow Melodion," an instrument which may be described as being much like a large suitcase, in shape. Hinges at one end allowed a steel spring to raise the other end to an angle sufficiently high to form a bellows; this was operated by the arm of the performer—the instrument lying flat on a desk. Inside the case was a set of organ or accordion reeds so placed that when the keys on the top were pressed they gave forth tones similar to a reed organ.

The keys were small, like push buttons in appearance, placed differently from organ keys, but having the same musical scale.

The instrument was used to give the pitch, or "key note" of exercises, and for playing the tunes when desired; also for accompanying solos which the teacher often sang. It was for this latter purpose that it most interested me, as he usually sang at the close of the school some song for the pleasure of his pupils. It was

not only the singing of those songs by this untaught singer that so delighted me, but it revealed to me, as nothing ever had, my inborn love for music.

During those times it was difficult to realize whether I was in the body or out, so heavenly did the music sound to me.

Nor can I ever forget, as it is still sounding in the chambers of my memory, his singing the old song "Bonaparte," which gives a description of the old Hero, dead on the Island of St. Helena,

"On a lone barren Isle,  
Where the wild roaring billows  
Assail the Stern Rock  
--And the loud breakers roar,"

being the opening lines.

## **Chapter 2**

On a farm that adjoined my father's was born, two months before my birth, another George. Being so near of an age and living so near each other, it was natural that we should be much together in our early years, and the friendship thus formed in childhood continued on through youth and early manhood into life's greatest activities, and still continues, though the shadows are lengthening on our pathways.

George B. and I roamed the meadows and fields together, learned to swim in the brook that crossed my father's meadow midway between our homes, and in winter, to skate upon it. We also watched for the first ripening of the apples and peaches in the orchards.

George B. was born with a fondness for hunting, and he was given a gun and dog before he was far in his teens, and allowed to hunt at will.

Very often he would honor me with an invitation to accompany him on his hunting excursions, though he never seemed to feel safe when I carried the gun. The most I contributed to those hunting trips, therefore, was my company and the noise I made in walking about the woods with him, which usually brought forth

some warning remarks—sometimes rather impatient—lest I disturb the game. I do not remember that we succeeded as sportsmen to any great extent, but the anticipation was sufficient to keep up our interest.

George gave me a chance to use his gun once, which should be mentioned to his credit. I fired at the first live object I saw, which happened to be a little bird that flitted about us, possibly in search of food for its young; and to my surprise and lasting regret the shot reached its mark, and the little innocent creature, one of God's messengers of joy and happiness given to earth to teach His people to praise Him, lay dead. That was the only living thing I ever shot, and from that day to this I have never forgotten the pain in my heart as I looked at that little dead bird as it lay in my palm.

In the month of April, 1861, some time after this and two years after the delightful experience of the singing school, the war between the North and South broke in upon the peace of that countryside, and from that time on to the close of the conflict, there was little else to claim the thought and attention of the people living at so great a distance from the great centers of life's activities. From nearly every household went forth one or more of the youth at the call of their country, some never to return, some to be maimed for life, and others, fortunate enough to return unscathed by shot or shell, came back not as they went, but older, and with more sober mien.

As those weary months came and went, every one watched anxiously for tidings of him whose breast was bared to the hail of death, as battles waxed and waned, and always with dread lest the tidings should confirm anxious fears.

About a year after the war began, when patriotism was at white heat, George B. and I discussed the possibility of enlisting a military company from among the boys of the neighborhood. I am sure the idea originated in his fertile brain, for anything of a military character appealed to him more than it did to me.

Laying our plans, we set about the organization so earnestly that every boy between ten and fifteen years of age was interested.

George and I elected ourselves Captain and First Lieutenant,

respectively, and appointed the other commissioned and non-commissioned officers down to the lowest, and strangely enough, the selections we made suited everybody, especially those appointed to office. The Captain familiarized himself with the necessary military tactics to drill the Company, then coached me and the other officers as to our duties, which enabled us to carry out his orders and instructions.

Of course, the officers must have uniforms befitting their rank, and the soldiers something that would at least pass for uniforms. The government was not back of us to provide these, and there was no money that we knew of lying around idle with which to purchase them, so our mothers came to the rescue and made them out of such material as was available.

The Captain and First Lieutenant managed somehow to get swords and epaulettes which had been handed down from the War of the Revolution—along with other insignia of office as their positions required.

The call sent out for a meeting at the brick school house for a certain Saturday evening to effect an organization was responded to with enthusiasm, and the company formed. It was arranged to begin training the following Saturday evening at the same place as soon as possible after the "chores" were done. Boys came from our school district and from adjoining districts, nearly a hundred in all, and when the officers had gotten them under discipline, their evening drills and parades became proud events to the people who came from miles around to witness our military maneuvers.

So successful was the summer's training that it was decided to call the company together for another season of training and weekly exhibitions of patriotism.

The "soldiers" responded to the second call with their former enthusiasm and entered into the training with boyish delight. The success attending the second summer was greater than the first. George B. was, of course, still Captain, and his Lieutenants were the same. We were fortunate enough to raise a military band, consisting of a snare drum, a bass drum and a fife. I was detailed to assist the "Drum Corps," at the same time retaining and performing the duties of my commission. We did considerable more parading that second year, largely due to the presence of the



band. We paraded up and down the principal road; and once, I remember, we marched around the square, a distance of two miles, keeping step to the music of the band.

Although the company had "rendered great assistance to their country," it was decided at the end of the second season to disband and rest on our laurels.

So far as I can recall, there was but one out of that company of boys who joined the army during its deadly conflict to save the Union, and that was "Captain B." Before the end of the war, he arrived at military age and lost no time in offering himself to the forces at the front.

On retiring from the army he resumed his schooling at the academy in the village, and while there met the handsome and gifted young lady he afterward married.

During the campaign in which he was first elected to the presidency, Grace B., who was then about thirteen years of age, wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln, saying she thought he would look better if he would let his beard grow—her sympathies having been aroused by thoughtless remarks of an ungainly appearance—and Mr. Lincoln answered her letter. It is well known that he let his beard grow after he became president, and it is quite among the possibilities that this was done through the suggestion of his little friend. The letter, which I have had the pleasure of seeing, is incorporated in Miss Tarbell's "Life of Lincoln," and for more than sixty years it has been the priceless treasure of its recipient—the wife of "Captain B."

Nor is this all of the story' When it became known that the train in which he was to travel from Springfield to his inaugural in Washington would pass through the home town of his little friend, he requested a political resident to find a girl by the name of Grace B. and bring her to the station on his arrival, that he might meet her. This was done, and the great-hearted Lincoln took the girl in his arms to assure her of his sincere appreciation of her solicitude for him.

Not long after George and Grace were married they went "West" to seek such fortune as awaited them, and located in one of the interior cities of Kansas, where he is still engaged.

The "two Georges" have occasionally met since those far-off days and have had delightful fellowship in recalling the exploits of their childhood and youth.

### **Chapter 3**

The next event that came into those years to relieve the routine of school in winter and farm work in summer was the arrival of a piano in our home, when I was sixteen years of age. It was the first one I remember to have ever seen, and certainly the first my hands ever touched. My mother bought it for a sister, who had a beautiful voice, but who, unhappily, became a victim of the "white plague" before the instrument gave her much pleasure. It became a delight to me and, until I left home, afforded me the keenest pleasure, and the opportunity of learning to accompany myself in singing the popular songs of the day. I remember well the first song I sang to chords I picked out, was "Sweet Evelina." From that beginning, being able from my knowledge of reading vocal music to get the author's idea of the changes of the harmony in his accompaniment, I soon acquired facility in improvising to the songs I sang.

That piano stands near me in my sister's home as I write, a delightful reminder of those far-off days when music thrilled me as it seldom has in these after years; and though nearly sixty years have passed since it first gladdened my heart with its sweet tones, it still responds with a semblance of its old-time harmonies.

When twenty-one years of age I began the study of the voice, going first to Buffalo—sixty miles distant from my home—once each week to a German teacher recommended as the best teacher in the city.

When I arrived at his studio, I found it to be a room about fifteen feet square with low ceiling. What space was not taken up by a square piano was filled by his own three hundred pounds avoirdupois. He tried my voice and finding I could read music, expressed pleasure as well as surprise and at once gave me a book of graded exercises and set me to singing them. He also found, if indeed it mattered to him, that my voice production required no attention. In any case he started me singing exercises, telling me as his first suggestion to open my mouth wide, which I proceeded

to do, though it never seemed to me that I could open it wide enough, for he was always urging me to open it "Vider! Vider!"

After going to him twenty or more times I became discouraged and went to Rochester and studied under a celebrated teacher of voice and violin. He understood well the art of voice production, as I afterward came to know, and while he found no occasion to change the method of tone production I had unwittingly acquired at the outset of my singing, he gave me exercises and instructions that proved of great service in later years in my own teaching.

While studying with him, I became the tenor in a quartet choir under the direction of Herve D. Wilkins, for many years the most prominent organist and musician in Western New York. My Sundays were thus engaged for a year, spending the days between at my home on the farm.

During that time I married Elma Miller, a daughter of Reverend Moses Miller, a licensed local preacher residing in the neighborhood.

There was much talk in those days of the West holding out the most inducement to a young man ambitious for a career, and as Chicago was looming up as the coming metropolis of that part of the country, I determined to cast my lot within its borders. Before doing so, however, I went there to investigate the possibilities of securing a position of some kind in line with my chosen profession. While there I made the acquaintance of Mr. Lyon, senior partner of the firm of Lyon & Healy, who, in answer to my question as to the prospects of my securing a position by which to maintain myself and family, told me that I was sure to succeed. This encouragement had much to do with my final decision to begin there the work that was to claim my thought and energies the remainder of my life.

Therefore, in the autumn of that year—1869—I made Chicago my home, going there rather blindly with no encouragement as to the likelihood of getting employment, but vaguely hoping that something would "turn up." After getting settled in a suite of rooms, that would now be called an apartment, located on the corner of May and Randolph Streets, I set out to find work. Calling at principal music stores—Lyon & Healy, and Root & Cady,—I let it be known that I would accept a position in some

church choir and also employment in business. As I became acquainted, opportunities occasionally offered to sing in different choirs, along with work in other lines. This went on for a year when, in the autumn of 1870, I was given the position of director of music in the First Baptist Church on the South side, one of the leading churches in the city as well as in the denomination. About that time I secured a position with Lyon & Healy, both of which came as a relief to my solicitude in the care of my family.

Some months later, however, my relations with the latter were abruptly terminated by the great fire that swept out of existence the business part of the city.

Among the musicians I met after my arrival in Chicago, aside from Dr. Root, P. P. Bliss, H. R. Palmer, and Ira D. Sankey, was Professor C. C. Coffin, who, like myself, was just beginning his career.

Professor Coffin and I were charter members of the Chicago Apollo club, which was organized shortly after the great fire and which continued for many years to be one of the most celebrated male voice organizations in the country.

Another of Chicago's older musicians that I became acquainted with in those early years is Professor C. A. Havens, organist of the First Baptist Church for a half century.

During the winter preceding the destruction of the church edifice in 1872, the society decided to change the form of its Sunday evening services to that of an evangelistic nature, to be conducted by laymen, under the direction of B. F. Jacobs, the celebrated Sunday school worker.

To add to the interest of the meetings, I organized a male quartet, principally from the choir, and as there were at that time no hymns of an evangelistic character specially written for male voices, I arranged some of the most popular gospel hymns for the quartet, which proved an attractive feature.

During that time the work of the quartet and the kind of music they were using attracted the attention of Dr. George F. Root, and he informed me that, as far as he knew, there was then no music written for male voices to hymns of that character. This being the case, and knowing of the success of the experiment, it occurred to

him that, as it was a field hitherto unoccupied, it would be well to get out a book for male voices of an evangelistic nature.

He therefore edited one and used several of the arrangements I had made for the quartet. As there was no better authority in the country on subjects of that kind, he being one of the most celebrated and popular writers, as well as one of the largest music publishers, it would seem to be quite within the range of probability that the singing by that quartet of men during that winter was the means of introducing a new, and what has since proved to be a very effective and popular, custom of singing the gospel.

As an illustration of the favor with which the singing of these simple heart-songs was received in those early days there may be mentioned the very cordial and hearty reception given the quartet at the Illinois State Sunday School Convention held in Springfield, Ill., in June, 1872. Mr. Jacobs, who was the moving spirit in the convention, arranged for the quartet to conduct the singing and to sing their special selections as occasion required. This proved to be the attractive feature of the convention, and was probably due to the effectiveness of singing gospel hymns properly arranged for men's voices.

A year after the publication of Dr. Root's book for male voices, James McGranahan edited the *Male Choir*, which was used by him in his association with Major Whittle with decided success in the large choruses organized for the purpose.

Two or three years after Mr. McGranahan's book was published, I assisted Mr. Sankey in the editorial work of the *Male Choir*, a collection of specially arranged gospel songs, which volume was the first "pocket-size" song book.

#### **Chapter 4**

The most outstanding musical event that occurred during those early years, and, indeed, possibly in the history of our country, was the Peace Jubilee held in Boston the summer of 1872.

Seventeen thousand singers, trained for the purpose, were gathered from many of the States of the Union to form a choir, and three thousand musicians to form an orchestra. Added to these twenty

thousand singers and musicians were military bands from England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain and the United States, and to all these a mammoth organ of special construction swelled the volume of exultant harmonies.

To whom belongs the honor of conceiving an affair of such gigantic proportions I am unable to recall, but the men who carried the happy and brilliant idea to a successful conclusion were Eben Tourjee, the founder of the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and Patrick Gilmour, the famous band master of those years.

In spite of such a vast body of singers and musicians, under the direction of one person, the work was amazingly well done under the leadership of the two men mentioned, aided by Carl Zerahn, for many years the conductor of the famous Handel & Haydn Society of Boston, and when the first concert was given, they were ready and sang not only in magnificent volume, but with remarkable precision, which was impressive in the extreme.

I remember well that Professor Coffin was a member of the Chicago choir, as Mrs. Stebbins and I had the privilege of being; and also that I was chosen to assist in training the contingent that went on from there. Professor Coffin and I had the honor, too, of being members of the choir of three hundred men forming the male chorus.

The music sung at the various concerts was from the great masters, and consisted of selections from oratorios, famous choruses, glee clubs and national anthems. One of the interesting features of that part of the program was the appearance of Strauss, the originator and composer of the "Strauss Waltzes," and father of the celebrated musician by that name, recently visiting this country, who conducted many of his compositions to the delight of numerous lovers of his music.

The opening of the Jubilee was an overwhelmingly impressive occasion, not only to the audience who listened to the twenty thousand singers and musicians, but to the choir and orchestra as well, for the sight of thirty thousand people seated before them in the great auditorium was one never to be forgotten.

One or another of the military bands was given a place on the

program of each day, which was easily the most spectacular feature of the jubilee. They not only played magnificently, animated by the laudable rivalry between them, but they were in their very best military dress and, in many cases, in imperial uniforms, which added to the attractiveness of their appearance and gave luster to their performances.

