

STORY OF GOSPEL HYMNS

Sankey's Collection of Sacred Songs and Solos

by

Ira D. Sankey

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CHAPTER NINE

JUST A WORD ABOUT OTHER WELL KNOWN HYMNS

A SONG OF HEAVEN AND HOMELAND

Words by Eben Rexford

Music by Ira D. Sankey

*"Sometimes I hear strange music,
Like none e'er heard before."*

In the year 1901 Mr. Eben Rexford, editor of *The Ladies' Home Journal* landscape and gardening department, wrote me, asking a donation of fifty copies of *Gospel Hymns* for a poor church, saying he would give me twenty new hymns in exchange. I sent the books and received the hymns, among which I found "A Song of Heaven and Homeland," which I soon set to music, and which I consider one of my best compositions. It was first published in *The Ladies' Home Journal*.

ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME

Words by E. Perronet

Music by Oliver Holden, 1792

*"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall."*

A man in England, who had been a happy Christian, began gradually to lose his faith, and at last boldly avowed the infidelity that had for a long time been quietly slumbering within. To his wife, who still loved and clung to the Saviour, this was indeed a blow, and her heart was torn at the thought that one she tenderly loved, and with whom she had often held sweet counsel, should now turn from the truth she held to be priceless, and overturn the faith he once sought to uphold. The husband was soon taken very sick, and it was evident to the anxious wife that the sickness was unto death.

She pleaded with and for the dying one that he might again confess Christ, in whom he had once been so happy, but no relief came to her distressed soul. One day the dying man was heard to utter a faint cry, and his wife caught the words, "Bring, bring." Thinking that he desired a cooling drink, she brought him what she supposed he wanted, but he waved his hand, and again uttered the words, "Bring, bring."

The wife was at a loss to understand what could be the meaning, when he, with a final struggle, as if he had gathered all the remaining energy into one last effort, exclaimed:

*"Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all."*

And he departed to join that company that wait that morning when the redeemed shall be gathered in.

ALL THE WAY MY SAVIOUR LEADS ME

Words by Fanny J. Crosby
Music by Robert Lowry

*"All the way my Saviour leads me;
What have I to ask beside?"*

Fanny Crosby had been the recipient of a very unexpected temporal blessing, and while seated in her quiet room, meditating on the goodness of God to her and all his ways, this hymn flashed into her mind. It was written out and given to Robert Lowry, who wrote the fine tune which has given it wings, and carried it into millions of homes and hearts.

AWAKE, MY SOUL

Words by Joel Barlow
Music by A. R. Reinagle

*"Awake, my soul! To sound His praise,
Awake, my harp! To sing."*

This is Joel Barlow's version of the 108th Psalm. In 1785, by the request of the General Association of Connecticut, he corrected and revised Watts' version of the Psalms, supplying such as had been omitted by Watts and adapting it to American thought and requirement.

AWAKE, MY SOUL, TO JOYFUL LAYS

Words by Samuel Medley

*“Awake, my soul, to joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer’s praise.”*

This hymn with its fervent, joyful tone, its touching refrain and the peculiar old melody united to it, has been greatly esteemed in this country in days gone by. It first appeared in 1782, in Meyer’s collection of hymns for use of Lady Huntingdon’s church. Samuel Medley, the author of the hymn, was visiting at the house of a Mr. Phillips in London, and asked the daughter of his host to bring him some paper and ink. With these he retired to his room and presently came back with this hymn written. Mr. Medley was pastor of a Baptist Church in Liverpool for many years. He was born in 1738 and died 1799.

CLOSE TO THEE

Words by Fanny J. Crosby Music by S. J. Vail

*“Thou my everlasting portion,
More than friend or life to me.”*

This is another popular hymn, written by Fanny J. Crosby, and set to music by Silas Jones Vail, who was born at Southold, Long Island, N. Y., October 6, 1818. He was a hatter by trade, but wrote a large number of songs for Philip Phillips, who was the first to publish any of Vail’s compositions, among which may be mentioned, “*Gates Ajar*,” “*Nothing But Leaves*,” and “*Scatter Seeds of Kindness*.” He died in Brooklyn, N. Y., May 20, 1883.

