

# STORY OF GOSPEL HYMNS

Sankey's Collection of Sacred Songs and Solos

by

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## CHAPTER SIX

~ R ~

### RESCUE THE PERISHING

Words by Fanny J. Crosby

Music by W. H. Doane

*“Rescue the perishing,  
Care for the dying.”*

On a stormy night a middle-aged man staggered into the Bowery Mission. He was intoxicated, his face unwashed and unshaven, and his clothes soiled and torn. He sank into a seat, and, gazing around, seemed to wonder what kind of a place he had come into. “*Rescue the perishing*” and other gospel hymns were sung and seemed to interest him, and to recall some memory of his youth long since forgotten.

As the leader of the meeting told the simple story of the Gospel, and how the Lord had come to seek and save sinners, the man listened eagerly. The leader in his younger days had been a soldier and had seen hard and active service. In the course of his remarks he mentioned several incidents which had occurred in his experience during the war, and he gave the name of the company in which he served. At the close of the meeting the man eagerly staggered up to the leader and in a broken voice said:

“When were you in that company you spoke of?”

“Why, all through the war,” said the leader.

“Do you remember the battle of –?”

“Perfectly.”

“Do you remember the name of the captain of your company at that time.”

“Yes, his name was –.”

“You are right! I am that man. I was your captain. Look at me to-day, and see what a wreck I am. Can you save your old captain? I have lost everything I had in the world through drink, and I don’t know where to go.”

He was saved that night, and was soon helped by some of his former friends to get back his old position. He often told the story of how a soldier saved his captain, and how much he loved the words of “*Rescue the perishing.*”

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A man in Sussex, England, gives this testimony:

“I believe I can attribute my conversion, through the grace of God, to one verse of that precious hymn, ‘*Rescue the perishing.*’ I was far away from my Saviour, and living without a hope in Jesus. I was very fond of singing hymns, and one day I came across this beautiful piece, and when I had sung the words,

‘Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,  
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more,’

I fell upon my knees and gave my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. From that hour I have followed him who, through this verse, touched my heart and made it vibrate with his praises ever since.”

\* \* \*

Fanny Crosby returned, one day, from a visit to a mission in one of the worst districts in New York City, where she had heard about the needs of the lost and perishing. Her sympathies were aroused to help the lowly and neglected, and the cry of her heart went forth in this hymn, which has become a battle-cry for the great army of Christian workers throughout the world. It has been used very extensively in temperance work, and has been blessed to thousands of souls.

Mr. Moody was very fond of it, and has borne testimony to its power to reach the hearts of wanderers. It was also a favorite of the two great temperance workers, Frances E. Willard and Francis Murphy.

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## **REST FOR THE WEARY**

Words by S. Y. Harmer  
Music by William McDonald

“In the Christian’s home in glory,  
There remains a land of rest;”

A fifteen-year-old girl, of good family, was present at one of our meetings in the Free College Church of Glasgow, in 1874, and at the close of the meeting remained among the inquirers at the College Hall. Here she was spoken to by a lady, and was led to Christ.

Going home, she told her mother that she was now happy in the Lord.

That very night she was taken sick, symptoms of scarlet fever appearing. Prayer was offered for her at the daily prayer-meetings. Perhaps most of her friends thought that the Lord would answer their supplications by restoring her to health; but he had a purpose of another kind. He meant to take her away to himself, and to teach others by her removal.

When it was evident that she was dying she told her father that she was going home to Christ. Near the end, he tried to sing with her "*In the Christian's home in glory.*" She caught up the words,

*"There my Saviour's gone before me,  
To fulfill my soul's request."*

And faithfully repeated them until her voice died away; those were the last words she was heard to utter. Before this she had sent a message of thanks to Mr. Moody and myself, and to the lady who had led her to Christ.

"Ah," said Mr. Moody, in telling of this, "would not anyone have regretted missing the opportunity of helping this soul, who has sent back her thanks from the very portals of glory?"

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### RING THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

Words by William O. Cushing

Music by George F. Root

*"Ring the bells of heaven! there is joy to-day  
For a soul, returning from the wild."*

"*'Ring the bells of heaven'* was written," says the author, "to fit a beautiful tune sent me by George F. Root, entitled, '*The little Octoroon.*' After receiving it, the melody ran in my head all day long, chiming and flowing in its sweet musical cadence. I wished greatly that I might secure the tune for work in the Sunday-school and for other Christian purposes. When I heard the bells of heaven ringing over some sinner that had returned, it seemed like a glad day in heaven.

