

WHEN SANKEY SANG "THE SHEPHERD SONG."

The memory of Moody and Sankey is still fragrant. Dwight L. Moody was a man to whom God had given wonderful power and ability to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Ira D. Sankey was another man to whom God had given wonderful power to sing the same gospel. For years these two men worked together, Moody preaching and Sankey singing. In the year 1875 they had both been at Liverpool, serving their Master in that great city. Toward the end of the year they returned to America.

It happened that on Christmas Eve of this year, 1875, Mr. Sankey was traveling by steamboat up the Delaware River. It was a calm, starlight evening, and there were many passengers gathered on the deck. Mr. Sankey was asked to sing, and, as always, he was perfectly willing to do so. He stood there leaning against one of the great funnels of the boat and his eyes were raised to the starry heavens in quiet prayer. It was his intention to sing a Christmas song, but somehow he was driven almost against his will to sing the "Shepherd's Song":

"Saviour, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

"We are Thine, do Thou befriend us,
Be the guardian of our way;
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us,
Seek us when we go astray:
Blessed Jesus,
Hear, oh, hear us when we pray.

"Thou hast promised to receive us,
Poor and sinful though we be;
Thou hast mercy to relieve us,
Grace to cleanse, and power to free:
Blessed Jesus,
We will early turn to Thee.

"Early let us seek Thy favor,
Early let us do Thy will;
Blessed Lord and only Saviour,
With Thy love our bosoms fill:
Blessed Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still."

There was a deep silence. Words and melody, welling forth from the singer's soul, floated out over the deck and the quiet river. Every heart was touched. After the song was ended, a man with a rough, weather-beaten face came up to Mr. Sankey and said:

"Did you ever serve in the Union Army?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Sankey, "in the spring of 1860."

"So did I," said the stranger, "but I was serving in the Confederate army. When I saw you standing at your post I thought to myself: 'That fellow will never get away from here alive.' I raised my musket and took aim. I was standing in the shadow completely concealed, while the full light of the moon was falling upon you. At that instant, just as a moment ago, you raised your eyes to heaven and began to sing. Music, especially song, has always had a wonderful power over me, and I took my finger off the trigger.

"Let him sing his song to the end," I said to myself, "I can shoot him afterwards. He's

my victim at all events, and my bullet can not miss him."

"But the song you sang then was the song you sang just now. I heard the words perfectly:

"We are Thine, do Thou befriend us,
Be the guardian of our way."

"Those words stirred up many memories in my heart. I began to think of my childhood and my God-fearing mother. She had many, many times sung that song to me. But she died all too soon, otherwise much in my life would no doubt have been different.

"When you had finished your song it was impossible for me to take aim at you again. I thought: 'The Lord who is able to save that man from certain death must surely be great and mighty'—and my arm of its own accord dropped limp at my side.

"Since that time I have wandered about far and wide; but when I just now saw you standing there praying just as on that other occasion I recognized you. Then my heart was wounded by your song; now I wish that you may help me find a cure for my sick soul."

Deeply moved, Mr. Sankey threw his arms about the man who in the days of the war had been his enemy. And that Christmas night the two went together to the manger in Bethlehem. There the stranger found Him who was their Saviour the Good Shepherd, who seeks for the lost sheep until He finds it. And when He has found it, He lays it on His shoulders, rejoicing.—The Christian Herald.

HEART KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Some years ago at a drawing-room function one of England's leading actors was asked to recite for the pleasure of his fellow guests. He consented, and asked if there was anything special that his audience would like to hear.

After a moment's pause, an old clergyman present said: "Could you, sir, recite to us the Twenty-third Psalm?"

A strange look passed over the actor's face; he paused for a moment and then said: "I can, and I will, upon one condition; and that is that after I have recited it, you, my friend, will do the same."

"I?" said the clergyman, in surprise. "But I am not an elocutionist. However, if you wish it, I will do so."

Impressively the great actor began the psalm. His voice and his intonation were perfect. He held his audience spellbound; and, as he finished, a great burst of applause broke from the guests.

Then, as it died away, the old clergyman arose and began the psalm. His voice was not remarkable; his intonation was not faultless. When he had finished, no sound of applause broke the silence—but there was not a dry eye in the room, and many heads were bowed.

Then the actor rose to his feet again. His voice shook as he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the old clergyman and said: "I reached your eyes and ears, my friends; he reached your hearts. The difference is just this—I know the Twenty-third Psalm, but he knows the Shepherd."—The War Cry.

Strauss, the German skeptic, once said of Christ, "He is the highest model of religion within the reach of our thoughts; and no perfect piety is possible, without His presence in the heart."—Free Methodist.

"Blessed are the pure in heart."

TRY THIS!

By Rev. Charles V. Fairbairn

"The devil never takes a vacation, and why should a minister?" That's what I used to say when I was young and ignorant—still ignorant enough, for that matter. However, I forgot that the enemy is not lugging around one hundred and forty-nine pounds of body with tissues that wear out, nerves that get to jangling, and a frame that finally yields to the assault of death. Were we humans purely spirit, too, neither would we ever tire, wear out, or fade away. But we are not that as yet.

Experience has taught me that professional men, lawyers, doctors, teachers, ministers—men whose body houses a busy mind and a restless spirit, who want to be, and go, and do—can do more work in eleven months' toil with one month off for recreating natural supplies and restoring depleted energies than in twelve months of steady plugging away, plugging away, plugging away. How happy for the disciples that Jesus knew when to draw them away from the following crowd to the sparsely populated spots! Prayer, meditation, quiet, rest—rest without disturbance, and that change which is as good as a rest—are absolutely indispensable to those who would do the finest kind of work, see the most possible accomplished.

Societies, boards, pilgrims, think this over. Give your preacher a vacation period this summer of not less than two whole weeks with salary continued. Come on, now. Think this over. Give him a rest. See him come back a new man. Note his new vigor. Yes, it will help him keep better blessed and do better work. The thought involved is well-tested, thoroughly proven, physical, psychological, spiritual truth. Try it.

Trouble may demolish a man's business but build up his character.

THE GREAT DISCOVERY

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage in the third century of the Christian era, is the author of the following confession of faith, which sounds as though it might have been spoken in testimony in a holiness meeting. Writing to a friend he said:

"It is a bad world, Donatus, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any of the pleasures of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are Christians—and I am one of them."—Selected.

PLENTY OF SPACE

A Christian traveler was packing his suitcase when about to go on a journey, when he remarked to his friend, "There is still a little corner left open in which I desire to pack a guide Book, a Lamp, a Mirror, a Telescope, a Book of poems, a number of Biographies, a bundle of old Letters, a hymn Book, a sharp Sword, a small Library containing thirty volumes—and all these articles must occupy a small space about two by three inches."

"How are you going to manage that?" queried the friend.

"Very easily, for the Bible contains all of these."—Heart and Life.