The late Silas J. Vail, having composed this tune, brought it to Fanny Crosby, and requested her to write words for it. As he was playing it for her on the piano, she said: “That refrain says: ‘*Close to Thee; Close to Thee*.’” Mr. Vail agreed that that was true, and it was agreed that it should be a hymn entitled “*Close to Thee*.”

COME, YE DISCONSOLATE

Words by Thomas Moore
Music by Samuel Webbe

*“Come ye disconsolate! where’er ye languish,
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel.”*

Thomas Moore, of Dublin, the friend of Lord Byron, wrote some thirty-two songs, published in 1848, which have been united to popular airs of various nations.”*Come, Ye Disconsolate*” has ministered to the soothing of many a troubled heart, and often guided the weary soul to the mercy seat, where alone the accusing conscience may lay its guilty burden down and realize, “*Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.*”

FREE FROM THE LAW

Words by P. P. Bliss

Music by P. P. Bliss

*“Free from the law, oh, happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission.”*

“What shall I give my husband for a Christmas present?” asked Mrs. Bliss of a friend, just before Christmas, 1871, and at the suggestion of this friend, she purchased and presented Mr. Bliss with a bound volume of a monthly English periodical called “*Things New and Old.*” From reading in this book something in connection with Romans 8, and Hebrews 10, this glorious gospel song was suggested to him.

GUIDE ME, O THOU GREAT JEHOVAH

Words by W. Williams

Music by Wm. L. Viner

*“Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land.”*

Written by William Williams; the sweet singer, who was known as the “Watts of Wales.” It was first published in Welsh in 1745. Later it appeared in English under the title, “A favorite hymn of Lady Huntingdon’s young collegians.”

This hymn was one of the most popular in our collection, when Mr. Moody and I were holding meetings in Wales.

HEAR THE CALL

Words by W. F. Sherwin

Music by W. F. Sherwin

*“Lo! the day of God is breaking;
See the gleaming from afar!”*

Mr. Sherwin was of great assistance in our meetings in Boston in 1876. Early in his life Mr. Sherwin manifested decided musical abilities, but being a poor boy, he had to struggle hard to obtain the instruction he so much desired. However, at the age of fifteen he was the leader of a large chorus choir. At twenty-five he was well-known at New England musical conventions. He was brought up a Congregationalist, but while having charge of the music in a Baptist church in Albany, he adopted that denomination. He was an ardent Sunday-school worker, and had part in the preparation of many hymn and song books for use in Sunday-schools and in the temperance work. He was born in Buckland, Mass., March 14, 1826, and died at his home in Dorchester, Mass., April 14, 1888.

HOLD THOU MY HAND

Words by Grace J. Frances
Music by Hubert P. Main

*“Hold Thou my hand: so weak I am and helpless,
I dare not take one step without Thy aid.”*

Written by Grace J. Frances, which is a nom de plume of Fanny Crosby. Hubert P. Main wrote the music. It became a great favorite of Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, who asked permission to republish it in her collection of hymns.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY

Words by Reginald Heber, D.D.
Music by John B. Dykes

*“Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;”*

This majestic hymn was written by Bishop Heber, who was born in Cheshire, England, 1783, and educated at Oxford. He served in the church at Hodnet for about twenty years, when he was appointed Bishop of Calcutta, East India. He wrote fifty-seven hymns, which were published by his widow in 1842. Heber died 1826 in the prime of his life.

The tune “Nicaea” was composed by Dr. John Bacchus Dykes for this hymn, and is one of the best of his compositions. Nicaea was the place in Asia Minor where the first Ecumenical Council was held in the year 325, and it was there that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity was promulgated, declaring the eternal sonship of Christ, and his equality with the father.

Dr. Dykes was born at Kingston-upon-Hull, in 1823; and was a graduate of Cambridge. He wrote many excellent tunes, and did much to elevate the congregational psalmody of England. He died 1876.

I AM THINE, O LORD

Words by Fanny J. Crosby
Music by W. H. Doane

*“I am Thine, O Lord,
I have heard Thy voice.”*

This popular and useful consecration hymn was written by Fanny Crosby and set to music by W. H. Doane, and has been largely adopted by Christian Endeavor societies throughout this country and Great Britain.

Fanny Crosby was visiting Mr. W. H. Doane, in his home in Cincinnati, Ohio. They were talking together about the nearness of God, as the sun was setting and the evening shadows were gathering around them. The subject so impressed the well-known hymn-writer, that before retiring she had written the words to this hymn, which has become one of the most useful she has ever written. The music by Mr. Doane so well fitted the words that the hymn has become a special favorite wherever the Gospel Hymns are known.