Then the words '*Ring the bells of heaven,*' at once flowed down into the waiting melody. It was a beautiful and blessed experience, and the bells seem ringing yet."

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A little girl in England, who was much beloved by her parents, was dying. She had been very fond of our hymns and would often speak of how much she loved them. A few days before she died she said to her mother:

“When I am gone, mother, will you ask the girls of the school to sing that hymn,

*‘Ring the bells of heaven! There is joy to-day,  
For a soul returning from the wild;  
See! The Father meets him out upon the way,  
Welcoming His weary, wandering child!  
Glory! Glory! How the angels sing!  
Glory! Glory! How the loud harps ring!’”*

Half an hour before her departure she exclaimed: “Oh, mother, listen to the bells of heaven! They are ringing so beautifully!”

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## ROCK OF AGES

Words by A. M. Toplady

Music by Dr. Thomas Hastings

*“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”*

In the year 1756 a young man of sixteen, while visiting with his mother in Ireland, attended an evangelistic meeting held in a barn at the little village of Codrington. At this meeting the young man was converted. He was none other than Augustus Montague Toplady, who afterwards wrote this famous hymn.

Of his conversion the author says: “Strange. that I, who had so long sat under the means in England, should be brought right unto God in an obscure part of Ireland, midst a handful of people met together in a barn, and by the ministry of one who could hardly spell his own name. Surely it was the Lord’s doing, and is marvelous.”

At the age of twenty-two Toplady received orders in the Church of England. He was a strong Calvinist, and the author of many popular hymns. He died in 1778.

“*Rock of Ages*” was first published in 1776, in “*The Gospel Magazine*,” of which he was the editor. The hymn has been more or less altered and rearranged several times since then, but the sentiment remains the same.

It was to this hymn that the beloved Prince Consort, Albert of England, turned, repeating it constantly upon his deathbed. “For,” said he, “if in this hour I had only my worldly honors and dignities to depend upon, I should be poor indeed.”

Mrs. L. S. Bainbridge, who, with her husband, visited China for the purpose of studying Christian missions, tells the following incident:

“The Chinese women, it seems, are so anxious to ‘make merit’ for themselves; that they will perform any labor to escape the painful transmigrations of the next life.

“They dread to be born again as dogs or cats, and the highest hope possessed by them is to be reborn as men. In order to secure this they do any and every meritorious act. One woman had excavated with her poor, weak hands a well twenty feet deep, and it was only after this achievement that she learned of the free Gospel of salvation. She was now a woman of eighty, and, stretching out her aged and crippled fingers, we sang together,

*“Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling.”*

Years ago, when a ship sank in the Bay of Biscay, a man who was saved was asked what the passengers were doing when the ship went down. He said that the last he heard was “*Rock of Ages*,” sung by all who could join in it.

Several tunes have been written for this hymn. The most popular one; however, being the tune by Dr. Thomas Hastings who was born at Washington, Connecticut, in 1784 and who died in New York in 1872. He wrote many hymns and published several hymnbooks. I have in my possession a large number of hymns set to music by Mr. Hastings which have never been published.

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### **SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS**

Words by Fanny J. Crosby

Music by W. H. Doane

*“Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on His gentle breast.”*

Mr. Doane came into a room in New York, once, where Fanny Crosby was talking with Mr. Bradbury, the father of Sunday-school music, and said to her: “Fanny, I have written a tune and I want you to write words for it.”

“Let me hear how the tune goes,” she replied. After Mr. Doane had played it over for her on a small organ, she at once exclaimed: “Why, that tune says, ‘*Safe in the arms of Jesus*,’ and I will see what I can do about it.”

She at once retired to an adjoining room, where she spent half an hour alone. On returning she quoted to Mr. Doane the words of this now immortal hymn. It was first published in the book entitled “*Songs of Devotion*.”

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A party of steerage passengers were gathered one foggy day below decks on an Allan liner near the entrance of the Belle Isle Straits. They were cold and cheerless and weary of the voyage, though only two days out, and a lady had come down to talk and sing to them.

The subject was "Stepping over the line," and the song was "*Safe in the arms of Jesus.*" She told the story of a young sailor, who was summoned to his mother's death-bed.