One fortunate enough to be there the day General Grant, then President of the United States, attended, and which was the climax of those wonderful days, will never forget the enthusiasm his presence created, and the ovation given him, which was "like the sound of many waters," and the acclaim of the vast audience was impressive beyond expression.

It was very fitting that he who gave utterance to the famous slogan "Let us have peace," should honor the occasion by his presence and add impressiveness to the scene. It was also most fitting that as he entered the hall, the bands struck up "See the Conquering Hero Comes," and the great audience rose to give him welcome as he modestly passed down the aisle to the place appointed for him.

Each of the seven days passed with absorbing interest in the varied programs—celebrated soloists from abroad as well as from our own country adding their voices to the Jubilee of Peace—thus maintaining to the end of the event the interest and enthusiasm of a nation in which peace once more reigned.

The two years that remained of my life in Chicago recorded no events of special interest. At the end of the autumn of 1874, having been a resident of the city five years, I resigned my position as director of music in the First Baptist Church, and removed my family to Boston with a view to pursuing my musical studies under what were considered at that time more favorable conditions.

## **Chapter 5**

The winter previous to leaving my home, I was led as never before to consider seriously God's claim upon my life, notwithstanding the fact that I had a godly heritage and had lived all my life in a Christian atmosphere, attending church regularly and even singing in the choir of a country church a few miles away from home.

At that time, moreover, during the progress of a series of special meetings that were being held in the school house across the way, I declared my intention to live a Christian life. In those years there was greater stress laid upon the necessity of an "experience" at the time of one's conversion than has prevailed in recent years, which was, perhaps, more true of the denomination to which my father and mother belonged than it was of other denominations.

I remember distinctly the impression I had when little more than a child, that people who belonged to any other denomination than "ours" had very little chance of going to heaven when they die; which was largely due to the fact, I now believe, that they did not set as much store by "experience" at the time of conversion as did ours.

I believed, as did the minister who conducted the meetings, and also those in the community who were interested, that it was necessary for one's assurance that they should pass through a period of "godly sorrow for sin," as expressed in tears of repentance, and that in due time God would answer by unmistakable evidences of His forgiveness and with an experience of joy that was well-nigh overwhelming. And I sought with deepest sincerity of heart and with repentance for my long delay in yielding to God's claims, not for a night only, but every night during the meetings, and always with a longing that the light might dawn upon me and I be given the same joyful evidences of my conversion I had so often seen in the experiences of others. But God, for some purpose I have never understood, did not give me the desire of my heart, and the meetings came to a close without the usual evidences of the genuineness of my conversion that I sincerely believed, as others did, were necessary to my peace of mind. It was a disappointment that the work did not seem to me, or to others, to be complete. I had made a start, however, and God enabled me to keep my determination to live a Christian life as best I knew and with the light I had, which led me to establish the custom of "family prayers" that had prevailed in my father's home, a custom that has never been departed from in my own in the years that have followed.

A year or two after my removal to Chicago, I came in contact with men who were accustomed to deal with the "believer's assurance" from a Scriptural standpoint, and for the first time my



mind was directed away from a subjective experience as an evidence of salvation to the word of God. When my attention was called to the Scriptural conditions of becoming a Christian, and also to what was assured the believer who had complied with those conditions, the light I had long looked for came to me, not suddenly as I had thought, but, as the first rays of morning light appearing on the horizon are ere long followed by the full shining of the sun, so the light of God's Word found in John 1:12; 5:24; 6:47, dawned upon me, dispelling the darkness of doubt that had kept me so long in uncertainty as to my standing with God.

I came to realize, therefore, that I had been looking within, instead of to God's assuring word that "he that believeth on me hath (present possession) everlasting life," John 6:47.

Many have stumbled, as did I, over the simplicity of the conditions upon which God gives eternal life, which are as stated in Acts 16:31—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." However, simple as the conditions are—indeed so simple that a child may comply with them—the act of believing in the saving sense entails the greatest consequences to the believer, involving the surrender of his reliance on every other means of obtaining salvation, for "there is no other name under heaven given whereby we may be saved," and also a life of obedience to the will of God.

There are two phases to "believe" or "believing," that it is important to understand. One is believing *about* Christ what is recorded of Him in Scripture as to His life and earthly ministry, His work in redemption. His death and resurrection and ascension—all of which is essential; and the other is believing *on* Him. It is, therefore, only as one believes on Him in this latter sense that he comes into saving relation with Him. In the former sense one may believe the "record God gave of His son," and yet live apart from Him; in the other sense, there is a vital union with Him—the all-essential condition for the possession of the life He died to give.

I have been led to dwell on the foregoing, because I have learned in dealing with inquirers in my evangelistic work that, in some phases, my experience at the time of my conversion is typical rather than exceptional; for the desire to have an experience that testifies to one's feelings or consciousness at the outset of the Christian life, is well nigh universal.

Nor is this desire confined to those seeking to know the way of life, but it is not infrequently found among professing Christians who are not well grounded in God's plan of salvation.

A beautiful and rather striking comment upon the subject of "Believing," by Anne Johnson Flint, is here appended as an illustration of what the attitude of every child of God should be, and of that which alone brings one into the "rest of faith" so essential to the Christian's highest usefulness.

"I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me," Acts 27:25.

"I believe God"—but do I? Am I sure?

Can I trust my "trusting" to endure?

Can I hope that my belief will last?

Will my hand forever hold Him fast?

Am I certain I am saved from sin?

Do I feel His presence here within?

Do I see the answer to my prayers?

Do no fears my confidence assail?

Do I know my faith will never fail?

"I believe" ay, I do! I believe

He will never fail me, and I know

His strong hand will never let me go.

Seeing, hearing, feeling, what are these?

I believe in Him and what He saith;

I have faith in Him, not in my faith;

That may fail, to-morrow or to-day,

Trust may weaken, feeling pass away,

Thoughts grow weary, anxious or depressed;

I believe God, and here I rest.

## **Chapter 6**

On leaving Chicago to make my home in Boston, which occurred in November of 1874, five years after leaving the old homestead farm, Mr. B. F. Jacobs, in whose large Sunday School and Bible Class I had led the singing for four years, gave me letters of introduction to three of his Boston friends—Dr. A. J. Gordon, pastor of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church of that city, one of the ablest and best loved ministers in his denomination, and

composer of the music of the well-known hymn, "My Jesus, I Love Thee"; Mr. J. S. Paine, a wealthy merchant, life-long friend of Mr. Moody, and ever after a kind and valued friend to me; and Mr. Eben Shute, a business man, and well known in New England as a Sunday School worker.

I gave the letter addressed to the latter first, and I will never forget the expression on his face as he read it. I thought I had never seen so beautiful a smile as wreathed his face, and it would be impossible to say how much good it did me. Being a total stranger in the city, with no certainty of securing a position of any kind, to be greeted so kindly and with such an evidence of pleasure on his part was an experience the memory of which has never lost its fragrance.

I presented the other letters in due time and was greeted in each case most cordially. My uncertainty as to a position was soon relieved, for within a week of my arrival in Boston I was engaged to lead the singing in Dr. Gordon's church and in his Sunday School, of which my delightful friend was the very efficient superintendent for many years.

The year and two months of my service in that church, leading up to the first of January of 1876, when my engagement as director of music in Tremont Temple began, was a very happy experience, as friendships were formed that have been cherished among the most valued of my life. As a memento of the fellowship with those friends, there hangs above my desk, as I write, a large steel engraving of one of the most famous works of art, that was a gift to me from the Sunday School of Dr. Gordon's church, on my going to another field.

During my rather brief residence in Boston—a little less than two years—I had, besides my regular duties in the Temple, occasion to conduct the singing for Sunday School and other religious conventions, special meetings, mid-week Bible classes, etc., at which times my voice was in considerable use for solo purposes, as the songs Mr. Sankey had made famous across the sea were in constant demand. I was thus kept in touch with a considerable part of the religious activities in New England, and with work along lines which were to engage my efforts and rime the remainder of my life. I little anticipated then that it was in a measure preparing me for that work, and still less did I think I was to enter upon it

so soon.

In August of that year there was a gathering of friends at one of the near-by seaside resorts for Bible study and exposition, among whom were Dr. James H. Brooks of St. Louis, Dr. W. J. Erdman, Major Whittle, and others. Having known the latter for many years and not having seen him for some time, I took occasion to attend one of their services, which was the first time I remember to have met Dr. Brooks, who greatly impressed me with his forceful personality. He stood over six feet in height, well proportioned, and with a strong, intellectual face; all of which stamped him as a man of commanding presence. He gave an informal exposition that afternoon which showed him to be a man of extraordinary ability as an expositor of the great fundamentals of Christianity. He was also known as a believer in the premillennial return of our Lord, and a great defender of the "faith once for all delivered to the saints." That conference was the first, I believe, of the summer conferences known as the "Premillennial Conference," and in the after years as the "Niagara Conference," held at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Major Whittle invited me to accompany him to Northfield to spend Sunday with Mr. Moody, which I did, and where I assisted in the services Mr. Moody had arranged to hold in the little New England village church in which his townspeople first heard Mr. Sankey and himself on their return, the summer before, from the work in Great Britain that had given them such fame. It was in that church where, four years later, was held the first conference which in subsequent years was to make Northfield a household word throughout Christendom.

It was from the steps of that church, too, that one summer evening, when such a crowd had gathered that it was necessary to hold the service outside the church, Mr. Sankey sang his famous hymn: "The Ninety and Nine," and which was the means of converting a man who heard him sing it, although that man was quite two miles away and across the Connecticut River. It was a still summer evening when the song was sung and Mr. Sankey, sitting at his organ with the front of the church at his back acting as a sounding board to send his voice so great a distance, rang out that impressive story of the lost sheep so clearly and distinctly that the man sitting on his door step on the western bank of the river caught the sound of the voice and the message of the song, and

awoke to the fact that he was one of the lost sheep and that the Shepherd was seeking him, with the result that he was soon found of Him and brought into the fold. The man lived to become an official member of the church from the steps of which the sweet song was sung.

It is said of him that when dying, some years afterward, he heard Mr. Sankey singing again—this time from the new church building which stood not far from his home at that time—an impressive coincidence and one that must have awakened in the mind and heart of the dying man very precious memories.

At the services I was privileged to attend there on my first visit to Northfield, the church was crowded with people from the village and adjacent neighborhood who had come to hear their fellow townsman. Mr. Moody had me lead the singing and play the cabinet organ which stood on a low platform just in front of the pulpit.

Aside from the impressive address of Mr. Moody, there was nothing to fix that part of the service in my mind especially, except a discordant sound I kept hearing during the singing, which I at first thought was caused by something wrong with the organ. I determined to ascertain if my suspicions were well founded, so when there was an interval between verses, I listened to see if there might be one of the notes of the organ sounding when it ought to be silent, and found the discords were not from that source.

I was not long in doubt, however, for I soon heard the voice of Mr. Moody singing away as heartily as you please, with no more idea of tune or time than a child. I then learned for the first time that he was one of the unfortunates who have no sense of pitch or harmony, and hence are unable to recognize one tune from another or to sing in unison or harmony with others. I came to realize in after years, however, that in spite of that defect, he, as I have known to be the case with others similarly affected, loved the sound of music, and I have seen him at times bowed under the power of an impressive hymn as I have known no other to be.

The few days spent with the great evangelist in his home were memorable days and never to be forgotten. I was permitted to see him at close range as I had never before, and I found him to be in

every essential human, with no signs of a halo around his head as one is apt to imagine surrounds the head of all great people; but rather to be unaffectedly simple in his every-day life and association with others. As a husband he was the most thoughtful and considerate of men, and as a father the idol of his children and their most interesting and delightful companion and play-fellow. The impressions he often gave in public, that he was at times lion-like in his mastery of assemblies and unapproachable, was quickly dispelled when seen in his home, for there he was the very antithesis of that. In the home of his friends also, I found in after years, he was ever gentle, thoughtful and considerate.

So he was during those days spent in his home in Northfield. The incident that occurred during my stay that stands out in my memory as illustrating his thoughtfulness of others, was inviting people to his home to hear me sing. He took me in his buggy one day and drove about the country, and as we came to a farm house, he would stop and ask the people to come to his home on a certain day to hear some singing. The afternoon set for the entertainment proved to be one of the hottest days in August, which, however, did not deter the people from coming. They had a feeling that an invitation from their celebrated friend was like the command of a king, and one not to be declined.

At all events they came in large numbers and crowded the largest room available in his home. The organ I used to accompany myself stood by an open window, by which Mr. Moody sat and selected the hymns for me to sing. He kept me there for an hour in spite of the fact that he saw the heat was having a "melting" effect upon me, and though he himself could not very well endure it. I have sometimes thought he did this partly because he liked to see me perspire, as he never seemed to enjoy anything in the way of fun quite so much as to have a joke on his friends—a characteristic that was very pronounced in early life, and which never quite left him even when the weight of years and many cares were resting upon him.

Before my visit came to an end Mr. Moody broached the subject of my entering evangelistic work, giving me to understand that I would be associated with him and Mr. Sankey, and that my time would be subject to his disposal. After prayerful consideration I decided to retire from the pursuit of my profession, involving though it did the sacrifice of the ambition I had cherished for

years. There seemed to be a leading, though not so clear to me at the time as it afterward appeared, that a larger field for the use of such talent as I possessed had opened to me, and that I should enter it. At all events the decision was made then, and steps taken to sever my connection with Tremont Temple and other pursuits that were engaging my attention, to devote myself henceforth to evangelistic work.

This decision marked the end of seven years that had intervened since leaving the home of my early years; the end also of the second period in my history, and the beginning of the third, which was to be the last and longest.

## **Chapter 7**

Thus began my association with Moody and Sankey, men upon whose ministry God had set His seal in a remarkable way, and which was destined to last throughout their lives.

The first work assigned me by Mr. Moody was to organize a choir to assist in a three months' evangelistic campaign he and Sankey were to conduct in Chicago, beginning the first of October, 1876. On the first of September, accordingly, the work was undertaken. An appeal to the churches of the city for singers brought a very hearty response, and a chorus of about one thousand voices was secured.

Rehearsals were well attended, and in addition to the more familiar hymns we gave attention to the newer songs of P. P. Bliss, such as "What Shall the Harvest Be," "Almost Persuaded," "Go Bury Thy Sorrow," and others. "Knocking, Knocking, Who Is There," and other compositions of Dr. Root were also very impressively sung by the large choir. "What Shall the Harvest Be" became a favorite immediately and was often sung.

During the four weeks devoted to organizing the choir, and familiarizing them with the work they were expected to do, I was given accommodations at a hotel in the center of the city, which was headquarters of the committees having the meetings in charge; and in that way I came in touch with many of the men prominently identified with the movement. Among them was the author of the hymn, "It Is Well with My Soul," Mr. H. G.

Spafford, a man of unusual intelligence and refinement, deeply spiritual, and a devoted student of the Scriptures.

One day Mr. Bliss, who was also entertained at the hotel, came to my room with the first draft of the musical setting he had made to Mr. Spafford's words, and sang it for me; taking occasion also to call my attention to some progression in the harmony.

It was at that time he handed me the words to the hymn known as "Fully Trusting/" and suggested that I write music for them. This I did, and the hymn was incorporated in Gospel Hymns No. 3, published a year or two afterward. "It Is Well With My Soul," was published at the same time, and, immediately coming into general use, proved to be one of the strongest and most useful of gospel hymns.