I WILL SING OF MY REDEEMER

Words by P. P. Bliss
Music by James McGranahan

*“I will sing of my Redeemer,
And His wondrous love to me.”*

This beautiful hymn was written by P. P. Bliss and set to music by James McGranahan, and is one of his most famous compositions.

When Mr. Bliss so sadly met his death in the railroad disaster at Ashtabula, Ohio, December 29, 1876, Mr. McGranahan was selected to take his place as evangelistic singer in connection with Major Whittle, and much good was accomplished through their united efforts. He wrote much of the music in the Gospel Hymns, of which he was one of the joint compilers.

I WILL SING THE WONDROUS STORY

Words by F. W. Rawley
Music by Peter P. Bilborn

*"I will sing the wondrous story,
Of the Christ who died for me."*

The words of this hymn were written by F. H. Rawley, and the music by Peter Bilhorn, from whom I secured it in 1887 for use in *Gospel -Hymns* and *Sacred Songs and Solos*. The hymn commenced in its original form, "*Can't you sing the wondrous story,*" from which I changed it to "*I will sing.*"

It was greatly blessed in our meetings in Aberdeen, Glasgow, and other places in Great Britain, many persons testifying to having been benefited by its use.

IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY

Words by Sir John Bowring
Music by Ithamar Conkey

*"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time."*

Sir John Bowring, a native of Exeter, England, is the author of this strengthening hymn. He was nominally a Unitarian, but in fact he was a man who lived and died possessed of a clear, strong evangelical faith in the virtue of the blood of the atonement.

Before he was sixteen he had mastered five languages without the aid of a teacher. He was engaged in the woolen trade with his father, but early took to literary pursuits, and distinguished himself therein. He was twice elected to Parliament. In 1828 the University of Groningen conferred upon him the degree of LL. D. In 1845 he was appointed English consul at Canton, China, and he finally became Commander-in-Chief and Vice Admiral of Hong Kong. He was knighted by the Queen in 1854. He died in 1872, with peace in his heart and in the hope of the resurrection of the just. On his tombstone is inscribed, "*In the Cross of Christ I Glory.*"

Sir John Bowring was one of the most remarkable men of his day. He was born 1792, his father being a manufacturer of woolen goods for China and other distant countries. When only six years of age Sir John had mastered six languages, and before long he knew no less than thirteen. At the age of forty-three he was elected to the Parliament, and after filling many positions of honor, both home and abroad, he was knighted in 1854. He wrote many excellent hymns, besides volumes of political, economic and religious essays, which caused him to become a member of nearly every learned society in Europe. He lived to be over eighty years of age, and died in peace and joyful hope of the resurrection.

On his tombstone may be found the first line of this, his immortal hymn,

“In the cross of Christ I glory.”

The tune “*Rathbun*,” by Ithamar Conkey, of New York City, fits the words splendidly. Mr. Conkey was born 1815. He was a noted bass singer, and for a long time connected with the Calvary Church, New York. He died 1867.

JESUS SAVES

Words by Priscilla J. Owens Music by Wm. J. Kirkpatrick

*“We have heard the joyful sound;
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!”*

Mr. Kirkpatrick is a resident of Philadelphia, and was associated with John R. Sweeney in the publication of several hymn-books. He is the author of many popular hymns, “*Jesus saves*,” and “*Meekly wait and murmur not*,” perhaps being the best known of his compositions. Both of these hymns were extensively used in our meetings, and greatly blessed to many souls.

JEWELS

Words by W. O. Cushing
Music by G. F. Root

*“When he cometh, when he cometh,
To make up his jewels.”*

This hymn was written by W. O. Cushing and set to music by G. F. Root, and is one of the most popular children’s hymns in the world. He wrote many hymns for me, among the most popular of which may be mentioned, “*Hiding in Thee*” and “*There’ll be no Dark Valley*.”

William Orcott Cushing was born in Hingham, Mass., 1823, and was converted while yet a child. He entered the ministry, and continued therein for many years, until he partly lost the power of speech. This caused him to give up preaching, but the prayer which he made, “Lord still give me something to do for thee!” was wonderfully answered, and he was permitted to write hymns for children, many of which have been blessed to tens of thousands throughout the world, whom his voice as a preacher could never have reached.