"Willie," said the mother, looking up at him with tearful eyes, "sing to me once more '*Safe in the arms of Jesus.*'"

"Mother," he replied, "I can't sing that song. It would be a lie; I am not safe, and I can't sing a lie."

The speaker said that she thanked God that the young sailor afterward stepped over the line and was safe. After the story was told and a hymn sung, a man suddenly left his place among the listeners. The lady was troubled. Had she offended him or was his conscience stricken?

She watched for him day after day, but a storm succeeded the fog, and it was not until the last day of the voyage that she saw him again. Then, while the vessel was moored in Moville Harbor, and all was bustle on deck, the tall Scotchman sought her, saying:

"Oh, I am so glad that I have found you again! I could not leave without thanking you for those words you sang, '*Safe in the arms of Jesus.*' I felt that I could not sing that hymn, as I was not safe. I have been to church all my life, and have taken the sacrament; but I was not safe, and I could not sing it. Then came the storm and I was miserable, for I thought we might go to the bottom and I should be lost."

"And what did you do then?" asked the lady.

"Why, I remembered how you said that we might trust the Lord Jesus to save us now – and I did trust him right there in my berth. I stepped over the line, and now I can praise him, for I am safe in his arms, and I wish to live to his glory."

\* \* \*

Two little girls were playing in a corner of the nursery with their dolls, and singing as they played, "*Safe in the arms of Jesus, safe on his gentle breast.*"

Their mother was writing, only stopping now and then to listen to the little ones' talk, unobserved by them.

"Sister, how do you know that you are safe?" asked Nellie, the youngest.

“Because I am holding Jesus with both my hands tight!” was the reply.

“Ah, that is not safe,” said Nellie.” Suppose Satan came along and cut your two hands off!”

The sister looked much troubled for a few moments, dropped her doll and thought deeply. Suddenly her face shone with joy, and she cried out, “Oh! I forgot! I forgot! Jesus is holding me with his two hands, and Satan can’t cut his hands off; so I am safe!”

\* \* \*

A party of friends, traveling in the Alps, commenced to sing the first verse of this hymn, when, much to their surprise, they heard the second verse taken up on another mountain peak, as a response; and though the two parties of tourists could not see each other, they sang the alternate verses and passed on their way.

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A gentleman of London writes me as follows:

“My dear little girl Mary, aged six, greatly loved the hymn, ‘*Safe in the arms of Jesus,*’ and, having learned the tune, was continually singing it. One day, having a longing, wistful look in her eyes after singing it, I said to her: ‘What are you thinking of, darling?’

“She answered: ‘I do want to go and be with Jesus.’

“I asked her what I should do without her, she being my only little girl.

“She sighed and said: ‘Very well, then I won’t go just yet, though I should like to.’

“A few weeks after this, she was seized with scarlet fever of a very malignant type. She was buried in six days. The morning she was taken ill she said to her little brother, who was ill in the same room:

“‘Look here, Willie, I can find my own hymn myself now, “*safe in the arms of Jesus.*”’

She showed it to Willie, who asked if they should sing it. ‘No,’ she said, ‘I can’t sing with my head this way.’ She then became delirious and never spoke rationally again. She soon took her flight to the arms of Jesus, where she had so longed to be.”

\* \* \*

At the close of one of our meetings in the Circus in Glasgow a woman came to me when I was seated with an inquirer. After waiting until I was at liberty, she said:

“Mr. Sankey, I want to tell you something about my daughter Maggie.

“She was converted when you were here eight years ago, but has now gone home to heaven, and I want to tell you what she said when she was dying. She asked me to get her little hymn book, and when I brought it she asked me to turn to No. 25, saying, ‘I want to sing it.’

“‘Why, my child,’ said I, ‘you are not able to sing.’

“‘Yes,’ she said, ‘I want to sing one more song before I go; will you please turn to the twenty-fifth hymn, “*Safe in the arms of Jesus.*”

“I found it for her and she began to sing at these lines,

*‘Hark! ‘tis the voice of angels;  
Borne in a song to me,  
Over the fields of glory,  
Over the jasper sea.’*

“Her voice then seemed to fail her, and she said: ‘Mother, lift me up.’

I put my arms under her and lifted my poor girl up, and then she raised her eyes to heaven and said: ‘*Jesus, I am coming; Jesus, I am coming.*’ The doctor, who was standing by her side, said: ‘How can you sing when you are so weak?’