The meetings conducted in Chicago by Mr. Moody were held in a permanent brick structure erected in the center of the business part of the city and had seating capacity for ten thousand people. It had high ceiling, large galleries, remarkable acoustics, and was admirably adapted for music. It was known as Farwell Hall.

I was appointed to assist George C. Needham in his work in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and later, with Charles Inglis, of England, I was sent to one of the smaller churches of South Chicago. On entering the railway station on my way to this second appointment, I found Mr. and Mrs. Bliss waiting for the train I was to take.

It so happened that Major Whittle and Mr. Bliss were to begin a series of meetings in Peoria, Ill., at the same time our meeting began in South Chicago.

While bidding good-by to Mrs. Stebbins and our son, then a small boy, Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were reminded of their two boys in the home of friends in Rome, Pennsylvania, and tears came to their eyes.

After leaving Chicago Mr. Bliss fell asleep, with his head resting on his wife's shoulder. He was still sleeping when my destination was reached. As I rose to pass out, I said to Mrs. Bliss, "Don't disturb him." She replied: "Oh, yes! He would be disappointed if he did not say good-by." As he wakened and realized I was leaving, he followed me onto the platform with kindest wishes and



parting words.

This proved to be the last time I saw him, for he and Mrs. Bliss, at the conclusion of the meetings at Peoria, went to their children to spend the holidays, and on their way back to Chicago, a few days later, they met their tragic death at Ashtabula, Ohio.

## **Chapter 8**

During the fortnight following my good-by to Mr. and Mrs. Bliss, Mr. Inglis one day sang to me the hymn known as "Crown Him" ("Look ye saints, the sight is glorious!") As he sang it entirely from memory, I wrote down the melody.

Mr. Inglis did not know who composed or where he had heard the tune which, evidently, was of English origin. The song was published in the next number of "Gospel Hymns," and became one of the popular numbers in that collection. It was also included in Mr. Sankey's English hymn book and was widely used in that country. Yet no one has laid claim to its authorship.

Mr. Inglis, since that time, has visited this country nearly every year in the course of his evangelistic work; and although "living on borrowed time" (as I often heard Mr. Moody say of those who had lived beyond the allotted span of life), he is still (1924) preaching the gospel in this country as well as at home.

Following my appointment with Mr. Inglis and a short engagement with Mr. Needham at Fort Wayne, Indiana, I went to spend the holidays with my mother and brother who were still living in the old homestead. During this short vacation a very severe storm came on which blocked all the country roads and interrupted railway traffic. It was while thus situated that I received a telegram from Mr. Moody advising me of the death of Mr. Bliss and wife, and requesting me to return to Chicago at once to join Major Whittle in following up the work he and Mr. Sankey had just closed. I made my way with difficulty to the railroad, and after some twenty-four hours of slow progress, reached my destination, to find the whole city greatly moved by the disaster at Ashtabula. The churches especially were stirred through the prominence of Mr. Bliss' songs.

At the close of that follow-up campaign, conducted by Major

Whittle, I went on to Portland, Maine, to join Mr. Needham in a series of evangelistic services.

On my return journey to Chicago I spent a few days with Moody and Sankey in their great work in Boston.

Aside from the blessings that attended the meetings the remainder of the season in Maine there is no incident worthy of note, save that it marked the practical beginning of my writing: for, while I had only two hymns to my credit for that spring's work, I found my mind turning more to the exercise of any gift I might possess in that line than ever before.

## **Chapter 9**

In the following August I assisted Dr. Pentecost in a series of summer campaigns, the first of which was held in Worcester, Mass.

During those meetings, one of the subjects preached upon was the "New Birth." While presenting the truth, enforcing it by referring to various passages of Scripture, Dr. Pentecost quoted our Lord's words to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily I say unto you, ye must be born again," John 3:3-7. It occurred to me that by taking the line "Verily, verily, I say unto thee," from the third verse, and putting it with the line, "Ye must be born again," and by transferring the word "I" from the middle of the first line to the beginning, so it would read, "I verily, verily, say unto thee, Ye must be born again," those passages would then fall into rhythmical form, and by the use of some repetitions could be made available for a musical setting, and also for a chorus to a hymn, if some suitable verses could be found.

I had long been impressed by the fact that that truth lay at the foundation of God's plan for the salvation of men, and that it was of the greatest importance that it should everywhere be made known. It also came to me with special force that a good hymn, using those lines as a refrain, would be a means of emphasizing that truth and thereby doing great good. I spoke to Reverend W. W. Sleeper, one of the pastors of the city who sometimes wrote hymns, of my impression and asked him if he would write me some verses on the subject. He acted at once upon my suggestion

and soon after came to me with the hymn that bears his name. Before the meetings closed a musical setting was made, and when "Gospel Hymns No. 3" came out the song was sent on its mission carrying the solemn message to the hearts and consciences of men indifferent alike to their danger and to God's claims upon them.

The following incident is of interest as showing not only the magnetic attraction of song, but its power in carrying a message to the heart, and its tendency to awaken the careless to a sense of need.

"One evening in November, 1886," said the Superintendent of a boys' school, "I was walking along a street in St. Joseph, Missouri, when I saw before me a great crowd gathered around a door. On approaching, I discovered it to be the entrance to the Young Men's Christian Association hall. In the doorway stood some young men singing. Just as I came near enough to hear, they began:

‘A ruler once came to Jesus by night,  
To ask Him the way of salvation and light;  
The Master made answer in words, true and plain,  
"Ye must be born again."

CHORUS:

‘Ye must be born again,  
Ye must be born again;  
I verily say unto you,  
Ye must be born again!"

When they came to the chorus, the sword of the Spirit entered my soul. It seemed to me that I was brought face to face with the Lord Jesus. There on the street, while the song was being sung, I asked Him to teach me how to be born again, and He did. I accepted an invitation to the service of the evening, and after that service, for the first time in my life, I publicly acknowledged Christ as my Savior. I have always considered that it was through the influence of that hymn that I was awakened. Many times have I thanked God for the song, as well as for the courage He gave to His disciples to sing it in that public way."

Some years after this hymn was written, Mr. Sleeper sent me the verses of the hymn "Jesus, I Come" ("Out of my bondage, sorrow

and night"), which is a hymn of rare excellence, from any point of view, and one in which the author might properly have taken great satisfaction, for he lived to know it was very extensively used in foreign lands as well as in his own country.

Besides this engagement with Dr. Pentecost I had others, which made my first summer after entering the new field of activities a very busy one. Trailing each other closely came the "Sunday School Parliament" at the Thousand Islands; conventions in Montreal, Quebec, New Hampshire and Massachusetts; Y. M. C. A. State conventions, services of song in various cities, and meetings with Dr. Pentecost in Nova Scotia and Maine.

In October I assisted both Reverend William Rainsford and Evangelist L. W. Munhall in meetings which were held in the tabernacle Moody and Sankey had used for their great campaign the winter and spring preceding—a fortnight being given to each series of meetings.

## **Chapter 10**

My next engagement was with Dr. Pentecost in special meetings in his own church in Boston. During this engagement the "Green Hill" was written, to be sung as a quartet by three prominent church soloists of the city and myself, at a special service.

On the evening appointed a severe storm prevented the three friends coming, and most of the usual congregation. The service was held in the lecture room of the church, and I ventured to sing the new song alone. There seemed to be little or no impression made by it, and as no one did me the honor to refer to it, I concluded it was a failure.

Two months thereafter—January, 1878—while engaged with Dr. Pentecost in a series of meetings Mr. Moody had arranged to follow those he and Mr. Sankey had conducted in Providence, Dr. Pentecost said to me one day:

"George, where is that 'Green Hill' you sang in my church?"

I answered: "The music is in my head, but the words I left in Boston." Some time afterward I chanced to find them and said to the Doctor, "I can sing the 'Green Hill' for you now, if you like,"

and he replied, "I wish you would."

Great interest had been awakened by Mr. Moody's meetings, and it kept up during the work of Dr. Pentecost, hence there was an atmosphere that was sympathetic and responsive to both sermon and song. The services were held in Music Hall—the largest auditorium in the city—and at the time fixed upon to sing the new song a very large number of people were present. Conditions, therefore, were favorable and that it was the means of a blessing may be judged by the fact that from that time on to the end of the series, some weeks later, there were few services when from one to a half-dozen written requests for its repetition were not sent to the platform.

In this connection it may be of interest to relate the origin of the music of "Evening Prayer."

During the first part of my term in charge of the music in Tremont Temple, Boston, it occurred to me to write music to a verse suitable for a response after prayer—it being the custom to sing such at the morning service—and the music, since known by the title mentioned above, was written.

Two years afterward, while these meetings in Providence were in progress, I was reminded of that music, and the thought came to me that if I could find a hymn suited to it, it might be worth publishing. With this in mind I began looking through such church hymn books as came to my hand, and "Savior, breathe an evening blessing" caught my eye, and finally was chosen. I arranged to have a male choir of 200 voices sing the music as set to the beautiful hymn, and to my gratification found they were admirably suited to each other. Since then the hymn has been used in many gospel hymn books and church hymnals, both here and abroad. It has been used, also, in St. Paul's Cathedral, in London.

It was during this engagement that I wrote the music of three of my songs—"I've Found a Friend," "Must I Go. and Empty Handed" and "What Must It Be to Be There." These compositions, with "Evening Prayer" and "Green Hill," were first published in "Gospel Hymn No. 3," the first number of that series with which my name was identified as associate editor.

Of the "Green Hill" Mr. Sankey wrote me—"While holding

meetings with Mr. Moody at Cardiff, Wales, in 1883, I visited the ruins of Tintern Abbey with Professor Henry Drummond, and sang this hymn, which Mr. Drummond said was one of the finest in the English language." A number of years later I sang it on the "Green Hill," believed to be Calvary, outside the walls of Jerusalem.

Mrs. Alexander—the author of the words—was the widow of an Irish clergyman. She published the hymn in her "Hymns for Children" in 1848. Mrs. Alexander, who was born in Ireland, wrote some four hundred hymns and poems for children.

An incident regarding "I've Found a Friend" is related by Mr. Sankey also. "We were holding a prayer meeting in a lodging house," says a minister of Nottinghamshire, England, "when a young man came into the meeting in a fun-seeking manner. We sang, prayed, and read out of God's Word, and then the young man asked if we would sing a hymn for him. He chose 'I've Found a Friend.' When we had sung one verse he began to shed tears, and I am glad to say that he gave his heart to God through the singing of that beautiful hymn. The next morning he left the place, but before leaving he wrote me a letter, of which I give these extracts.

"I asked you to sing that hymn, because it was the favorite of my sister, who is waiting for me at the gates of heaven. I have now promised to meet her there. Try to always think of me when you sing that hymn.' "

Of the hymn "Must I Go, and Empty Handed" the author of the words, Reverend C. C. Luther, relates that it was inspired by the remark of a dying young man, who said, "I am not afraid to die; Jesus saves me now, but, oh! must I go empty handed?" During our stay in Providence, Mr. Luther handed the words to me, and the music was written shortly afterward. An incident is told of the singing of the hymn in Essex, England, in a morning service attended by a godless youth. At the third verse—"Oh, the years of sinning wasted," etc., the young man was so forcibly impressed that he went home miserable and was unable to eat his dinner. In the afternoon he went to a Bible class for workingmen, conducted at the other end of the town. As he entered, the same hymn was being sung. He was so moved thereat and so impressed by the coincidence that it resulted in his conversion and in his leading a

consistent Christian life thereafter.

Of the hymn "What Must It Be to Be There," Philip Phillips, the "Singing Pilgrim," said, shortly before he died at Delaware, Ohio, "You see that I am still in the land of the dying; why I linger so long is a problem. The precious Savior is more to me than I ever expected when I was well. Often during the night I have real visions; I walk on the banks of the beautiful river and get glimpses of the bright beyond. The lines that come most often to me are these:

"We speak of the land of the blest,  
A country so bright and so fair,  
And oft are its glories confessed.  
But what must it be to be there?"

Blessed be God! I shall soon know. What a singing time we will have when we get there!"

I was leaving the auditorium at Northfield one Sunday evening some years ago, when Miss Helen Knox Strain, a missionary on leave, told me an incident connected with "Evening Prayer" that happened during the Boxer movement in China. Her story was so impressively told that I asked her to write it out in full for me, as it rarely falls to the lot of a hymn to be sung under such trying and well-nigh tragic circumstances. The account, as she wrote it, is as follows:

"The Woman's Union Missionary Society has a magnificent work just outside the city of Shanghai. No harm had come to us up to this time, but serious threats and rumors were rife; we dared not so much as put our heads out at night, though forty little soldiermen played at keeping us safe. Our missionaries have two centers at that place, and they meet often for prayer and consultation. At this particular time the rumors were frightful, and the threats to burn our homes that very night were so distressing that our meeting was a memorable one. Separated from home and from friends, facing death in a far-off land and full of tenderest feelings, we lifted our hearts in song.

"Though destruction walk around us,  
Though the arrows past us fly,  
Angel guards from Thee surround us:

We are safe if Thou art nigh.'

Out of the storm each soul, renewing its strength, mounted up with wings as eagles and found peace in the secret of His presence. Our Savior breathed, in very deed, an 'evening blessing' upon us, the fragrance of which remains to this day. The last verse of the hymn,

"Should swift death this night o'ertake us  
And our couch become our tomb,'

was omitted, as it seemed too probable that such it would be. We wanted only to think of the safe-keeping, and such, thank God, it proved to be."

## **Chapter 11**

Many interesting and touching incidents and many histories are revealed by awakened consciences, and stories of blighted lives whispered into the sympathetic ears of Christian workers. Dr. A. J. Gordon related a beautiful incident that took place during Moody and Sankey's great meetings in Boston, referred to in the foregoing chapter. Mr. Moody arranged to have his inquiry meetings held in Dr. Gordon's church, which stood near the tabernacle.

One night Mr. Moody found a mother with her small child in the inquiry room deeply interested in becoming a Christian, and he asked Dr. Gordon to sit down and help her. While so doing, the baby cried frequently. A big man who had been greatly blessed in the meetings, and who had a desire to be of some help, noticed Dr. Gordon's effort to help the mother of the restless child and, stepping up to him, said:

"I do not know how to help any one to become a Christian, but if the mother will let me, I will care for her child while you talk with her." The mother consented, and Dr. Gordon said it was a beautiful sight to see that strong man carry and quiet the babe, in his desire to do something for his Master.

A very interesting incident of another nature occurred during these meetings. There came into one of the inquiry meetings a middle-aged man, beside whom Dr. Pentecost sat down to ask if he could



be of service to him. The man acknowledged that he was interested in becoming a Christian and would be glad of help. During the Doctor's explanation of the plan of salvation the man suddenly exclaimed: "Hold on, Pentecost, I'll go home and talk with Brown about it," and, taking his hat, left the room. The man came a second time, and again the Doctor approached him. Again, as on the first occasion, the stranger declared: "I'll go home and talk with Brown about it," leaving as unceremoniously as before.