“*Jewels*” takes rank with “*Come to the Saviour*” and “*I am so glad that Jesus loves me*,” two of the most popular children’s hymns in the world. Mr. Cushing died 1902.

A minister returning from Europe on an English steamer visited the steerage, and after some friendly talk, proposed a singing service – if something could be started that “everybody” knew – for there were hundreds of emigrants there from nearly every part of Europe.

“It’ll have to be an American tune, then,” said the steerage-master;”try ‘*His Jewels*.’”

The minister struck out at once with the melody and words

“When he cometh, when he cometh, “

And scores of the poor, half-fed multitude joined voices with him. Many probably recognized the music of the old glee, and some had heard the sweet air played in the church steeples at home.

Other voices chimed in, male and female, catching the air and sometimes the words – they were so easy and so many times repeated – and the volume of song increased, till the singing minister stood in the midst of an international concert, the most novel that he ever led. (*Theron Brown’s Story of the Hymns and Tunes*).

George Frederick Root, Doctor of Music, the author of the tune, was born in Sheffield, Mass., 1820, and died 1895.

KNOCKING, KNOCKING

Words by Mrs. Harriet Beecher
Stowe Music by George F. Root

*“Knocking, knocking, who is there?
Waiting, waiting, oh, how fair.”*

This hymn was written by Mrs. H. B. Stowe, the well-known author of “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.” Mrs. Stowe wrote several hymns, but this is perhaps the most popular. The tune was written by George F. Root.

MORE LOVE TO THEE, O CHRIST

Words by Mrs. Elizabeth Prentiss
Music by W. H. Doane

*“More love to Thee, O Christ!
More love to Thee.”*

This favorite hymn was written by Mrs. Elizabeth Payson Prentiss, who was born in Portland, Me., 1818, and in 1845 became the wife of George L. Prentiss, D. D., who afterward became Professor of Theology at the Union Seminary, New York City. The hymn was written in 1869, and first printed on a fly-sheet. It became a useful revival hymn in the years that followed. Mrs. Prentiss, who wrote many well-known poems, was an invalid the greater part of her life, and died in 1878. The music was composed by W. H.. Doane.

MY MOTHER'S PRAYER

Words by T. C. O'Kane

Music by T. C. O'Kane

*"As I wandered round the homestead,
Many a dear familiar spot."*

"*My Mother's Prayer*" was sung at nearly all our temperance meetings, both in England and America, and many souls were led to Christ by the tender memories awakened by this hymn. It was first published by Philip Phillips, in his book, "*Dew Drops*." A minister writes the following:

"What our mothers sang to us when they put us to sleep is singing yet. We may have forgotten the words; but they went into the fiber of our soul, and will forever be a part of it. It is not so much what you formally teach your children as what you sing to them.

A hymn has wings and can fly every whither. One hundred and fifty years after you are dead, and 'Old Mortality' has worn out his chisel in re-cutting your name on the tombstone, your great-grandchildren will be singing the song which this afternoon you sing to your little ones gathered about your knee.

There is a place in Switzerland where, if you distinctly utter your voice, there come back ten or fifteen echoes, and every Christian song sung by a mother in the ear of her child shall have ten thousand echoes coming back from all the gates of heaven. Oh, if mothers only knew the power of this sacred spell, how much oftener the little ones would be gathered, and all our homes would chime with the songs of Jesus!"

MY PRAYER

Music by P. P. Bliss

Words by P. P. Bliss

*"More holiness give me.
More strivings within."*

This hymn, perhaps one of the most beautiful of all his compositions, was written by Mr. Bliss, 1873, after he had given up his musical convention work entirely and entered fully upon his lifework for the Master. It seems that it was only after he had given up everything and committed himself and all his gifts to the Lord's service, that he was enabled to write such a hymn as this. Bliss called the hymn "*My Prayer*," but thousands in every Christian land have made it their prayer as well, and it will continue to voice a heartfelt want of millions in years to come.

The hymn was a special favorite with Mr. Moody, and was often quoted by him as a hymn that would live in the church of God, while the children of God continue to call upon his name in prayer.