“She replied: ‘Jesus helps me to sing; Jesus helps me to sing.’ And with those words upon her lips, she died in my arms.”

“The mother said that she took the little hymn-book and laid it upon the girl’s breast; it was buried with her.

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Once when laboring in London I went to Basel, Switzerland, for a few days’ rest. The evening I got there I heard under my window the most beautiful volume of song. I looked out and saw about fifty people, who were singing “*Safe in the: arms of Jesus, safe on his gentle breast*” in their own language, but I recognized the tune. I spoke to them through an interpreter. The next evening I held a song service in an old French church in that city. The church was packed with people, and many stood outside on the street.

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Dr. John Hall, of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, in New York, said of this hymn, in a great Sunday-school convention in Brooklyn, that it gave more peace and satisfaction to mothers who had lost their children than any other hymn he had ever known. It has become very famous throughout the world, and was one of the first American hymns to be translated into foreign languages.

\* \* \*



Fanny Crosby is one of the most celebrated of hymn-writers, and has written more than five thousand hymns, many of which have become very widely known. She was born in 1820, and lost her eyesight when six months old, through the ignorant application of a hot poultice to her eyes. In 1835 she entered the New York Institution for the Blind, where she was graduated in 1842. She was a teacher at this institution from 1847 to 1858, when she was married to Mr. Alexander Van Alstyne, who also was blind. Mrs. Van Alstyne has written her hymns under her maiden name.

Dr. George Duffield, just before his death, said of her work: "I rather think her talent will stand beside that of Watts and Wesley, especially if we take into consideration the number of hymns she has written." At her present age of eighty-five she is still active, and she is always happy.

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### **Saved by Grace**

Words by Fanny J. Crosby  
Music by George C. Stebbins

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

In 1894 Mr. Moody and I were holding meetings in England. It was decided between us that Mr. Moody should remain in England while I returned to America to assist Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, in conducting the Summer Conference in Northfield. I was entertaining Fanny Crosby in my summer home there.

One evening I asked the popular hymn-writer if she would make a short address to her many friends gathered at the convention. She at first declined, but on further persuasion she consented to speak for a few moments. I led her forward to the desk on which lay the Bible and, standing there; she spoke beautifully for a short time. Closing her remarks, she recited a hymn never before heard in public, entitled "*Saved by Grace.*"

I afterward learned that my friend, L. H. Biglow – after attending a prayer-meeting conducted by the late Dr. Howard Crosby, where the subject was "Grace" – had asked Fanny Crosby to write a hymn on that subject. She immediately retired to an adjoining room, and in the course of an hour returned with the words, "*Some day the silver cord will break, and I no more as now shall sing.*"

Mr. Biglow secured the words from her, and put them in the safe among other hymns which she had written; but the song was evidently forgotten until recited by its author at Northfield.

A reporter of a London paper who was present at Northfield took her address, and also the hymn, which he carried back to England and published in his paper, thus sending it around the world. Four or five weeks later I found it in a copy of his paper. Cutting it out, I handed it to George C. Stebbins, asking him to set it to music.

During the following years the song became one of Mr. Moody's favorites, and is now sung by hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world.

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A newspaper of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, recently gave this incident in startling headlines:

"The congregation of Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, Union Avenue, Allegheny, Robert Meech, rector, was startled yesterday morning, by a sensational supplement to the morning service.

"The church was well filled and devout worshipers responded to the service as read by the rector. The reading had been concluded, and the rector was about to make the usual announcements of future services when an incident occurred such as old Christ Church had 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 in the service had been quietly commented on by those who occupied the adjoining pews. At the point mentioned she rose to her feet and, struggling with emotion, began to speak. The startled congregation was all attention, and 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 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 Sunday-school in the basement when good old 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. One afternoon I was on my way to Ferris Wheel Park to spend the afternoon in revelry, when I happened on the open-air meeting which the Epworth League of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church was conducting on North Park 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 impressed 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 which has never forsaken me.

“I gave up my business at once and have lived for his service ever since. I have been but a few days in this city.

“Last night I visited the Hope Mission, and the Lord told me I must come here and testify what he had 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 today. I could not resist the impulse to give this testimony. The Lord sent me here.”

The congregation was profoundly impressed. The rector descended from the chancel and, approaching the speaker, with tears in his eyes, bade her Godspeed. The service went on.