Later on he came a third time, and a third time Dr. Pentecost sat down beside him. As on both previous occasions, it seemed the inquirer had gotten some new thought he wanted to think over, and was on the point of leaving when the Doctor asked:

"Who is this Brown you speak of?" The man replied, "It is no one but myself; I am in the habit of talking over my business matters with an imaginary man, and I call him Brown." The man went away, but before the campaign closed, he came back and told his experience.

"One night I couldn't sleep for thinking over the matter," he said, "and finally 'Brown' suggested: 'Pentecost says it is only to believe, just to trust Him. Do you see that peg on the wall?' 'Yes,' I said. 'Do you think it would hold your hat?' asked Brown. 'I'll get up and see,' I replied, and the moment I saw my hat on that peg the light dawned upon me. Then Brown said to me, 'Now that you are a Christian, you will have to reorganize your business!'"

During that series of meetings. Dr. Pentecost had a very amusing, as well as surprising, reply to the question he was in the habit of asking—"Are you a Christian?" Walking up the broad aisle in one of our after meetings asking the question here and there, he saw ahead of him a rather dignified looking lady sitting next the aisle, and when he accosted her with: "Madam, are you a Christian?" she replied instantly, "No, sir, I'm an Episcopalian."

Our next work was at Hartford, where the interest awakened by Moody and Sankey in their campaign during the early part of 1878 was maintained unabated by the follow-up sermons of Dr. Pentecost. The rink that had been used during those memorable days continued to be crowded night after night for weeks.

The "Green Hill" and "Evening Prayer," sung by the large male

choir, were called for frequently.

Mark Twain came to the meetings occasionally, but so far as is known he manifested little interest in them or the work accomplished during the winter.

After Moody and Sankey had finished their work in New Haven, Dr. Pentecost followed, as in other cities. The meetings in New Haven were also held in a rink and attended by throngs of people who had been awakened by the great evangelists. No incident worthy of notice occurred in this meeting, except the popularizing of "Wonderful Words of Life." Nearly two years previous to that time, Fleming H. Revell, the publisher, handed me a copy of the first issue of a Sunday School paper called "Words of Life," and stated that Mr. Bliss had written a song especially for use therein.

I carried that song through two seasons of evangelistic work, never thinking it possessed much merit, or that it had the element of special usefulness, particularly for solo purposes. It occurred to me to try it one day during the campaign in New Haven, and, with the help of Mrs. Stebbins, we sang it as a duet. To our surprise the song was received with the greatest enthusiasm and from that time on to the close of the meetings was the favorite of all the hymns used. As an illustration of the hold it got upon the people all about that section of the country, I received a letter from the Secretary of the Connecticut State Sunday School Association offering me what seemed an absurdly large sum of money, if I would, with Mrs. Stebbins, come to the State Convention and sing that one song.

So far as I ever learned the song had neither been published in any hymn book prior to that time nor used in meetings anywhere. It was used in "Gospel Hymns No. 3," and at once became one of the most popular songs in Evangelistic Services and in the Sunday Schools of the land.

That was a striking illustration of the unreliability of prophecy regarding the usefulness of a hymn, before it is submitted to the public; for it is, after all, what the people like or dislike that decides. I have failed as a seer in that line enough times to take out of me all the conceit I ever had concerning my prophetic abilities.

## Chapter 12

In the beginning of the year 1880 Dr. Pentecost conducted a series of very successful services in Detroit, in which there was a great awakening among church members as well as among nonchurch-goers. During those weeks I found time to give to composition, and the most notable result of that phase of my work was the music to Dr. Horatio Bonar's beautiful hymn, "Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping." Mrs. Stebbins and I began singing it at once and found it to be one of our most useful hymns. I shall not forget how the solemnity and truth of the words impressed singers and listeners. Especially do I recall the many times it was sung the following summer at Northfield, during the first conference Mr. Moody called for the deepening of the spiritual life. The conference was held in the old Congregational church, and was most impressive, and probably the most fruitful, of all the long line of great conferences held there since.

Mr. Moody had given expression to his sense of need for a new infilling of the Spirit, which found a response in the heart of every one who had spent those ten days waiting upon God. The new setting made to the hymn of Dr. Bonar gave a freshness to it that it might not otherwise have had. At all events the singing of it seemed to harmonize so well with that which was upon the minds and hearts of the people that it was used more than any other hymn, as a duet or solo. I remember particularly how Mr. Moody was impressed with it and how bowed down he became under the spell of the thought emphasized so beautifully by Dr. Bonar.

Following the work of some two months in Detroit, Dr. Pentecost conducted a series of meetings in Chicago in the church that had grown out of Mr. Moody's mission work in that city—the church that came to be known as the "Moody Church."

Noted results came because of that series of meetings in that historic church so greatly owned of God. Meetings held also on the west side of the city, at that period, made them memorable to all who participated.

From Chicago Dr. Pentecost went to Minneapolis, where again the gospel was preached with great power and with blessing to the people in a very unusual way.

With reminiscences of this campaign there always comes the memory of one of the pastors engaged with us. He was not conspicuous as a gifted preacher nor as pastor of one of the prominent churches, but he was known by all as a man whose heart was overflowing with love for everybody. He never spoke to any one without a smile on his face and hardly ever without conveying the impression that the sun was ever shining.

Sometimes a single word becomes associated with a person, which was the case with this good man. I remember that because of his frequent use of the word "sweet," we called him "Sweet William."

I remember also, regarding this friend, that he came into possession of two magnificent greyhounds, one of which had once belonged to that famous Indian fighter, General Custer. He looked upon both animals as all but human, and—how he loved them! Indeed he seemed to feel that they were God's messengers to him.

Many years after this Minneapolis campaign he wrote me—from his home in California—a letter whose every line was fragrant with the same spirit of love that so impressed itself upon all of us that memorable Spring.

### **Chapter 13**

An event that has had much to do with the religious life of this country was the establishing at Northfield, Massachusetts, that following August of the conferences that have made Northfield and its illustrious organizer household words throughout the Christian world.

I recall very well the men who took part in that first conference. Mr. Moody, Major Whittle, Dr. Brooks of St. Louis, Dr. A. J. Gordon of Boston, Dr. Pentecost and Dr. W. J. Erdman. Evangelists George C. Needham, L. W. Munhall and Henry M. Moore of Boston, were among the speakers. Mr. Sankey, Mr. and Mrs. McGranahan, Mrs. Stebbins and myself were among the singers, all of whom have joined the great company of the redeemed on high, save one—besides myself—Dr. Munhall, who is still the Boanerges of the evangelists, both in physical strength, intellectual and moral power. That conference, as has been intimated, was characterized by a deep spiritual tone and by the manifest presence of God, and was one that left its mark upon the

lives of those attending it.

In the autumn immediately succeeding that conference, Dr. Pentecost conducted two series of meetings, during which he received a call to the pastorate of the Tompkins Avenue Congregational Church of Brooklyn, which he accepted and entered upon at the conclusion of his engagements. This arrangement left Mrs. Stebbins and myself free for the season. Moody and Sankey were then entering upon an all-winter evangelistic campaign in San Francisco, and we were called to that city.

The songs used most by us during that never-to-be-forgotten winter were, "Behold, What Manner of Love," "I Shall Be Satisfied," "Gathering Home," "One by One," "Green Hill" and "Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping." The latter we often sang with Mr. Sankey as a trio, as we also did another impressive hymn of Dr. Bonar's, "Pray, Brethren, Pray—Eternity Is Drawing Nigh," set to music by Philip Phillips.

At the conclusion of that very strenuous winter's work we returned East. At Niagara Falls we received word of President Garfield's assassination, news that came as a thunderbolt to the nation, visibly affecting every one as did the tragedy of the martyred Lincoln.

In the autumn of that year I joined Dr. Pentecost in his work in Brooklyn and established my residence in that city. I assumed direction of the music in his church. In spite of the demands upon him, Dr. Pentecost found time to do considerable evangelistic work in other parts of the city and adjacent towns, besides conducting Sunday afternoon services during the winter in the Academy of Music.

The following June, Mr. Moody summoned Dr. Pentecost, Mrs. Stebbins and myself to Scotland to assist him in the closing weeks of their all-winter campaign in Glasgow. On our arrival there we found the city greatly stirred by the evangelistic appeal that had been going out to the multitudes during that winter. Plunging at once into the work of gathering up results, we found our energies taxed by the demands made upon us.

At the close of that work, Mr. Sankey returned to America and Dr.

Pentecost went to England and the Continent, leaving Mrs. Stebbins and myself to assist Mr. Moody in work he had planned to do in Scotland during the summer. Other cities had been appealing to him for a campaign; he therefore arranged to visit several of the larger places and smaller towns, spending a few days in the former and a day or two in the latter.

During the great meetings he and Mr. Sankey held in Edinburgh eight years previously, when on their first visit to Great Britain, among the students of the Edinburgh University who came into the movement was a young man by the name of Henry Drummond. Mr. Moody soon learned that this modest and retiring young student had an extraordinary influence over the young men of the University, and he at once began using him in his meetings. There sprang up a very warm friendship between these two that lasted to the end of their lives.

Mr. Moody arranged not only for Mrs. Stebbins and myself to accompany him on his mission that summer, but included also his friend Drummond. During a part of the interval that separated their first meeting in 1873 and this winter's work in Glasgow Mr. Drummond had been one of the Professors of the Glasgow University, and had accomplished a great work among young men in the city, as well as in the University, so that his interest in evangelistic work, especially among young men, had kept him in sympathy with the work Moody and Sankey had been doing.

It is a pleasure to recall those weeks together. Mr. Moody, though still preaching two or three times a day, felt burden-free from the greater meetings and entered into plans for the summer much as a tired man does for his summer vacation.

As we traveled from place to place, sometimes in carriages, he entered into the enjoyment of the changing scenes as we passed along the roads of that beautiful country, and into the fellowship of his delightful companion. The Professor's sharp, but kindly, eyes saw now and then some interesting specimen in the plant world, which he would secure and explain to us—he being an authority in botany. The visits to Aberdeen, Dundee and other smaller cities and towns were full of interest, as well as fruitful in results. One day we took a steam yacht and went to Campbelltown (the home of his friend, the owner of the yacht), which has long been noted for the manufacture of whiskey, and where it was said

that one of the churches was built very largely from the profits of the sale of that article in the days when it was considered quite proper for even the ministers to imbibe.

On returning from there Mr. Moody conducted a day's meeting at Paisley, where we were entertained in the castle of Sir Peter Coates—manufacturer of the celebrated Coates thread—situated on the banks of the "Bonnie Doon" which ran through the castle garden.

The last place visited during that delightful summer was Dumfries, the home, at one period of his life, of Robert Burns. After Mr. Moody had conducted the services there for some time, he arranged to leave Professor Drummond, Mrs. Stebbins and myself to continue the meetings while he joined Mrs. Moody in London.

When the few days of meetings we were left to carry on had ended, Mrs. Stebbins and I went on to London and from there to Paris for a short stay before sailing for home, while the Professor made preparation for a trip to Africa on a scientific expedition. Before his departure he took with him to London some lectures he had delivered to the students in the Glasgow University and put them into the hands of a publisher with a view to their publication under the title of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World."

He went on to Africa and immediately buried himself in the very heart of the continent, remaining there some eighteen months. When he finally emerged and was able to get in touch with the world again, he woke to the realization that he was one of the most famous of men, through his book, which had already reached a large sale and was being much discussed in the religious press.

## **Chapter 14**

The winter following our return from Scotland was another strenuous season devoted to church and evangelistic work, much as the winter previous. I found time, however, to do some writing, and among the several written during that period are two of my best known hymns—"Jesus Is Calling" and "In the Secret of His Presence."

Of the former there was no incident that occasioned the setting made to Fanny Crosby's words, "Jesus Is Tenderly Calling," nor

did either the words nor the music impress me as possessing more than ordinary merit, even for evangelistic work. The music was written with the view of making the song available as an invitation hymn; but that it would meet with instant favor, and in a few years would become generally known, did not enter my mind.

I was even more surprised at the reception given to "In the Secret of His Presence," for in making a setting to the beautiful words of a native of East India I thought only of using it as an offertory selection, when a simple song would be desired; hence the rather unusual progressions of harmony that were introduced. The hymn was first used as intended when the setting was made, but afterwards was found suitable for other purposes and gradually came to the attention of singers of sacred songs.

About the time the setting was made—the latter part of 1883—Moody and Sankey began their all winter mission in London, and as I was in occasional communication with Mr. Sankey, I sent him a manuscript copy of the hymn as a matter of interest rather than with the thought of his singing it. Not long afterward, however, he informed me that he was singing the hymn in their meetings and that it was being well received. He also informed me that one of the daughters of Lady Beauchamp was singing it in London.

The hymn was published in "Gospel Hymns," and in "Songs and Solos," Mr. Sankey's English book. In that way it came to be known on both continents and on the mission fields as well.

A few years later Dr. J. Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, attended one of the summer conferences at Northfield. He said to me one day, "Mr. Stebbins, would you mind writing the music of your hymn 'In the Secret of His Presence' in four part harmony? It is the favorite hymn of our China Inland missionaries, and it is thought that if it were arranged in that manner, instead of with an accompaniment, it would be more convenient for them to sing."

In March of that winter, 1883-84, as already mentioned, I went to London with Dr. Pentecost to assist in the campaign Mr. Moody was conducting.

That all-winter mission was projected upon a large scale, as it was



planned to hold services in several of the most strategical locations. In order to accomplish this, and to accommodate the people, corrugated iron tabernacles were constructed and used in various locations, as needed.

In that way the whole city was encircled and the meetings made easily available. Three weeks were given to each center, and the influence awakened on one being carried to the one following, the interest was cumulative, and a great wave of blessing passed over the city that made it the most memorable religious campaign in its history.

The reason for inviting Dr. Pentecost and myself to assist in the movement was because there was so urgent a demand for meetings in localities too distant from the great central meetings, and it was felt important that those demands should be met so far as possible. For the same reason Major Whittle and Mr. McGranahan were present during the closing months.

In a great movement of that kind, lasting six months, amusing as well as touching incidents are sure to happen, and many interesting people met. Such proved to be the case that memorable winter.

Of the latter, that which I remember with the most pleasure was meeting George Williams, the founder of the Young Men's Christian Association—afterward knighted by Queen Victoria. Dr. Pentecost and I were invited, immediately on our arrival in London, to his home and his rare hospitality. I shall not forget the warmth and cordiality of our reception by that good man, for unaffected kindness of heart, and an entire absence of self-consciousness expressed itself in his every movement and word. No face I ever saw radiated a kinder smile or wore a gentler expression—and that not once but always. The many acts of kindness bestowed upon me by that honored man during those weeks, and on other visits to the metropolis, I treasure among my choicest recollections. He took me, at one time, to the large department store of which he was for many years the head, and we entered the very room where the Young Men's Christian Association was organized, and where he told me all about its origin. He was then a young man, and being accustomed to meet employees in that room for prayer (it was also used for a midday lunch room), the thought occurred to him to form an organization

for the benefit of the young men associated with him in the store.