Mr. Bliss was at the time of his death a member of the First Congregational Church of Chicago. The pastor, Dr. E. P. Goodwin, in an address on the death of Mr. and Mrs. Bliss, referred to the singing of this hymn as follows:

"On one of the last occasions when he was with us, on a flying visit to our city, made during his work as an evangelist, he came in late one evening and sat at the rear of the church. Espying him, I called him forward to sing the hymn, '*My Prayer*.' He struck the keys on the piano, stooped forward, and, reading the words in the latter part of the first verse, '*More joy in his service*,' said, I do not think I can sing that as a prayer any more; it seems to me that I have as much joy in serving the blessed Master as it is possible for me to bear.'"

NEAR THE CROSS

Words by Fanny J. Crosby
Music by W. H. Doane

*"Jesus, keep me near the Cross,
There a precious fountain."*

Like many other hymns by this author, the words were written to a tune already composed by Mr. Doane, and at his request. The words and tune are remarkably well adapted to each other, and the hymn will continue to be used long after many more pretentious ones have been forgotten.

NONE OF SELF AND ALL OF THEE

Words by Theo. Monad
Music by James McGranahan

*"Oh, the bitter pain and sorrow
That a time could ever be."*

The words of this excellent hymn were written by Theodore Monod, of Paris, in whose church we held meetings. Mr. Monod acted as interpreter for Mr. Moody. These meetings were well attended, and many professed conversion. As we left Paris Mr. Moody remarked that if he was a young man again he would give his life to France.

NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS

Words by Robert Lowry

Music by Robert Lowry

*“What can wash away my stain?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”*

This very simple hymn was first introduced at a camp meeting in Ocean Grove, N. J., where it immediately took possession of the people. It has been found very useful in inquiry and prayer-meetings.

O CHILD OF GOD

Words by Fanny J. Crosby

Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“O child of God, wait patiently
When dark thy path may be.”*

During the summer of 1886, Fanny Crosby was my guest at Northfield. One day I composed this tune, and said to her:

“Why not write a poem for this tune to-night?” The spirit of poetry did not seem to be upon her, and she answered:

“No, I cannot do it at present.”

The following day we went for a drive, and expected her to go with us, but to our astonishment, she asked to be excused, saying that she had something she wished to do. After we had gone, a number of students came in and had a pleasant chat with Fanny Crosby, and after they had gone she sat down at the piano and played my tune over, and the words of the hymn came to her as they now stand.

Upon our return she hastened to meet us, and recited the verses to me.

Fanny Crosby spent eight summers with us at Northfield, and on a recent visit here she told me that some of her happiest days were those at Northfield, and, referring to this hymn, she said she knew that she had been permitted to do a little good there. She also told me that she knew that many a poor soul had been comforted by this simple hymn.

O GOD, OUR HELP

Words by Isaac Watts
Music by H. W. Greatorex

*“O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come.”*

This is Watts’ version of the 90th Psalm. Its use has been universal, and is one of his best compositions. It has been translated into many languages. As written by Watts it began, “*Our God.*” This was changed by John Wesley to “*O God, our help,*” etc.

ONLY A BEAM OF SUNSHINE

Words by Fanny J. Crosby
Music by John R. Sweney

*“Only a beam of sunshine, but oh, it was warm and bright;
The heart of a weary trav’ler was cheered by its welcome sight”*

Fanny Crosby says:

“It was a cold, rainy day, and everything had gone wrong with me during the morning. I realized that the fault was mine; but that did not help the matter. About noon the sky began to clear; and a friend, standing near me said, ‘There is only a beam of sunshine, but oh, it is warm and bright;’ and on the impulse of the moment I wrote the hymn.”

ONLY REMEMBERED BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE

Words by Horatius Bonar
Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“Fading away like the stars of the morning,
Losing their light in the glorious sun.”*

Dr. Horatius Bonar, of Edinburgh, wrote the words of this hymn, which I set to music in 1891. I sang it as a solo in the Tabernacle in London at the funeral of my friend, C. H. Spurgeon, the great London preacher.

PRECIOUS PROMISE GOD HAS GIVEN

Words by Nathaniel Niles

Music by P. P. Bliss

*“Precious promise God hath given
To the weary passer by.”*

This well-known hymn was written by Mr. Nathaniel Niles, a resident of Morristown, N. J., and, at that time a lawyer in New York City. He was born at South Kingston, R. I., 1835. The verses were composed on the margin of a newspaper in the railway car one morning while on his way to business. The tune was written by P. P. Bliss, and published in his *Gospel Songs* in 1874, and later furnished by him for *Gospel Hymns*. I soon afterward published it in *Sacred Songs and Solos*, in England, where it became one of the most useful hymns in connection with our meetings.