At its conclusion many members of the congregation shook hands with the stranger and told of their impressions. A stranger might have imagined himself in a Methodist Episcopal church, so intense was the feeling. The strange visitor departed with a sense of duty done. All she said was: “I feel that the Lord Jesus and mother have been here.”

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### **SAVIOUR, MORE THAN LIFE**

Words by Fanny J. Crosby

Music by W. H. Doane

*“Saviour, more than life to me,  
I am clinging, clinging close to Thee.”*

Tune preceded words in this instance. It was in 1875 that Mr. Doane sent the tune to Fanny Crosby, and requested her to write a hymn entitled “Every day and hour.” Her response in the form of this hymn gave the blind hymn-writer great comfort and filled her heart with joy. She felt sure that God would bless the hymn to many hearts. Her hope has been most fully verified, for millions have been refreshed and strengthened as they have sung it.

At the suggestion of Mr. D. W. McWilliams, who was superintendent of Dr. Cuyler’s Sunday-school for twenty-five years, it was put into “Gospel Hymns.”

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### **SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS**

Words by Mrs. Albert Smith

Music by S. J. Vail

*“Let us gather up the sunbeams,  
Lying all around our path.”*

For many years this was the favorite hymn of Francis Murphy, the great temperance lecturer, and was the keynote of all his meetings.

I had the pleasure of attending many of his services in Chicago, and have seen him move an audience to tears by his pathetic rendering of this hymn. It is believed that thousands of drinking men have been saved through its instrumentality.

I had the pleasure of meeting the author of this hymn in Illinois in 1878, and was surprised to learn that she herself was childless, – although very fond of children, as shown in the tender expressions in the latter portion of the hymn:

“How those little hands remind us,  
As in snowy grace they lie,  
Not to scatter thorns – but roses  
For our reaping by and by.”

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### **SHALL WE MEET?**

Words by Horace L Hastings  
Music by Elihu S. Rice

*“Shall we meet beyond the river,  
Where the surges cease to roll?”*

While secretary and chorister of the Baptist Sunday-school at Logansport, Mr. Rice composed the music of this song and sent it to Robert Lowry, then editor of the musical department of the “*Young Reaper*,” a Sunday-school paper published in Philadelphia.

It was accepted and first published in that periodical. Years passed before the composer realized its popularity.

“The first notice I received,” he says, “of the favorable reception of ‘*Shall we meet*’ by the musical public was from Mr. Sankey, in a very kind letter written in August, 1879, thirteen years after its first publication. While music has been written for those words by a number of eminent musical composers, I have the satisfaction of knowing that my music has received the choice and approval of Mr. Hastings, the author of the words.”

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### **SHALL YOU? SHALL I?**

Words by James McGranahan  
Music by James McGranahan

*“Some one will enter the pearly gate  
By and by, by and by.”*

An active minister in the West in his boyhood attended our meetings in Madison Square Garden, and he says that his soul was thrilled by the singing there. He writes to me, also, of this personal experience: “I was passing through a town where I was known. At the close of a service which I had attended the minister asked me to sing a solo. Picking up ‘*Gospel Hymns*,’ I sang,

*‘Some one will enter the pearly gate  
By and by, by and by . . .  
Shall you? Shall I?’*

“In the audience was a well-educated man, clearly under the influence of liquor. He afterward said that he forgot or failed to hear the very able sermon. But he heard the song; and for days after ‘*Shall you? Shall I?*’ kept ringing in his ears, until he finally had to give his heart to God. He is now a faithful minister in the Methodist church.”

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### **SINGING ALL THE TIME**

Words by E. P. Hammond  
Music by George C. Stebbins

*“I feel like singing all the time,  
My tears are wiped away.”*

“One day in a children’s meeting in Utica, New York,” E. P. Hammond writes me, “while I was explaining how Jesus loved us and gave himself for us, I noticed a bright-looking girl bursting into tears. She remained at the inquiry-meeting, and with others was soon happy in the love of Christ. The next day she handed me a letter of which this is a part: ‘I think I have found the dear Jesus, and I do not see how I could have rejected him so long. I think I can sing with the rest of those who have found him, Jesus is mine. The first time I came to the meetings I cried, but now I feel like singing all the time.’”