I recall a delightful incident that occurred later in the spring. One of his sons, who had been interested in Mr. Moody's work, invited me on a trip to Windsor Castle. Seats were engaged on the top of one of the famous tally-ho coaches, and the ride taken. It was a lovely spring day; the beautiful meadows had on their freshest coat of green, and the foliage along the way was at its best; and as we passed rapidly along it seemed, indeed, as if we were on enchanted ground. The distance was scheduled to be made in three hours, which was very swift traveling behind horses; but three relays of four-horse teams selected for their swiftness made it possible to accomplish the thirty miles in that time.

It was considered quite the thing in those days for an outing, and it was certainly made most delightful and enjoyable. On arrival we were permitted to visit the famous royal castle, which added much to the interest of the day's experiences, especially for an American.

On another occasion the same friend took me to one of the noted annual affairs of London, known as the "Military Tournament," held in one of the great halls capable of seating twenty thousand people, and which had been crowded with men on one or more occasions when Moody and Sankey held meetings there, during their first visit to Great Britain. The occasion of the tournament was the displaying of various military movements and artillery exploits at which some members of the Royal family were to be present. On this occasion the Prince and Princess of Wales—afterward King Edward and Queen Alexandra—were present, and my friend had secured seats near the royal box, hence we had a good opportunity of seeing their highnesses.

The maneuvers of the military and the artillery were both interesting and thrilling to witness, and the affair was enjoyable in the extreme. I asked young Mr. Williams one day why he had taken so much trouble to give me those interesting experiences, and he answered: "When my brother and I took a trip around the world some years ago, our father said to us, 'I want you wherever you are to be as helpful to people you come in contact with as you can,' which we have tried to be."

Another interesting experience occurred in connection with the

anniversary exercises of the Young Woman's Christian Association of London that were held that spring. The program as arranged included singing by the Jubilee Singers of America, and an address by the Earl of Shaftesbury, the best known and best loved philanthropist of Great Britain, who was to preside. By request of the Honorable Emily Kinnaird, who was the active head of the Association (though her mother, Lady Kinnaird, was and had been president from its foundation) I assisted in the service, and the combination of talent on the program was interesting, if not amusing.

Miss Kinnaird specially desired me to sing Mr. Bliss's hymn, "Eternity," and though I had a regular engagement in another part of the city, she arranged to bring me to the meeting after the beginning of the service in which I was engaged. I was therefore put on the program with the celebrities mentioned.

The service was held in Exeter Hall, one of the famous halls used for lectures and religious gatherings for many years, and which, at that time, was headquarters of the central branch of the Y.M.C.A. On my arrival I found the hall full to overflowing, with Lord Shaftesbury in the chair. The singing of the Jubilee Singers was, of course, an impressive as well as attractive feature of the meeting, and the address of the great and good man was absorbing in its interest, although his impressive personality attracted my attention closer. He was so much like Lincoln in his stature and build, so much like him in his great heart of sympathy for the poor, and so like him concerned over those in trouble and sorrow, that it was not difficult to place him in the same class with our great Emancipator.

It was Mr. Moody's custom, during that winter, to have an all-day meeting the last day of the series at each center. I recall an incident that occurred at one of those meetings which caused a great deal of amusement. Moody and Sankey, Major Whittle, Mr. McGranahan, Dr. Pentecost and myself had lunched with some friends, and on the way to the afternoon meeting where Major Whittle and Dr. Pentecost were to speak, a remark was made to the latter illustrating one of Mr. Moody's habits of speech that amused him and which found a lodgment in his mind. As Dr. Pentecost arose to speak, Mr. Moody whispered to him: "Pentecost, be short, be short." The doctor began his address by saying, "Mr. Moody has asked me to be short. I notice that he will

have three-quarters of an hour of enthusiastic singing in his services, and then he will get up and speak a half hour, but it is not every one that can do that, for any one who can pronounce Jerusalem in two syllables can do almost anything." The remark caused laughter in the congregation and considerable notice by the press of England. Spurgeon's comment upon the incident, or rather upon Mr. Moody's pronunciation of the word, was not only characteristic of that great preacher, but very happy and appropriate. He said: "I thank God there is one man in such hot haste to get the gospel to the people that he does not stop to pronounce all the syllables of every word."

Sundays were very strenuous days with Mr. Moody, and not infrequently with those who assisted him. I remember one of them very well. He called upon me to take Mr. Sankey's place with him and to fill my own appointments also.

The day began with a meeting in the tabernacle at eight o'clock in the morning, followed by one at eleven, others at three in the afternoon and seven in the evening. As each of these services was followed by an inquiry meeting, the day was a very full one. But, as if that were not enough in one day, a service was appointed at an Institute for young men for nine o'clock in the evening, making five services in which Mr. Moody threw himself with all of his wonderful enthusiasm. My duties in those services were to lead the singing for a half hour or more at the beginning and to sing two or three solos. In addition to these five, I had three other meetings in which the same service was required as at the tabernacle. Mr. Moody was in the prime of his manhood, and I, but nine years his junior, was also at the height of my physical endurance, and so far as I recall neither of us was overtired. In those years, however, I never knew Mr. Moody to confess to being tired, so strong was he and so much did he enjoy his work. This was preeminently true of Dr. Pentecost, for he also had an iron constitution and never seemed so happy as in preaching the gospel, which he lived to do till near his eightieth year, dying in the harness while pastor in full charge of Mr. Wanamaker's large church in Philadelphia.

During the closing months of that great mission, I was "boarded round"—as teachers of country schools were entertained in my early days—and fortunate it was for me, whether it was for those teachers or not, for I had the pleasure of coming in touch with the

home-life of some members of the nobility, whom I found to be no different from others who were interested in the Lord's work. A notable instance of this was the family of Lady Beauchamp. It was her custom to rent rooms near by where the meetings were held, in each section of the city visited, and, with her son and four daughters, live there for the time being, so as to be near the meetings. The mother and daughters devoted their time and strength to working in the inquiry rooms, taking the names of the inquirers whom they had helped, and, after the meetings, following them up in their homes.

Indeed, I was told that it was the custom of Lady Beauchamp, and had been for years, every Sunday night at midnight to take a cab and go, unattended, to the dance halls of London, trying to induce young women to lead a different life. She was a tall, dignified lady who would attract attention anywhere by her remarkable appearance, and so commanding that she was permitted to come and go at will by proprietors of those places.

Her son, Montague Beauchamp, a Cambridge graduate, became a foreign missionary, and is yet in the field.

I had the pleasure of being entertained for some weeks in the home of Miss Ada Habershon, the author of many beautiful hymns—among which are "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," set to music by Charles H. Gabriel, and "Oh. What a Change!"—the music by Robert Harkness.

Miss Habershon sang with me frequently during those weeks. Up to that time she neither had attempted to write hymns nor to give attention to the special Bible work that in later years brought her into prominence. During the Torrey and Alexander Mission in London Mr. Alexander discovered her ability as a writer of gospel hymns and arranged with her to write for him exclusively, which arrangement continued until her death, a few years prior to his own passing.

At the conclusion of the Winter's campaign Mr. Moody, for himself and a few of his immediate helpers, accepted invitations from several of his London friends, who had country estates, to spend a few days resting and recuperating from the long and strenuous campaign, away from the crowded city.

Among friends who accompanied us on those delightful occasions were two of Lord Kinnaird's daughters, Professor Henry Drummond, and others.

Mr. Moody enjoyed the relaxation wonderfully and entered into the social pleasantries with youthful abandon. An occasional service was held in the various places where we rested for the benefit of people living thereabout.

Professor Drummond, who was the life of the party during those days, had a genius for introducing new and novel attractions for the young people, and possessed a remarkably attractive personality which made him a delightful acquisition to a company of friends.

I recall with special pleasure one experience we all enjoyed during those warm and sunny days. Mr. Moody got the company seated on the lawn under a large shade tree. After a moment he requested: "Drummond, give us the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians." The Professor, always reluctant, hesitated, until Mr. Moody insisted that we all wanted to hear his exposition of that pearl of the New Testament. After further persuasion he gave us his delightful reading of the chapter, which in after years was published under the title of "The Greatest Thing in the World," and has become a classic.

## **Chapter 15**

In the autumn of 1887 Dr. Pentecost, having resigned the pastorate of his church in Brooklyn to devote his entire time to evangelistic work, engaged to conduct a series of meetings in Lawrence, Massachusetts. While there Mrs. Stebbins and I were invited to dine with one of the pastors of the city, who called our attention to the hymn "Throw Out the Life-line." I was struck at once with the possibilities of its usefulness and wrote the author (who was then pastor of a Baptist church on the coast) asking if he would sell his hymn. He replied that he would and named a satisfactory price, which I paid. As the original music was poorly arranged, I re-harmonized the song, which was published in the next edition of "Gospel Hymns." Before that book was issued, however, it was arranged for male voices and published in "Male Chorus," which Mr. Sankey and I were just then editing. I began singing it very

soon and found at once that the song had a mission. It sprang into favor immediately, and from that time on, for many years, was one of the most popular hymns of the kind in use.

The author, Reverend E. S. Ufford, some years later made a tour around the world, singing his song everywhere he went and using it as a text to preach from in arousing Christians to a sense of their obligations to make known the gospel.

In the autumn following, Dr. Pentecost having accepted a call to spend the winter in Scotland, I joined Mr. Moody on the Pacific coast. I remember very well how the hymn got hold of men that winter and how inspiring it was to hear four or five thousand voices singing the chorus.

Mr. Sankey was not with Mr. Moody that winter, and the responsibility of leading the singing, often without adequate support from choirs, fell upon me. This, with much special music required in the various daily meetings, and the intensive work of the inquiry room, proved a severe test of endurance. But the summer's rest, that soon followed those strenuous months, restored wasted energies, and when the fall campaign set in, strength was found equal to the duties imposed.

Mr. Moody had arranged for meetings in several universities of the North, for which Mr. Sankey was not available, and I was called upon to accompany him. After these (in the latter part of the winter) a meeting was planned for New York City, and the services began in the Collegiate Church, Fifth Avenue and Twenty-ninth Street. It was soon found that the church was not large enough to accommodate the people. To meet this emergency it was arranged to have two services each morning—one in the Collegiate Church at 10 o'clock, and the other at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, at Fifty-ninth Street, at 11 o'clock. After conducting the preliminary services at the 10 o'clock meeting, I would go on to the next appointment and keep the people singing until Mr. Moody appeared. As each of these services was followed by an inquiry service, it made the mornings busy.

The afternoons were given to services in the Central branch of the Brooklyn Y.M.C.A., and the evenings were devoted to services in different parts of the city, making, altogether, four services a day

—Saturdays excepted. This program was followed for about ten weeks, which made another winter of exacting labors. In none of these meetings had we adequate support from choirs.

To a service in the Collegiate church came a young lady from the West, who was visiting relatives in the city. She had heard of the fame of the evangelist and was desirous of hearing him speak. Mrs. Stebbins and I sang Dr. Doane's beautiful hymn, "Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet," which arrested her attention, she being a singer herself. But as she was not a Christian, the hymn did more than attract her attention. The truth went as an arrow to her heart and conscience and so disturbed her that she hurried away from the meeting as soon as it was out, with the determination not to attend another. The truth, winged by the sweet melody, became so fixed in her mind that she could get no relief, and, instead of being able to keep her resolution, she found herself at the next service, intensely interested in the message of Mr. Moody. Still unhappy and resentful, yet unable to keep away from the meetings, she finally gave up the fight and yielded herself to God's claims upon her. Some time after returning to her home, she became a student at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, where I had the pleasure of meeting her during the World's Fair evangelistic campaign which Mr. Moody conducted during the six months of the Fair and during which time she sang with me on occasions. The happy sequel to this story is that she married one of the students of the Institute and went to the foreign field with him, where they have been for many years in mission service.

The song referred to—"Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet"—I discovered in a book published by Bigelow and Main of New York. The book was one that had been succeeded by others and was not at that time in demand. I was impressed with the possible usefulness of the song—if some slight changes were made—in my work. I found various repetitions that seemed unnecessary. These I eliminated and, without materially changing the author's theme, began singing it, as a duet, with Mrs. Stebbins. I found it to be one of the most valuable hymns. Not only because of the attractive melody, but because of the very important truth contained in the words which Fanny Crosby had happily arranged almost wholly from the Scripture. Satisfying myself as to the usefulness of the hymn, as thus arranged, I submitted the changes to Dr. Doane, and he very cordially consented to its use in that



form.

Mr. Moody was very fond of the hymn and used it a great deal for many years. It afterward appeared in many gospel hymn books until it became a common favorite and very much blessed wherever used.

The summer following this strenuous winter, Mrs. Stebbins and I accompanied Dr. Pentecost on his visit to India. A campaign among the Europeans connected with the government of that land had been considered.

After the summer conferences at Northfield were over for the season, we set sail for England, and in October, accompanied by the Honorable Gertrude and Emily Kinnaird, who were going in the interest of the Indian Y.M.C.A., we sailed from London direct to Calcutta in the S.S. *Khedive*. There were few matters of interest different from the experiences of other pilgrims over that well-traveled highway. The stopping at coaling stations, where we got a glimpse of native inhabitants—their peculiar dress, general appearance and customs; their appeal to you for charity or insistence upon selling their wares, were all interesting to those who saw them for the first time. The day spent at the famous Fortress of Gibraltar, the day at Naples, and the passing through the Red Sea, left the deepest impress upon my mind.

After a day of absorbing interest among the ruins of Pompeii, we sailed out of the far-famed Bay of Naples as the shadows of evening were gathering. The whole Western sky was painted with a brilliancy of color I had never before seen. A stream of fire-red molten lava flowed down the side of Mt. Vesuvius. The entire scene was grand beyond description and left an impress upon my mental vision that time will not destroy. To one who has visualized the passing of the Children of Israel through the Red Sea "on dry land" comes a sense of awe at the greatness and majesty of the God who would so lead His chosen people. And when one realizes that on either side of the sea are the mountains which resounded with the thanksgiving songs of that ancient people, there comes stealing over him the feeling that he is in the very midst of the greatest events in ancient history.

Full of interest was the day spent at Ceylon, the famous island on the extreme southern point of India. We visited many points of

interest; among them the house in which the hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" was written; the cinnamon gardens, etc., finishing our stay with a service at a prominent church. The short stop at Madras, where we held a service in the Y.M.C.A. hall, was also a day of interest and enjoyment.

Preparations for inaugurating the mission in India were made in Calcutta, and shortly after our arrival there (about the middle of November) the work began—the meetings being held in the opera house and attended, very largely, by Europeans.

As the interest developed, Dr. Pentecost, by request, held services for the students of the college, which were largely and enthusiastically attended, although with what result in actual conversions could not be determined, as the young men all belonged to the high castes, the breaking away from which was liable to result in serious consequences. The services, however, served to awaken the educated natives and to secure for Dr. Pentecost a very urgent invitation to conduct similar work among them, which he arranged to do later in the season.

At the conclusion of the series of meetings in the opera house, the committee in charge of the campaign thought it important that Dr. Pentecost should continue his addresses to the college students. He, accordingly, did so; and as we, quite early in that work, learned that the singing of our special songs served little more than to excite curiosity, it seemed best that Mrs. Stebbins and I should, for the time being, assist the missionaries in their different fields. In carrying out this plan, Bishop Thoburn—the first missionary bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India—who was known and loved among the missionaries of all denominations in that country, arranged for our services and planned our work among them—incidentally making engagements for us to conduct services of song in the principal cities of the empire.