Mr. Moody often requested it to be sung in connection with his lectures on “The Precious Promises.”

SAVIOUR LIKE A SHEPHERD LEAD US

Words by Dorothy A. Thrupp

Music by Wm. B. Bradbury

*“Saviour, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tend’rest care.”*

This beautiful little hymn is supposed to have been written by Miss Dorothy A. Thrupp, and first published in Miss Thrupp’s *Hymns for the Young*, in 1836. The music by which it is now so well known, both in America and Great Britain, was written by William Bradbury. It was much used in our meetings as a congregational hymn in connection with the subject of the Good Shepherd.

SAVIOUR! VISIT THY PLANTATION

Words by John Newton

Music (Rathbun) by Ithamar Conkey

*“Saviour! Visit Thy plantation;
Grant us, Lord, a gracious rain.”*

In his youth Mr. Newton was employed in planting lime and lemon trees on a plantation in Africa. One day his master sneeringly said to him: “Who knows but by the time these trees grow up and bear, you may go home to England, obtain the command of a ship, and return to reap the fruit of your labors?”

John Newton really did return, in command of a ship, and with some hope of heaven in his heart, and saw the trees he had planted grown up and bearing fruit.

At the age of eleven he went to sea with his father. He drifted away from his pious mother’s teachings and grew into an abandoned and Godless sailor. He was flogged as a deserter from the navy, and for fifteen months he lived, half-starved and ill-treated, on the above mentioned plantation, under a slave-dealer.

His Christian belief matured while in command of a slave-ship. He soon became an ardent worker for Christ.

In 1805, when no longer able to read his text, his reply when pressed to discontinue preaching, was: “What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?” He was a lifelong friend of the great hymn-writer, William Cowper, and himself wrote a large number of hymns.

“Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation” is usually sung to the tune “Rathbun,” written by Ithamar Conkey.

SUN OF MY SOUL

Words by John Keble
Music by Peter Ritter, 1798

*“Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near.”*

This is taken from Mr. John Keble’s evening hymn, which originally consisted of fourteen verses and was published in “*The Christian Year*” in 1827.

It was based upon the words found in Luke 24: 29, “**Abide with us; for it is toward evening and the day is far spent.**” Keble was born in Gloucestershire, 1792, and died in 1866. The old English tune to which the hymn is sung was written in 1798.

SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER

Words by W. W. Walford
Music by Wm. B. Bradbury

*“Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care.”*

This most useful hymn was set to music by William Batchelder Bradbury. He was born in October 6, 1816, and died in New Jersey, January 7, 1868. He published a large number of Sunday-school hymnbooks, which had a very large circulation in the United States.

When quite a young man, I attended a musical convention conducted by Mr. Bradbury in the State of Ohio, and there received my first impressions as to the power of sacred song.

TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

Words by W. D. Longstaff
Music by Geo. C. Stebbins

*“Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with thy Lord.”*

Mr. Longstaff, of Sunderland, England, wrote this hymn after hearing a sermon at New Brighton on “**Be ye holy as I am holy.**” “*Take Time to be Holy*” was first published in *Gospel Hymns* and *Sacred Songs and Solos*, in 1891. It has been much used in holiness-meetings, both in this country and Great Britain. Mr. Longstaff was the treasurer of Bethesda Chapel, in Sunderland, when we held our first meetings in that town, and was the first one to write anything in relation to our meetings in Great Britain.

TEN THOUSAND TIMES TEN THOUSAND

Words by Henry Alford. D.D.
Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“Ten thousand times ten thousand, in sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints, throng up the steeps of light.”*

This is considered the best of Dean Alford’s hymns. It was written in 1866 and published in the “*Year of Praise*” in 1867. Beside the open grave of the author, January 17, 1871, the hymn was sung with intense emotion by his sorrowing friends.

THE ANCHORED SOUL

Words by W. O. Cushing
Music by Robert Lowry

The words of this hymn were written by W. O. Cushing, and the music by Robert Lowry. It has become very popular among sailors and seafaring men.