“This prompted me to write the hymn, but I had no thought of its ever being sung, although it almost seemed as if I could hear her singing:

*‘I feel like singing all the time, .  
My tears are wiped away,  
For Jesus is a friend of mine,  
I’ll serve him every day.’*

“Mr. Spurgeon was very fond of this hymn. At the first meeting in his building one of his deacons said to me, ‘This Tabernacle will seat six thousand grown people, but there are eight thousand crowded into it to-day.’ Three thousand could not get in on account of the crowd.

“Every child had one of our hymn-books, and all united in singing this hymn which they loved so much. It has been sung in our meetings in nearly every state in the Union, and translated into many languages.

“We sang it in our daily meetings in Jerusalem, near where Christ was crucified, and away in Alaska, two thousand miles north of San Francisco. Thousands of children sang it in Norway and Sweden, day after day.

“A little boy, who felt himself a great sinner in not having loved Jesus, was led by God’s spirit to believe, and his burden was gone. Bright smiles took the place of tears, and with the happy throng he was soon joining in the song, *‘I feel like singing all the time.’*”

“Little did I then think that years afterward I would find that same boy the pastor of a large church in Minneapolis, rejoicing that so many of his own Sunday-school were able to join in the same hymn which he sang when his heart was filled with a newfound love for Christ.

“It was largely through his influence that during one week of our meetings in Minneapolis, last spring, about seven hundred confessed conversion. I received in one day at Newark, New Jersey, more than two hundred letters from those who had just professed to have found Christ in our meetings. Many of those young converts, in giving what they believed to be the story of their conversion, often put in the words, ‘Now I feel like singing all the time.’”

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## SOMETHING FOR JESUS

Words by S. D. Phelps  
Music by Robert Lowry

*“Saviour! Thy dying love  
Thou gavest me.”*

Professor W. F. Sherwin was holding a Sunday-school institute in Maine on one occasion. This hymn was used in the exercises, and a young lawyer was so much affected by the singing of the third verse that it was the means of changing all his plans for life. He consecrated himself to Christ’s service, and thereafter devoted himself with his whole heart to evangelistic work.

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“A large family joined my church lately,” says a minister in Glasgow. “The mother told me that, while a stranger in the city, she had happened to drop into our chapel, when she was quite overcome. Her heart was lifted up as the people sang, *‘Saviour! Thy dying love.’*”

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Now famous in many lands, this hymn was first published more than forty years ago in the “*Watchman and Reflector*,” and from there it was copied by various other religious papers. Dr. Robert Lowry requested the author, Mr. Phelps, to furnish some hymns for the hymn-book, “*Pure Gold*,” which he and W. H. Doane were preparing, and among others which Mr. Phelps contributed was “*Saviour! Thy dying love*.”

Dr. Lowry composed for it the tune with which it will always be associated. On the author’s seventieth birthday-nine years before his death in 1898—Mr. Phelps received this congratulation from Dr. Lowry:

“It is worth living seventy years, even if nothing comes of it but one such hymn as ‘*Saviour! Thy dying love*.’ Happy is the man who can produce one song which the world will keep on singing after its author shall have passed away.”

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### **SOMETIME WE'LL UNDERSTAND**

Words by Maxwell N. Cornelius  
D D. Music by James McGranahan

*“Not now, but in the coming years,  
It may be in the better land.”*

Mr. Cornelius was brought up on a farm in my own county in Pennsylvania. He left farming when he came of age, and learned the trade of a brick-mason. Later he became a contractor in Pittsburg.

In erecting a house in that city his leg was broken. The physicians decided that it would have to be amputated, and they gave him a week in which to get ready for the ordeal. My own physician was sent for to assist at the operation. When the day arrived the young man said that he was ready, but asked for his violin, that he might play one more tune—perhaps the last one he would ever play.

Whatever the tune was, the melody was so sweet that it caused even the physicians to weep. He stood the operation well and came out safely, but was maimed for life. He now decided to go to college and get an education. After passing through college with honor he concluded to become a minister of the gospel. His first charge was at Altoona, Pennsylvania, but on account of his wife’s health he soon removed to California, locating at Pasadena, where he built the largest Presbyterian Church in that place.

Many who had subscribed to help to pay for the building failed in business, and he was left to meet the obligations as best he could. But in a few years he had the church cleared from all debt. Shortly afterward his wife died. He preached the funeral sermon himself. At the conclusion he quoted the words of this hymn, which he had composed shortly before. Both the words of the hymn and the sermon were printed in a Western newspaper, where Major Whittle found them.