We learned that Miss Goreh, the author of the hymn "In the Secret of His Presence," lived in Allahabad, and, through courtesy of the missionaries of the American Presbyterian Church, had the pleasure of meeting the lady whose hymn had become familiar to many thousands of people on the other side of the world.

I had been told that she was engaged in Christian work among her

native sisters; but she was then in attendance upon a sick friend. I found her to be a retiring lady of an attractive and interesting personality, and enjoyed the brief conversation with her greatly. Thus met the writer and the singer—one from the East, the other of the West beyond distant seas—of a song that had carried blessing to untold numbers of God's children.

This plan of visiting the different cities of India afforded us an opportunity not only of seeing much of Indian life among the natives and of the beauty of their architecture, but also of coming into intimate touch with the noble band of missionaries and of seeing the really great work they are accomplishing in that land. It was a great privilege, too, to sow the seeds of the Kingdom by means of sacred song and to have a part in the evangelistic movement of that winter.

One experience we had among the many that will never be effaced from memory was our visit to that pearl of all existing architecture, the Taj Mahal, so justly famed for its unrivaled beauty. One brilliant moonlight evening Mrs. Stebbins and I, accompanied by our son, G. Waring Stebbins, (then a young man in the beginning of his musical career, and a singer, as well, who was assisting in the services of song) visited the place, and while standing immediately under the dome which towered a hundred feet above our heads, we each sounded a note of the common chord and then listened to hear our voices echoed back to us for nearly a minute before the sounds died away in a harmony that seemed heavenly indeed, so pure and free from all imperfection were they and so unlike any other earthly sounds our ears had ever heard.

During the latter part of the season, we had the opportunity of assisting Bishop Thoburn in a short series of meetings in Bombay, and also in Madras; and while engaged in the latter, the first National Y M.C.A. convention was held there; also the first National Sunday School convention, which gave us the opportunity to sing for them and to conduct the music at their sessions.

At the close of our engagements in Madras, preparations were made for our return to America, and within a fortnight we sailed from Bombay with plans for breaking our journey at Egypt and Palestine en route.

Some time prior to departure. Dr. Pentecost yielded to the urgent request of prominent Brahmin citizens of India to continue his addresses on the historical facts of Christianity and of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, in distinction from the religions of the East. He, therefore, remained for some time to meet those engagements which resulted in his return to India the following season for further work along the same lines and to resume his work among the Europeans connected with the Government.

On our arrival at Ismalia, at the northern end of the Red Sea, some ten days after sailing, we disembarked and took the train for Cairo.

As we passed through the land in which God's ancient people once dwelt, toiled and suffered, and from which they were finally driven by the hand of the oppressor, we came again under the spell of sacred history; and from then on for the days that remained of our stay in the land of the Pharaohs, we were never free from an overpowering sense that we were on the very ground where God had displayed His mighty power and performed His greatest miracles in ancient history.

To say that the seven days spent under those Egyptian skies were absorbing in their interest would be to say what is self-evident, for no one can visit that land without having a bewildered sense of being in another world, seeing unusual sights, hearing strange sounds, and having weird sensations never dreamed of before.

Wandering the streets of the ancient city, visiting the markets and marts of trade, the mosques, the tombs and places where the people congregate; the museum where we looked upon the mummied form and face of the Pharaoh who oppressed the Children of Israel four thousand years before, the face so extraordinarily preserved through four millenniums as to show the remarkable strength that monarch must have possessed; the visit to the ruins of the old city of Memphis, which once had the proud eminence of being the home of the Pharaohs, but now giving little evidence of ever having been anything more than a few stone houses. The visit, riding on donkeys, to the first Pyramid ever constructed; the sight of the tombs of sacred bulls, and other places uncovered after having been buried under the sands of

centuries; and later, the visit to the great Pyramids, the climbing to the top, five hundred feet from the ground, of the largest one, which some of the party did, while others went up two hundred and fifty feet into the very heart of it, where a tomb was designed that contained a large granite sarcophagus, in which the great Pharaoh who constructed it had expected his body to rest through the ages, but where no evidence of his remains having been committed to its keeping has ever been discovered—all these produced sensations which would defy the most gifted pen.

The memory of the Sunday spent in that strange city can never be lost. We did not spend any part of the day in sight-seeing, but in the morning attended the Koptic church, the only Christian church there, where we had the great privilege of singing to the praise of God of our salvation, and of Him who came in one of the dark periods of the world's history to redeem mankind. The afternoon of that day was spent in the study of Bible history of God's ancient people—Mrs. Stebbins reading aloud.

When she came to the story of Joseph, our son lay upon the floor, his chin resting in his hands, listening in breathless silence to that most beautiful and fascinating story. It was easy to visualize, under those circumstances, the scenes and tragedies depicted in the life of that great outstanding figure in Biblical history, and as the story unfolded we could all but see its reenactment. So it was with much that we saw in that ancient land of the Pharaohs.

From Egypt we sailed to Palestine, making our first stop at the famous city of Joppa, the nearest place of call for passengers visiting Jerusalem, and as the steamer dropped anchor, a friend, who knew of our coming, came out in a small boat to meet us, quite as much to our pleasure as to our surprise, as we were not expecting him. As we disembarked we, like all passengers, were put into a small boat manned by experienced and sturdy men with oars, who very skillfully took us through the narrow passageway between rocks that have stood guard at the entrance of that harbor for centuries, and delivered us safely on the shores of that sacred land.

We proceeded by stage to Jerusalem, where we were met at the Joppa gate by Mrs. Spafford of the American Colony, whom we had known in Chicago, and who made us very comfortable during our stay in the city.

There we found Dr. and Mrs. H. R. Palmer, and also our very warm friend, Mr. R. C. Morgan, editor of the London *Christian*, who traveled with us through Palestine after completing our visit in the city most sacred to Christians the world over. Dr. and Mrs. Palmer preceded us to other parts of the country.

During the days of our stay there, we visited the principal places of interest in and about the city, being conducted by a member of the Colony who was intimately acquainted with the city.

We had the great privilege of singing there and of giving a service of song also, which we looked upon as one of the outstanding experiences of our lives. The first song I sang was "There Is a Green Hill Far Away," which I was privileged to do in sight and sound of the place where the world's greatest tragedy was enacted.

Aside from the opportunity of visiting the places made forever sacred by the footsteps of our Lord, there is one other experience that will remain with me, and that was our visit to the Mount of Olives.

A company of us took lanterns one moonlight night—which every one was obliged to do when going through the city—as there were no street lights in those days—and wended our way out through the gate, through the Garden of Gethsemane, up the slopes of the Mount and there sat down to view the city from that famous mountainside.

As we sat silently viewing the city of so many sacred memories, we saw others, like ourselves, coming out of the gate of the city with lanterns as did the soldiers nineteen hundred years before to arrest the Savior and take Him to the Judgment Hall to be condemned as a malefactor. We visualized the rabble that thronged His way to the cross where He made expiation for the sins of the world—even for those who were guilty of His death—and it required little imagination to reenact that scene in the tragedy, for we were under the same sky and on the same mountainside. While thus our thoughts were recalling that saddest of all the world's events, one of the party began singing the hymn, "'Tis midnight, and on Olivb's brow," in which we all joined with a sense of reality most solemn and impressive.

After visiting the places of greatest interest in and about

Jerusalem, including Bethlehem and Bethany, we journeyed by sea to northern Palestine, going from Haifa, where we disembarked, to Nazareth by stage, across the plains of Esdraelon, and from Nazareth to Tiberias, on the shores Galilee, by horse and donkey, as the wagon road over that stretch of eight or ten miles was bad.

There were few points of interest to take our attention in or about Nazareth, aside from Mary's Well, which was said to be the identical one from which the mother of our Lord frequently drew water, as all the inhabitants of that city have been wont to do throughout all the centuries gone by, hence its name. We drank of its cooling water, and thought of the years when Mary's Son did likewise, as He, like other men, earned His bread by the sweat of His brow.

We also gazed upon the hills about the city, as He must have many times rested His weary eyes upon the beauty of the landscape. We tried to think of Him at His carpenter's bench; of His going in and out among His townsmen; of His assuming His share of the burdens of the family and His share of the responsibilities of the government of the city; of His living the simple life of the community, ennobling toil by setting an example to all who should follow Him in the common walks of life; of His loyalty to a perfect standard of righteousness, and to the principles of the Golden Rule He afterwards established as the perfect rule of life.

We were privileged to sing our songs in Nazareth, as we remained there over the Sabbath. Arrangements were made for a service as in other places, and we counted it one of the most impressive experiences of our lives.

It is needless to say that our visit to Tiberias was most absorbing in its interest. Memories of scenes that were enacted and of the marvelous works wrought on the shores and upon the turbulent waters of that sacred sea, came trooping from the past to assure us that we were on the very ground where some of the mightiest acts of God had been witnessed. And what a privilege it was to look out upon the blue waters of that sea and wander along its shores.

Our stay in that enchanted place was prolonged beyond our expectation because of a temporary illness of one of the party, which gave us the opportunity of singing in a special service

arranged for us and of assisting in a medical mission in the city. We were surprised by the physician in charge telling us that he had heard Mrs. Stebbins and myself sing in Glasgow a number of years before, naming the hymn we sang that impressed him most, which was Mr. Ogden's beautiful hymn "Gathering Home." A similar remark was made to me on the streets of one of the cities of India by a gentleman who stopped and asked if my name was Stebbins; when I told him it was, he remarked that he heard me sing the same song in Glasgow years before, and it had impressed him so that he remembered it to that day. These incidents gave us the feeling that the world was not so very large after all.

The last songs we sang in that land of sacred lore was in Haifa, before embarking for Italy, in mission conducted by German missionaries.

As that port of call lay at the foot of Mount Carmel, whereon God had wrought such wondrous miracles through His servant Elijah, we were privileged to stand upon its summit, to look out upon the great sea, and amid those impressive surroundings to recall God's wonderful dealing with the true and the false prophets.

During our weeks of stay in Egypt and Palestine, so strange and ancient everything appeared that we seemed to have been suddenly taken back two thousand years, and were living the events of those far-off days. When, therefore, the shores of that land faded from our view, as we sailed homeward bound, we awoke to realize we were once more under modern skies, and would ere long be in the midst of modern life in the new world beyond the seas.

As a brief visit to the Continent was scheduled in the plans for our homeward journey, it was arranged by friends that we should give services of song in three of the cities of Italy, beginning with Naples.

This was held in the Presbyterian church; the next in the Methodist and Presbyterian missions in Rome, and the third in the Presbyterian church in Florence.

We counted it an honor to be permitted to sing our message of salvation in that land of song, and a privilege to visit those cities crowded with so much of intense interest relating not only to



ancient history, but to modern life. To visit the galleries and look upon the famous works of modern and ancient art was an experience of a lifetime, and a pleasure no words can describe.

A brief visit to Venice, that pearl of Italian cities, a few days gazing upon the beauty and grandeur of the Swiss lakes and mountains, a few days in Paris, with a service of song in the American church, and a few days' rest in London preparatory to sailing for home brought us to the end of our mission to the Far East.

## **Chapter 16**

The year following our return from India—from the summer of 1891 to the autumn of 1892—nothing occurred worthy of mention here; but in October of the latter year Mr. Moody cabled me to join him in Great Britain for a work that had been planned the winter he and Sankey spent in Scotland. After our work in several of the principal cities of England, we went to London for a campaign in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. On our arrival in that city Mr. Moody became anxious concerning a severe cold which had settled in his throat and interfered greatly with his speaking. I prevailed upon him to call Dr. Habershon, who discovered an irregular heart action. He assured us there was no occasion for immediate anxiety, but warned the patient against excessive work.

Before the doctor left, he got Mr. Moody's consent to make an appointment with Sir Andrew Clark, then the most famous physician in London, for expert advice. The appointment was made for a day immediately at the close of the services in the Tabernacle and following a banquet given Mr. Moody by his London friends, which was presided over by George Williams.

At Sir Andrew's examination of Mr. Moody he assured us that Dr. Habershon had made a correct diagnosis, and endorsed the advice the young physician had given. During his examination, Sir Andrew asked Mr. Moody, whom he knew by reputation, how often he preached. "Three times a day, usually," replied Mr. Moody, "sometimes—four—except one day I reserve for rest." After a moment of silence the doctor asked: "What kind of a man are you, anyway?" Mr. Moody came back with the inquiry: "Sir Andrew, how many hours a day do you work?" When told "fifteen

to eighteen," Mr. Moody retorted with, "What kind of a man are you, anyway?" He was advised to limit his preaching to one or two services a day, to be careful about overexerting himself and to exercise judgment as to his diet. This Mr. Moody promised to do, and from that time more carefully restricted himself in his public activities.

From London we went to Dublin for a fortnight's mission, which was held in a large hall, sometimes used for a rink.

Soon after the close of these engagements, which proved to be his last work in Great Britain, he sailed with his son, William R. Moody, for New York on the *S. S. Spree* of the North German Lloyd. When about a thousand miles from Queenstown, the shaft of the steamer broke and a rush of water into some of the stern compartments caused the ship to settle at that end. Being a single screw steamer, she was left at the mercy of the sea.

Among the passengers was General O. O. Howard, at that time Commandant of the Army of the East with headquarters at Governor's Island. He was known not only for his great service to his country, but for being an outstanding Christian man and actively interested in all forms of aggressive Christian work.

As he and Mr. Moody were long-time friends, they often met, no doubt for prayer, in that time of fear lest the great ship with its large list of passengers should founder. It was said that both of these men were constantly busy encouraging as best they could the frightened people, and that Mr. Moody spoke to them in a body, making use of the most encouraging portions of Scripture.

The following account of that experience, given by Mr. Moody himself, is taken from a biography, written by his son, W. R. Moody:

"When about three days out on our voyage, I remember I was lying on my couch, as I generally do at sea, congratulating myself on my good fortune, and feeling very thankful to God. I considered myself a very fortunate man, for in all my travels by land and sea I had never been in an accident of a serious nature.

"While engaged with these grateful thoughts, I was startled by a terrible crash and shock, as if the vessel had been driven on a rock. I did not at first feel much anxiety—perhaps I was too ill to

think about it. My son jumped from his berth and rushed on deck. He was back again in a few moments, exclaiming that the shaft was broken and the vessel sinking. I did not then think it could be so bad, but concluded to dress and go on deck. The report was only too true. The ship's passengers were naturally aroused, but in answer to frightened inquiries they were assured it was only a broken shaft.

"The serious nature of the accident soon became evident, however, as other passengers rushed on deck declaring their cabins were filling with water. Later it was found that the two fractured ends of the shaft, in revolving, had broken the stern tube, admitting water into two after-most compartments, which were immediately filled. The bulkhead between the compartments was closed at once and braced with beams to resist the pressure of the water. For two days the ship drifted in this helpless condition, in momentary peril from the tremendous beating force of the water in the flooded compartments, as the ship rolled. But for the skill of Captain Willigerod and his efficient engineers, Messrs. Meissel and Baum, the ship would soon have foundered.