THE EYE OF FAITH

Words by J. J. Maxfield
Music by W. A. Ogden

*“I do not ask for earthly store
Beyond a day’s supply.”*

This was a favorite hymn of Mr. Moody during our last campaign in Scotland.

As we went from place to place the choirs which had sung at our meetings would often gather at the stations and sing this and other hymns at our parting.

THE HALF WAS NEVER TOLD

Words by P. P. Bliss
Music by P. P. Bliss

*“Repeat the story o’er and o’er,
Of grace, so fun and free.”*

This was suggested to Mr. Bliss by his reading notes, written by his friend and sometime fellow laborer in gospel work, James M. Brookes, of St. Louis, upon the Queen of Sheba’s visit to King Solomon. This was one of my most popular solos.

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Words and Music by Knowles Shaw
Arr. by Ira D. Sankey

*“At the feast of Belshazzar and a thousand of his lords,
While they drank from golden vessels, as the Book of Truth records.”*

This hymn was written by Knowles Shaw on the experience of King Belshazzar of Babylon. I arranged it to music from a tune written by the author of the words, and frequently sang it as a solo.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IS JESUS

Words by P. P. Bliss

Music by P. P. Bliss

*“The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,
The light of the world is Jesus.”*

Both the words and music of this hymn were written by P. P. Bliss in the summer of 1875, at his home in Chicago. It came to him altogether, words and music, one morning while passing through the hall to his room, and was at once written down.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY

Words by C. W. Fry

Arr. by Ira D. Sankey

*“I’ve found a friend in Jesus,
He’s everything to me.”*

A young Jewess had been converted in London through her German governess. She had been forbidden to read the New Testament by her parents, who were ardent Jews, but while reading Isaiah 53 she found the Messiah, and was soon expelled from her home. She then went to Germany, and herself acted as governess for several years. When she heard of Mr. Moody’s work at Northfield, she decided to go there. Having been entertained in London for a few weeks by Mr. Denny, a prominent layman, this gentleman asked me one day in London, as he was about to sail for America, if I would see her safely across the ocean, which I promised to do. In Louisville she first saw Mr. Moody. On leaving Louisville she went to New York and applied to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions for appointment as a foreign missionary. There being some delay in accepting her application, she decided to go with Hudson Taylor, whom she had met at Northfield. On arriving in China she adopted the garb of the Chinese women, and became a faithful and useful worker. After two years she was married to a missionary from Scotland. They are still engaged in missionary work in Northern China.

* * *

“Auntie, please sing ‘Lily of the Valley,’ said a little girl of six, as she stood by the piano in company with a number of other children on a Sunday evening. In a few minutes all present were singing:

*“I’ve found a friend in Jesus, He’s everything to me;
He’s the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;”*

And the little one, who knew only the chorus, joined in heartily with the rest, her clear voice ringing out sweetly amid those of the older children. When her auntie would play on the piano she would always run to her and beg for one or another of her favorite hymns, but her favorite was, “*Lily of the Valley*,” and she never tired of hearing it.

The following winter was a very severe one, and this little girl was stricken with diphtheria. Nothing would soothe her but to have her mother sing to her. Over and over again the mother would sing all the songs she knew, but specially “*The Lily of the Valley*.”

One morning, soon after dawn, the child seemed to be a little brighter, and tried to raise her hand, as though she wished to speak. Tenderly the mother asked what she wanted and the girl whispered, “Sing ‘*The Lily of the Valley*’ once more.”

With tears streaming down her cheeks the mother attempted to sing the first verse and the chorus. A smile broke over the little one’s face, and as her head dropped back on the pillow her spirit went out into the bosom of Him, who is indeed the “*Lily of the Valley, and the fairest of ten thousand*.”

Bitter indeed were their tears when they realized that their darling was no more, but their sorrow was lightened by the knowledge that she was free from pain, and they will always treasure with her memory the hymn she loved so well.

* * *

Mr. Fry is one of the leaders of the Salvation Army in London. In addition to writing the words, he also set the hymn to music, and later arranged it to slower time and published it in *Gospel Hymns*.

THE MORNING LAND

Words by Ellen K. Bradford
Music by E. H. Phelps (Arr. by Ira D. Sankey)

*“Some day,’ we say, and turn our eyes
Toward the fair hills of Paradise.”*

This hymn was written by the author of the music of, “Over the Line,” and first published in sheet form in England, where I found it, and by permission of the publishers arranged it for use in the “*Sacred Songs and Solos*” and “*Gospel Hymns*.”