Impressed by their beauty, he cut them out and carried them in his Bible for three months before he wrote the chorus:

*“Then trust in God through all thy days;  
Fear not! For He doth hold thy hand;  
Though dark thy way, still sing and praise;  
Sometime, sometime we’ll understand.”*

Soon after he handed the words to his friend, James McGranahan, who composed the tune to which the hymn is now sung.

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While Mr. Moody and I were holding meetings in the great Convention Hall in Washington, in 1894, one evening he requested me to go to an overflow meeting in the Second Presbyterian Church.

I sang “*Sometime We’ll Understand*” as a solo, and I told how Major Whittle had found it. At the conclusion of the meeting a lady came forward to the platform, and said “That hymn was written by my pastor;” and for the first time I learned who had written the beautiful words of the hymn I loved so much.

A year or two later I sang this hymn in the Church of the Covenant in Washington. The late Secretary of State, John Hay, was present. He was much moved by the song, and at the conclusion of the service came forward and thanked me.

While we were talking a young lady with her husband came up to me and said that she was the daughter of Dr. Cornelius, the author of the hymn, and hoped that God would continually bless my singing of the song.

At one of our crowded meetings in the Free Assembly Hall in Edinburgh, Scotland, Mr. Moody called to the platform Lord Overtoun, who changed the meeting into a memorial service for the Prince of Wales’ eldest son, the Duke of Clarence, who had recently died in England.

After a number of addresses had been made by ministers and others, Lord Overtoun asked a member of my choir, Miss Jane Darling, if she had any song suitable to the occasion. I had gone to Dunfirmline to commence meetings there. Miss Darling took her seat at my little organ and sung in the most touching and pathetic manner the hymn, “*Sometime We’ll Understand*.”

At the conclusion of the meeting Lord Overtoun sent a dispatch to the Princess of Wales, including in the message three of the verses of the hymn. The same evening he received a dispatch from the Princess, thanking him for the verses. A few days later Miss Darling had the hymn beautifully engrossed upon parchment and forwarded it to the Princess.

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## STAND UP FOR JESUS

Words by George Duffield  
Music by G. J. Webb

*“Stand up I stand up for Jesus!  
Ye soldiers of the cross.”*

In the “Great Work of God” of 1858, in Philadelphia, Dudley Tyng was the recognized leader. While standing by a piece of farm machinery on his place, the sleeve of his coat became entangled in the gearing. His arm was drawn into the machinery and torn off, and he died soon after.

In the prime of his life he was taken away from the direction of that great revival movement. But his dying message to his associates in the work, “*Stand up for Jesus*,” supplied the theme for this hymn. It was written by George Duffield, and was read at the close of a sermon which he delivered on the Sunday following the death of his friend. Set to the tune composed by Mr. Webb, this hymn has become famous and useful.

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## SUBSTITUTION

Words by Mrs. A. R. Cousin  
Music by Ira D. Sankey

*“O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head!  
Our load was laid on Thee.”*

Written in Melrose, Scotland, by the author of the immortal poem, “*Immanuel’s Land*,” this hymn was sent to me by a minister in Dublin; and in the letter conveying the verses he remarked:

“It is said of you that you sing the Gospel, and I am sure that if you will sing the enclosed there will be no question as to the truth of that assertion.”

I then wrote the music and sang it in one of Mr. Moody’s meetings, where it was blessed to the saving of two persons the first time it was sung, according to their own testimony.

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A young officer in the British army turned away in horror from the doctrine of this hymn. His pride revolted, his self-righteousness rose in rebellion, and he said:

“He would be a coward indeed who would go to heaven at the cost of another!”

As the years rolled away this man rose to distinction and high rank in the army, and he also learned wisdom. In his last hours, as he lay on his deathbed, he repeatedly begged those near him to sing "*O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head;*" calling it, "My hymn, my hymn!"

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A gunner of the royal artillery was attending the Old Soldiers' Home in Woolwich during the spring of 1886. The chief attraction to him at first was the night-school. From this he was eventually led to join the Bible-class and attend the Sunday evening service in the Hall.

Seeing that he looked very unhappy and that he lingered after the meeting, one night, a worker asked him if anything was troubling him. The tears came to his eyes at once, and he said:

"I want to be a Christian, but I am afraid that I am too bad."