"The officers and crew did all they could to save the vessel. But it was soon found that the pumps were useless, for the water poured into the ship too rapidly to be controlled. There was nothing more in the power of man to do, and the ship was absolutely helpless, while the passengers could only stand still on the poor drifting, sinking ship and look into possible watery graves.

"All this time, unknown to the passengers, the officers were making preparations for the last resort. The life-boats were put in readiness, provisions were prepared, life preservers were brought out, the officers were armed with revolvers to enforce their orders, and it was only a question of whether to launch the boats at once or wait. The sea was so heavy that the boats could hardly have lived in it.

"At noon the captain told the passengers that he had the water under control and was in hopes of drifting in the way of some passing steamer. The ship's bow was now high in the air, while the stern seemed to settle more and more. The sea was rough, and the ship rolled from side to side, lurching fearfully. The captain tried to keep up hope by telling the anxious people that they would probably drift in the way of a ship by three o'clock that afternoon,

but the night closed in upon us without the sign of a sail.

"That was an awful night—several hundred men, women and children, waiting for the doom that seemed to be settling upon us! No one dared to sleep. We were all together in the saloon of the first cabin—Jews, Protestants, Catholics and skeptics—although I doubt if at that time there were many skeptics among us. The agony and suspense were too great for words. With blanched faces and trembling hearts the passengers looked at one another as if trying to read in the faces of each other what no one dared to speak. Rockets flamed into the sky, but there was no answer. We were drifting out of the track of the great steamers, and every hour seemed to increase the danger of our situation.

"Sunday dawned without help or hope. Up to that time no suggestion for religious services had been made. To have done that would almost certainly have produced a panic. In the awful suspense and dread that prevailed, a word about religion would have suggested the most terrible things to the passengers. It was necessary to divert their minds, if possible, or they would break under the strain. But as that second night came on, I asked General O. O. Howard, who was with us, to secure the captain's consent for a service in the saloon. The captain said: 'Most certainly; I am that kind too.' We gave notice of the meeting and, to our surprise, almost every passenger attended, and I think everybody prayed, skeptics and all.

"With one arm clasping the pillar to steady myself on the reeling vessel, I tried to read the 91st Psalm, and we prayed that God would still the raging of the sea and bring us to our desired haven. It was a new psalm to me from that hour. The eleventh verse touched me very deeply. It was like a voice of divine assurance, and it seemed a very real thing as I read: 'He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' Surely He did it! I read also from the 107th Psalm, 20-31. One lady thought those words must have been written for the occasion and afterwards asked to see the book for herself. A German translated it verse by verse as I read it, for the benefit of his countrymen.

"I was passing through a new experience. I had thought myself superior to death. I had often preached on the subject and urged Christians to realize the victory. During the Civil War I had been under fire without fear. I was in Chicago during the great cholera

epidemic, and went around with the doctors visiting the sick and dying; where they could go to look after the bodies of men, I said I could go to look after their souls. I remember a case of smallpox where the sufferer's condition was beyond description, yet I went to the bedside of that poor sufferer again and again, with Bible and prayer, for Jesus' sake. In all this I had no fear of death.

"But on the sinking ship it was different. There was no cloud between me and my Savior. I knew my sins had been put away, and if I died it would only be to wake up in heaven. That was settled long ago. But as my thoughts went out to my loved ones at home—my wife, my children, my friends on both sides the sea. the schools and all the interests dear to me—and as I realized that perhaps the next hour would separate me forever from all these, so far as this world was concerned, I confess I almost broke down. It was the darkest hour of my life.

"I could not endure it, I must have relief, and relief came in prayer. God heard my cry, and enabled me to say, from the depth of my soul, 'Thy will be done!' Sweet peace came to my heart. Let it be Northfield or heaven, it made no difference now. I went to bed, fell asleep almost immediately, and never slept more soundly in my life.

"Out of the depth I cried unto the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears. I can no more doubt that God gave answer to my prayer for relief than I can doubt my own existence.

"About three o'clock in the morning I was aroused from my sound sleep by my son's voice: 'Come on deck, father,' he said. I followed him and found every one eagerly watching a far-off light rising and sinking on the sea. It was a messenger of deliverance to us. It proved to be the light of the steamer Lake Huron, bound from Montreal to Liverpool, whose lookout had seen our signal of distress and supposed it was a vessel in flames. Oh, the joy of that moment when these seven hundred passengers beheld the approaching ship! Who can ever forget it!

"But now the question was, 'Can this small steamer tow the helpless *Spre* a thousand miles to Queenstown?' Every moment was passed in intense anxiety and prayer. It was a brave and perilous undertaking. The vessels were at last connected by two great cables. If a storm arose these cables would snap like thread,

and we must be left to our fate. But I had no fear. God would finish what He had begun. The waves were calmed, the cables held, our steamer moved in the wake of the *Lake Huron*. There were storms all about us, but they came not nigh our broken ship. Seven days after the accident, by the good hand of God upon us, we were able to hold a joyous thanksgiving service in the harbor of Queenstown. The rescuing ship that God sent to us in our distress had just sufficient power to tow our steamer, and just enough coal to take her into port. Her captain was a man of prayer. He besought God's help to enable them to accomplish their dangerous and difficult task; and God answered the united prayers of the distressed voyagers and brought us to our desired haven."

At the close of Mr. Moody's mission in Dublin, just prior to his sailing for America, I joined Major Whittle, who had been engaged for a short time in evangelistic work in some of the smaller cities of Ireland. The Evangelistic Committee of Dublin had planned a campaign in the small towns of the country, with a view to reach the people of outlying districts who were cut off from privileges the people of the cities enjoyed.

It was an interesting experience, the months we spent among the warm-hearted people of the country towns, though void of anything of a spectacular nature. The eagerness with which they listened to the simple gospel of the grace of God, and the anxiety that many of them manifested to secure a copy of the New Testament, which was given to all who desired one, was very heartening and refreshing.

It was not the design of the Dublin Committee to proselyte, nor would the Major have willingly lent himself to that, but rather to get the word of God into the hearts and hands of the people, believing most devoutly that it was the will of God.

There was deep interest everywhere manifested, and many conversions, but the amount of good accomplished can be revealed only by the records that are kept on high.

The last meetings of that busy winter were in Belfast, where great blessings were received during the weeks we labored. The churches were all heartily united and a widespread spirit of inquiry was awakened among the people.

Major Whittle's daughter, May, whose beautiful music set to many of her father's hymns has become familiar to all lovers of gospel hymns, was with us during that winter and contributed greatly to the blessing in the meetings by her singing and her work among the young women in the towns visited. As Mrs. Stebbins was unable to be with me that winter, I was most happy to avail myself of her assistance in the rendering of many of the special selections. She possessed a voice of rare sweetness and richness of quality, that had been well trained in the Royal Academy of London.

At Christmas time a few days of rest were given us, a portion of which I spent with a friend in Glasgow. Dr. Andrew Bonar had been for many years the pastor of a church in that city, and, desiring to hear him again (having had that pleasure many times at Northfield), I attended his Sunday morning service and listened to an impressive Christmas sermon. Although past eighty-five years of age, he was still in possession of his mental powers, unimpaired by the duties of a strenuous life.

The next day my friend and I called upon the Doctor at his home, where we spent an hour in delightful fellowship with him, and where at the close of our visit he gave us his blessing, which has ever seemed like a benediction from the very Throne itself, so near did he always seem to his Lord.

When I called again two or three days later, his daughter met me at the door and said her father was not well, and that it would not be well for him to receive friends. I left my good-by and love for him and went on to continue the work with Major Whittle in Ireland. The next day a dispatch came from his home which announced that he had passed into the presence of his Lord whom he had served so loyally all his long life. The beautiful Christmas sermon I had the privilege of hearing that Sunday morning proved to be his last message to his people and to the land he loved.

Dr. Bonar had many years been recognized as one of the most saintly men of Scotland, and one of its most distinguished Bible scholars. He well deserved and shared the fame of his brother Horatio, the poet, who was also a preacher of great fame and power.

Those who were present at the two Northfield conferences which

Dr. Bonar attended—1882 and in 1885—will never forget the blessing he brought to them, not only by his masterly exposition of the Word, but by his very presence. I recall an incident that occurred in 1880. He had been speaking most impressively daily for some time, and with great blessing to the people, when Mr. Moody said to him: "Dr. Bonar, I want you to tell us how it is that you have been able to live the life you have been describing to us." The Doctor shook his head as a smile radiated his saintly face; but Mr. Moody said to him again: "But, Dr. Bonar, the people have been listening from day to day to your messages and they want to know the secret of the life you have been describing." Again the Doctor shook his head, and again that smile as a reflection from another world illumined his countenance. Mr. Moody, with his usual insistence on having his own way in such matters, persisted in his demand. At last Dr. Bonar arose and said: "Brethren, I don't like to speak of myself, but for fifty years I have had daily access to the throne of grace," and with those words, spoken in the most simple manner, took his seat. He could not have said more had he spent the whole morning in explaining the pathway that led him into the secret of a victorious life.

Before his return to Scotland on his second visit to Northfield, I had the honor of entertaining him in my home in Brooklyn. And while there, he expressed the desire to visit West Point. I arranged to escort him to that famous place, and on the appointed day we took one of the beautiful day line steamers on the Hudson, which was an added pleasure to him. Arriving at the celebrated military academy, I took him at once to General O. O. Howard, who spared no pains to make our visit pleasant and interesting.

Major Whittle was on the staff of General Howard during the later years of the war, and from the pulpit often spoke affectionately of his General. Not infrequently the Commander attended our services, and the Major always insisted that he speak to the people. It was through this channel, as well as at conventions, that I met and became acquainted with General Howard.

As a key to the simple and childlike faith that great man ever manifested in his attitude toward God, I once heard him say that in former times when some one jostled him in a crowd or struck his armless shoulder (which was always tender), he used to express some impatience, until one day he decided that a much better plan would be to pray for the person who had in that way



caused him pain; and ever since that time, he said, instead of complaining he had prayed.

Another feature in the life of the General that impressed me greatly, was the heroic deed he performed among the Indians in the West, when he had been sent, by the Government, to put down the uprising among them, which other officers of the army had failed to accomplish.

The Government had been trying to capture the famous chief, Geronimo, or cause him to surrender; but they had failed in every effort. When General Howard took command of the expedition, he said to his staff, "I am going into the Indian Chief's camp. Is there any one of you who will volunteer to accompany me?" Of course there was a response, and, taking one of his officers, they made their way, unarmed, to the camp. The Chief, who was surprised at the approach of the officers without gun or sword, admitted them into his presence and listened to what the General had to say, who assured him they had not come to do him injury, but to induce him to surrender to the Government.

The Chief was so impressed by the bravery of the General that he bade him retire to one of the tents, and in the morning he would make known his decision. This the officers did, and in the morning the Chief surrendered.

In the spring of 1893, at the conclusion of our work on the other side, I hastened home, because of sickness in my family, the Major and daughter coming later. On their arrival in New York, they went to spend a day or two with General Howard, who was then stationed on Governor's Island.

Sometime prior to the inauguration of the World's Fair Exposition in 1893, Mr. Moody planned to conduct an evangelistic campaign in Chicago to continue through the duration of the fair, being impressed with the opportunity it would afford to reach many thousands of people who would be visiting the city during that period.

To accomplish this, he arranged to have simultaneous meetings every night in various parts of the city.

With this in view he secured several of the most prominent

evangelists in this country and from abroad, with as many singers and leaders of singing as were needed; then selected the most strategic points in the city where meetings could be held either in churches, nails or tents erected for the purpose.

Many services were held in theaters on Sundays, and when Forepaugh's circus came to town the great tent was placed at Mr. Moody's disposal on Sunday, without charge. Hence every available place that was thought desirable for conducting a meeting was secured during that long campaign.

The planning for the daily meetings, speaking on an average once a day, the listening to reports from each of the centers at the close of each day, added to the raising of money to carry it on, taxed the strength and resourcefulness of even so strong a man as Mr. Moody. However, he proved equal to the task, tired though he was when the day's work was done. It was his custom to hear reports of the meetings that had been conducted by the evangelists as they came in from their various engagements at night and to have refreshments served them in his office in the Bible Institute, where they and their singers were entertained.

At such times, feeling the need of something to take the strain from his mind, he would often say to one of the evangelists noted for being always ready with some amusing incident or story: "W —, give us a story." The request would no sooner be made than the story was forthcoming, and no one would laugh more heartily than Mr. Moody himself. The telling of his story would often suggest one from another of the company, and that, in turn, enthuse some one else, to the enjoyment and relaxation of all.

Thus, after a brief prayer, the day would close and all retire to needed rest.

Each day began with some special singing by soloists and by a chorus of men, followed by an address before the students of the Bible Institute by some one of the evangelists or noted men who happened to be visiting there at the time, which was looked upon as an auspicious beginning of the day's work as then and there outlined.

Many interesting incidents occurred during those busy days. During one of the services Mr. Moody was conducting in

Forepaugh's circus tent one Sunday afternoon, a little girl strayed from her mother and got lost in the great crowd of fifteen or twenty thousand people, the most of whom were standing. Some one, seeing the frantic child, took her and carried her to Mr. Moody and told him she was lost. Taking her in his arms he held her up before the great throng and cried at the top of his voice, "A lost child! A lost child!" The anxious mother, seeing her in the great man's arms, rushed up to receive her babe. Mr. Moody, as by an inspiration, made use of the incident in his graphic way to impress upon the minds of the careless and indifferent their lost condition before God, and the fact that the Savior was there even then seeking to find and to save.

That ever-to-be-remembered campaign was of such a nature that the results could not well be tabulated, even if Mr. Moody had been disposed to keep a record of them, which was never his custom to do in his evangelistic work, believing, as he did, that if he was faithful in proclaiming the truth God would take care of the results.

If the burden of that long campaign, that was never lifted for one wakeful hour from the shoulders of the evangelist, made any inroads upon his vitality, either physical or mental, it was not evident to his friends. It certainly was not manifest in any lessening of his energy or enthusiasm for the salvation of men.

In the light of warning given him by the London physicians the autumn before, however, it would not be wide of the mark to conclude that the long unremitting strain did undermine, to some extent, his vital force. In any event, during the few years that remained of his eventful life, it was very evident to all his friends that he was becoming conscious of his limitations, and that his former great strength and animation were not to be depended upon as in the years when there seemed to be no limit to his physical ability.

In my own case I realized more in after years than at the time, that the use of my voice in leading the singing with poor support at best, in congregations never the same and made up of people from every part of the land who were not familiar with the hymns, made a supreme test of endurance, both of my voice and vitality.

From the beginning of my public activities in the evangelistic

field I was not always situated so I could save my voice, hence there were demands upon it that rendered the preservation of the finer qualities difficult, if not impossible. Yet there seemed no alternative; it was therefore used regardless of the injuries that might result—an experience more or less true with all the earlier evangelistic singers.

The plan adopted in later years of having a leader to devote all his energies in directing the choir and congregation, and a singer to do little else than the solo work—a custom inaugurated, or at least greatly emphasized—by Mr. Alexander, seems a wise one.