It has been sung as a duet at funerals all over the world.

THE WONDROUS CROSS

Words by Isaac Watts
Arr. Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died.”*

This beautiful hymn was founded on Paul’s word in Galatians 6:14, “**God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.**”

The author occupies one of the highest positions among all the hymn writers who ever lived. Wesley and Watts stand on the highest pedestal of fame together. Watts was the son of a schoolmaster, and was born at Southampton, 1674. He belonged to a family of nonconformists, who were very pious and godly people. He was educated by a clergyman in his home city, and later by an Independent minister in London.

He became minister to an Independent congregation in London, where he continued to preach for fourteen years. In the year 1712 he paid a visit to some friends in Hertfordshire, for the purpose of regaining his health, which, on account of excessive study, had suffered.

While here. Sir Thomas and Lady Abney became so interested in him and took such a liking to him that they insisted upon his staying with them in their beautiful home. He accepted their kind offer, and for thirty-six years he lived in their house, being a constant source of joy and blessing to his benefactors. It was here he wrote many of the most useful and popular hymns now used by the Christian churches throughout the world. He died 1748. Just before passing away he said:

“If God has no more service for me to do through grace, I am ready; it is a great mercy to me that I have no manner of fear or dread of death. I could, if God please, lay my head back and die without alarm this afternoon or night. My chief supports are from my view of eternal things, and my sins are pardoned through the blood of Jesus Christ.”

In this happy frame of mind the great hymnist entered into his last rest. At least a score of different melodies have been written to the words, but Lowell Mason’s “*Hamburg*” is no doubt the most popular.

'TIS MIDNIGHT

Words by Wm. B. Tappan

Music by Virgil C. Taylor

*“’Tis midnight; and on Olive’s brow
The star is dimm’d ‘that lately shone.”*

The author of the words of this hymn, William Bingham Tappan, was born at Beverly, Mass., October 29, 1794. He was a Congregational minister and was engaged for many years in the service of the American Sunday-school Union.

The hymn was first published in the author’s *“Gems of Sacred Poetry,”* in 1822, under the title, *“Gethsemane.”* Mr. Tappan died in his native state in 1849.

TILL HE COME

Words by E. H. Bickersteth

Music by Dr. Lowell Mason

*“‘Till He come! Oh, let the word
Linger on the trembling chords.”*

The author, E. H. Bickersteth, says this hymn was written to present one aspect of the Lord’s Supper which is passed over in many hymnals, **“Ye do show forth the Lord’s death till He come.”**

WE SHALL MEET BY AND BY

Words by J. Atkinson

Music by Hubert P. Main

*“We shall meet beyond the river, by and by, by and by;
And the darkness shall be over, by and by, by and by.”*

John Atkinson, D. D., a Methodist minister, wrote this hymn on the death of his mother, in 1867.

This is another instance of a hymn being written out of a deep and special heart-felt experience, and like gold, the best comes from the greatest depth.

WE SHALL SLEEP, BUT NOT FOREVER

Words by Mrs. M. A. Kidder

Music by S. J. Vall

*“We shall sleep, but not forever,
There will be a glorious dawn.”*

Mrs. Kidder is believed to be the author of about one thousand hymns, some of which have become very popular. I set a number of her pieces to music. This hymn and, *“Is my name written there?”* are perhaps her most widely known compositions. She died in Chelsea, Mass., November 25, 1905, in her eighty-sixth year.

WHILE THE DAYS ARE GOING BY

Words by George Cooper

Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“There are lonely hearts to cherish,
While the days are going by.”*

This, one of the most popular hymns to which I have set music, was written by George Cooper. I found it as a poem in a periodical in 1881, and immediately wrote the chorus and composed the tune. It has been much used and greatly blessed in Gospel meetings.

WORK, FOR THE NIGHT IS COMING

Words by A. L. Walker

Music by Dr. Lowell Mason

*“Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours.”*

This splendid work-hymn was written by Anna L. Walker, a resident of Canada, and first published in her *“Poems,”* in 1868. It was suggested to her by the words of Jesus: *“The night cometh, when no man can work.”* The music was written by Dr. Lowell Mason. It was often used in our meetings both in Great Britain and America.

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