He then told how on the previous Sunday evening, when this hymn was sung, he was so overpowered by the thought of what the Lord had endured for our sins that after the first verse he could not sing. The solemn words were fixed in his memory, and had troubled him all the week, until he came to the great Burden-bearer.

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### **SWEET BY-AND-BY**

Words by S. Fillmore Bennett Music by Joseph P. Webster

*"There's a land that is fairer than day,  
And by faith we can see it afar."*

Mr. Bennett, the author of this world-famed hymn, has this to say about its origin:

"In 1861 I became a resident of the village of Elkhorn, Wisconsin, the home of the composer, J. P. Webster; and shortly after became associated with him in the production of sheet music (songs) and other musical works.

In the summer or fall of the year 1867 we commenced work on '*The Signet Ring.*' One of the songs written for that book was '*Sweet By-and-By.*'

Mr. Webster, like many musicians, was of an exceedingly nervous and sensitive nature, and subject to periods of depression, in which he looked upon the dark side of all things in life. I had learned his peculiarities so well that on meeting him I could tell at a glance if he was in one of his melancholy moods, and I found that I could rouse him from them by giving him a new song or hymn to work on.

On such an occasion he came into my place of business, walked down to the stove, and turned his back to me without speaking. I was at my desk writing. Presently I said:

“Webster, what is the matter now?”

“It is no matter,” he replied; “it will be all right by and by!”

“The idea of the hymn came to me like a flash of sunlight, and I replied: ‘The sweet by and by! Would that not make a good hymn?’

“Maybe it would,” said he indifferently.

“Turning to the desk I penned the three verses and the chorus as fast as I could write. In the meantime two friends, Mr. N. H. Carswell and Mr. S. E. Bright, had come in. I handed the hymn to Mr. Webster. As he read it his eye kindled, and his whole demeanor changed. Stepping to the desk, he began writing the notes in a moment.

“Presently he requested Mr. Bright to hand him his violin, and then he played the melody. In a few moments more he had the notes for the four parts of the chorus jotted down. I think it was not over thirty minutes from the time I took my pen to write the words before the two gentlemen; Mr. Webster and I were singing the hymn in the same form in which it afterward appeared in *‘The Signet Ring.’*

“While singing it Mr. R. R. Crosby came in. After listening awhile, with tears in his eyes, he uttered the prediction: ‘That hymn is immortal.’ I think it was used in public shortly after, for within two weeks children on the streets were singing it.”

“Next year the publishers of *‘The Signet Ring’* heralded its advent by distributing a large number of circulars upon which selections from the work were printed; among them *‘Sweet By-and-By.’* These circulars first brought the hymn to the notice of the public, and created the principal demand for the book.

“Toward the close of that year the hymn was published in sheet-music form. It is now in numerous collections of vocal music in America, and, as a newspaper account says, ‘It is translated into various foreign languages and sung in every land under the sun.’

“Webster, Crosby and Carswell are dead. S. E. Bright, of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, and myself are the only remaining living witnesses to the birth of *‘Sweet By-and-By.’*”

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## **SWEET PEACE, THE GIFT OF GOD'S LOVE**

Words by Peter P. Bilhorn

Music by Peter P. Bilhorn

*“There Comes to my heart one sweet strain,  
A glad and a joyous refrain.”*

The author of this well-known and popular hymn, a gifted evangelist and Gospel singer, was born in Mendota, Illinois, in 1861. His father was killed near the close of the war, and at eight years of age he had to leave school to help his mother. Though the education of books was thus denied him, yet through wonderful ways of Providence he has been able to read in the great book of human nature, and his knowledge of men is as great as his influence and power for good over them.

At the age of fifteen he moved with his family to Chicago, where his voice was a great attraction in concert-halls and among worldly comrades. He was standing by a piano in a German concert-hall, one day in 1881, when a Christian worker entered and persuaded him to attend one of the revival meetings in Mr. Moody's church being conducted by Dr. Pentecost and Mr. Stebbins. He was interested, and for twelve nights he attended regularly.

On the twelfth night he heard a sermon from the words, "Christ hath redeemed us," and he gave his heart to God. Shortly afterward he engaged in mission work in all parts of Chicago, wherever and whenever he could make himself useful, at the same time studying music under Professor George F. Root.

After two years he went to work among the cowboys in the West, where he had many thrilling experiences. Since then Mr. Bilhorn has devoted his talents entirely to the work of singing the Gospel, and to-day he is ranked among the leaders of evangelistic work in song.

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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