My contemporaries, as well as myself, however, were both leaders and soloists, which may explain, in part at least, the early breaking down of Mr. McGranahan, and Mr. Sankey, for neither had reached the allotted span of life when they were laid aside from all public activities.

At the close of this strenuous campaign I returned to evangelistic work among the churches, giving the most of my time for the three ensuing years to assisting Major Whittle.

During the August Conference at Northfield in 1893, Fanny Crosby, who was a guest in Mr. Sankey's summer home, was invited to address the conference at one of its sessions. At the close of her remarks she quoted the verses of "Saved by Grace"—a hymn that has become one of her most famous and best loved.

That evening Mr. Sankey asked: "Fanny, where did you get the hymn you quoted at the close of your address to-day?" She replied, with a smile, that she had stored it away in her memory, to use when she was asked to address meetings, and added, "I don't intend to let any of you singers have it, either," meaning thereby that she did not want it set to music, lest it become well known and less desirable for her individual use. "That's right, Fanny, don't you let anybody have it," replied Sankey.

But providentially, it would seem, a representative of the "London Christian" heard her speak, and not knowing of her desire to keep the poem exclusive, he took the verses in shorthand, with her address, and in a few weeks published them.

1. Some day the silver cord will break,  
And I no more as now shall sing;

But O, the joy when I shall wake  
With-in the palace of the King!

2. Someday my earthly house will fall,  
I can-not tell how soon 'twill be,  
But this I know- my All in All  
Has now a place in Heav'n for me.

3. Some day, when fades the gold-en sun  
Be-neath the ros-y tint-ed west,  
My bless-ed Lord will say, "Well done!"  
And I shall enter in-to rest.

4. Some day; till then I'll watch and wait,  
My lamp all trimmed and burning bright,  
That when my Savior opes the gate,  
My soul to Him may take its flight.

Chorus:

And I shall see Him face to face,  
And tell the story—Saved by grace;  
And I shall see Him face to face,  
And tell the story—Saved by grace.

One day in the early fall, Mr. Sankey came to my house and said to me, "George, do you remember the hymn Fanny quoted in Northfield which she wanted to keep for her own use? Here it is in the 'Christian,' and since it is published, I think it better be set to music. Suppose you try and see what you can do."

Not long after this he and Mr. Moody were holding a series of meetings in Providence, R. I., at the same time Major Whittle and I were engaged in Newport. It was at that time Fanny's Crosby's beautiful hymn was given its musical setting.

Before his meetings closed in Providence, Mr. Moody came down to Newport to address our meeting, and I was prompted to start the new song on its mission at that time. Accordingly Mrs. Stebbins and I sang it for the first time to the great throng which had come to hear Mr. Moody.

The song, and especially the chorus in which occurs the words, "Saved by Grace," evidently impressed him, for at the conferences

at Northfield the next summer, Mr, Moody had us sing it two and three times a day. One of his famous sermons was upon the subject of Grace—a subject he loved very much—which was doubtless responsible for his using the hymn as much as he did, not only at that time, but in his work in after years.

As a striking manner in which the hymn has been made a blessing, I mention an incident that occurred some years after its publication, the account of which was given in a Pennsylvania newspaper:

"The congregation of Christ Episcopal Church was startled yesterday morning by a sensational supplement to the morning service. The church was well filled, and devout worshipers responded to the service. The reading had been concluded, and the rector was about to make the usual announcements, when an incident occurred such as old Christ Church never dreamed of. Out of the usual line in a church of this denomination, it was nevertheless marked in its effect and will never be forgotten by those present.

"In the fourth pew from the front aisle of the church sat a neatly-dressed woman of intellectual face, apparently about thirty years of age. Her presence as a stranger had been noticed by many, and her deep, tearful interest had been quietly commented upon by those occupying adjoining pews. At the point mentioned, she rose to her feet and, struggling with emotion, began to speak. The startled congregation was all attention, as she was allowed to proceed.

"Rapidly and eloquently she told of her going out from the church and of her return to it. In graphic words she painted the hideousness of sin, and of the joys of a pure life, and as she spoke men and women gave way to their emotions and listened breathlessly to the end of the narration."

'I was christened in this church,' she said, 'and attended the Sunday school in the basement when Dr. Paige was rector. My mother was a devout member here and taught me the right way. At the age of fifteen I deserted my home and married an actor. For a number of years I followed the profession, leading such a life as naturally accompanies it. In dramatic circles, in variety, business, and in the circus, I spent those godless years.'

"About two years ago I was in the city of Chicago, and one afternoon was on my way to a park to spend the afternoon in revelry, when I happened on an open air meeting which the Epworth League of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church was conducting on North Clark Street. I stopped through curiosity, as I believed, to listen; but I know now that God arrested my footsteps there. They were singing, 'Saved by Grace,' and the melody attracted me. Recollections of my childhood days came trooping into my soul, and I remembered that in all the years of my absence my mother, until her death, nine years ago, had been praying for me.

"I was converted, and, falling on my knees on the curbstone, I asked the Father's pardon. Then and there I received it, and I left the place with a peace that has never forsaken me. I gave up my business and have lived for His service ever since. Last night I visited Hope Mission, and the Lord told me I must come here and testify what He has done for me. I have not been in this building for many years, but it seems only yesterday that I left it. I have been sitting in the pew directly opposite the one once occupied by my mother and myself, and I feel her presence to-day. I could not resist the impulse to give this testimony. The Lord sent me here.'

"The congregation was profoundly impressed; the rector descended the chancel and, approaching the speaker, bade her Goodspeed. The service went on, and at its conclusion many shook hands with the stranger. One might have imagined himself in a Methodist Episcopal Church, so intense was the feeling. The visitor departed with a sense of a duty done. All she said was: 'I feel that the Lord Jesus and my mother are here'"

There were four events in those days that stand out in memory like milestones on one's journey—the Ecumenical Foreign Missionary Conference held in Carnegie Hall, New York, in 1900, the Christian Endeavor Convention held in Madison Square Garden in 1892, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Y.M.C.A. in America, held in Boston in 1893, and the Second Christian Endeavor Convention held in Boston in 1895.

The event of 1900 was an international affair, delegates from the various Protestant evangelical denominations of the world were present, among whom were many notable men who had come

together to confer on the best method of advancing the cause of Christianity among the uncivilized peoples of the earth, and of the advisability and practicability of the different agencies cooperating in their efforts. It was considered the most important gathering ever held for the purpose.

The conference was presided over by Ex-President Harrison, who delivered the most eloquent address, in many respects, that was heard there. Many celebrated men from our own, and from foreign countries, were among the speakers and in attendance upon the sessions.

William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt—then Governor of New York State—were among those who made addresses and who added great interest to the occasion. One of the brilliant speeches made during those interesting days was delivered by a woman who was prominent in the work at that time, but who has since become known throughout the foreign missionary world, as one of the most able advocates of the missionary cause. I refer to Mrs. Helen Montgomery of Rochester, New York.

Her address was appealing to a remarkable degree, while her attractive personality, her unaffected manner and grace of speech, made her address one to be remembered as among the most impressive delivered during the conference.

As the singing was under my direction, I had the rare privilege of seeing and of hearing many of the most notable people identified with the Foreign Missionary movements of the world, which has ever been one of my most delightful recollections of those by-gone years.

The Christian Endeavor Convention was the largest delegated gathering in the history of the Society up to that time—there being thirty thousand registered. And that which made the occasion impressive in the extreme was the presence of eighteen thousand people in the great auditorium from day to day, and the sound of their voices as they joined in singing their militant songs.

The organizing of the choir of two thousand singers to assist in leading the services of song, and the conduct of the singing during the convention was placed in my hands. Mr. Sankey assisted by singing special selections which added greatly to the musical



features of the sessions.

Among the speakers, besides Dr. Clark, the founder of the Society, were Whitelaw Reid, Ambassador to Great Britain, Chauncey Depew, and other celebrated men from our country and from abroad.

As that great hall was not large enough by nearly one-half to accommodate the delegates, not to mention the thousands of visitors desiring to attend the services, simultaneous meetings were held in halls and churches made available for the purpose, where the same programs were carried out as nearly as possible, so that all could have the privilege of enjoying the events of those crowded days.

This great outpouring of the young people of the land engaged in the common cause of service for the kingdom of God was a striking illustration of the growing power and influence of the organization, and seemed at that time the culmination of its years of effort to utilize the youth of the churches.

The Christian Endeavor Convention held in Boston in 1895 far surpassed that of 1892 in numbers if not in enthusiasm, for fifty thousand delegates attended, making it by far the largest in its history up to that time, and probably the largest attempted since then, as it was found that a convention of such proportions must be split up into sections, which was not productive of the best results.

The most eminent speakers and leaders of song available were secured, and everything passed off with great enthusiasm as might be expected where such an aggregation of young people imbued with the spirit of Christian endeavor were gathered.

It was very interesting to note the contrast between that great gathering and the first convention of the Society held in Providence in 1878, where but a few score of people had a part.

The contrast must have been startling to Dr. Clark, for it is doubtful whether in those early days his wildest flight of imagination had pictured what a great world-wide organization his was destined to become. My first meeting with Dr. Clark was in the year 1877 when he was in his initial pastorate in Portland, Maine. He was then but a youth, little dreaming the destiny God

was fitting him for; for, while he must even then have been a man with a vision, he was never "visionary," but of rare judgment, as his afterlife has so wonderfully demonstrated.

In those brief years that intervened between those two conventions, the Society had become an organization wielding an influence in the churches with which it was connected that was world-wide, and already Dr. Clark had been around the world in its interests, and since then, several times. To what dimensions the movement has grown in the more than a score of years since that great convention, I have no present knowledge, but it is fair to presume that its influence is to-day one of the greatest agencies of the church at large for the advancement of the cause of Christianity throughout the world.

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Young Men's Christian Association in this country was held in the largest hall in the city. The responsibility for the conduct of the music was divided between one of the Y.M.C.A. secretaries, Clarence B. Willis, and myself.

This important event in the history of the Association brought together its leading lights from every part of our country, and not a few from foreign lands.

Perhaps the most prominent visitor from abroad was Mr. Howard Williams, one of the sons of George Williams, the honored founder of the Association, to whom reference has been made.

He came to represent his father, who was then well advanced in life, and to bring his blessing and salutations.

With him came Lord Kinnaird, one of the most celebrated and youthful laymen in Great Britain, whose presence added much interest to the occasion, as he was known to be a hearty and generous supporter of the Association in his country.

But the one among the notable array of celebrated men who added most to the interest of the convention was Booker T. Washington, whose address was the most interesting and entertaining from a popular standpoint.

He was then the most celebrated man of his race, an honored citizen of our country, and a splendid orator. No man of his day

could give a more interesting and graphic description of the rise of his people from bondage and ignorance toward civilization, or could better describe their characteristics and dialects. He would often in his inimitable way give illustrations of the latter, not alone to entertain his auditors, but to enforce his statement.

In this connection it will be of interest to relate a bit of history that had a bearing on his future, as showing how great issues are sometimes determined by seemingly trifling events.

Some time in the eighties, an association was formed in New Haven, that came to be known as the "Christian Workers' Convention," which had for its object the awakening of interest in Rescue Missions that were being formed in many of the principal cities of the country. Dr. R. A. Torrey was its president during the several years of its existence, and I was the leader of the singing at its annual convention.

In the making of the program for one of these annual events which was to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, about the year 1889, Booker T. Washington was engaged to deliver a ten-minute address. At the time the convention assembled he was in Boston in the interest of his school at Tuskegee, Alabama, but as he had never addressed an audience of white people in the South, he deemed it of sufficient importance to leave his work and hasten to Atlanta.

When the time for his address came, he was on the platform before an audience of Atlanta citizens that filled the large opera house. As Dr. Torrey introduced him, he arose with some trepidation and for the first time faced a white audience in the Southland, not knowing what his reception might be. He proceeded with his brief address, and when the ten minutes had expired the Governor of the State, who was also on the platform, and who was known for his active interest in religious matters, arose and proposed that Mr. Washington's time be extended. It was put to a vote of the convention and passed unanimously, and his time extended to the gratification and profit of the large audience.

This circumstance served to open the door for the remainder of Mr. Washington's life to the people of that part of the country, and he was from that time regarded by the best people of his land as among their most distinguished citizens, whose abilities they

admired, and whom they looked upon as a benefactor to his race and an honor to his country.

The fifth and last campaign that I was engaged in across the sea was the winter of 1896-7 spent with Major Whittle in Scotland. On this visit we were accompanied by Mrs. Whittle and Mrs. Stebbins, the latter assisting us in the work during that strenuous winter in the land of the Scots.

From a previous visit to that country, accompanied then by Mr. and Mrs. McGranahan, Major Whittle had come to be known and loved by the people and the clergy; so on this second visit he had everywhere a very cordial reception and constant evidences of the affectionate regard in which he was held by the Christians of that country.

The cities visited were Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and several smaller places. While in one of the latter we learned of the death of Professor Henry Drummond at Sterling, his home city.

He had been for more than a year a great sufferer from a disease that rendered it impossible for him to move any part of his body save his head and one hand. Yet his attendant, who was a personal friend, and his physician as well, said that during all his long suffering he remained constantly cheerful and uncomplaining, which we could quite believe would be true of a man of his character.

As we had long known him and admired him for his great ability and had loved him for the charm of his personality, we felt constrained to leave our work and join with his host of friends in paying the last tribute of respect and love to him whom God had so richly endowed with gifts that made him a blessing to his fellow men.

This winter abroad proved to be the last extended evangelistic movement that either Major Whittle or I engaged in, as I had some premonitions of a breakdown during the campaign—the result of many years of continued strain. Major Whittle, while then in good health, not long after his return from abroad, gave himself wholeheartedly to the spiritual and physical welfare of the soldiers who were in the Southern camps under training for service in the

Spanish war. Forgetting that he was no longer young or able to endure the fatigue and exposure of camp life with the immunity he had once enjoyed, he contracted a disease which undermined his strength to such an extent that he was obliged to retire from public work, for the most part, from that time till his death two or three years afterwards.

Following that winter in Scotland, my public activities were largely confined to convention work and the summer conferences in Northfield; and in the later years, entirely to the latter, which brought me finally in the last years of Mr. Alexander's service there, to the close of two score years of work in my chosen field.

The music of those world-famed conferences from the very beginning in 1889 had been a prominent feature. Mr. Sankey, Mr. McGranahan and myself, were in charge until one after another dropped out. First Mr. McGranahan retired broken in health, then Mr. Sankey; both of whom, after some years of wasting strength, passed away, leaving the responsibility upon me. When Mr. Alexander came in 1915 he shared with me, assuming at once the direction of the more important services, and when the time came for me to pass on to other hands the entire responsibilities, he was there to undertake them, which gave promise that the singing for years to come would continue to be an inspiration to the conferences.

It was not to be under his leadership, however, as he was called soon afterwards to a higher sphere of labor. And upon whomsoever shall rest the mantle laid down by Mr. Alexander, may God put the seal of His approval.

► For the rest of the book, read [Reminiscences of Celebrated Writers and Singers of Gospel Songs](#).

---

George C. Stebbins: Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories by Himself.  
East New York: George H. Doran Company, ©1924.

[www.WholesomeWords.org](http://www.WholesomeWords.org)