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SKETCH

OF THE

LIVES AND WORK

OF MESSRS.

MOODY & SANKEY



THE AMERICAN REVIVALISTS.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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MESSRS. MOODY & SANKEY.

If success is the test of merit, how can we sufficiently eulogise the labours of these gentlemen who are the subject of this sketch? In what terms can we describe the marvellous gift which they possess of drawing crowds to their services, and with an ever increasing interest—an interest which shows no flagging, no signs of diminution, but gaining strength from each succeeding series of Gospel meetings?

It will be well to consider the means by which this great movement is sustained, and directly we do so this solution suggests itself: *it is the embodiment of simplicity*, both as regards the address of the speaker and the music with which the service is interspersed; nothing is employed by which the attraction of the audience is diverted from that portion of the work which is before it: the thousands are spellbound by the unadorned oratory of Mr. Moody—equally so by the flowing melodies of the solos sung by Mr. Sankey, to an equal extent, when in a body they offer their tribute of praise in the hymns which have become popular to all. With these few remarks we present our readers with a sketch of the men; their lives and their work. With reticence which is the characteristic of most workers, they are remarkable for saying little of their own lives apart from their labours in the good work. But sufficient is known of their antecedents to enable the world at large to become acquainted with much relating to them which cannot fail to be interesting.

Both Messrs. Moody and Sankey were born in the United States of America. Mr. Moody, who is in the 38th year of his age, was born in one of the New England States, in the district which was the scene of the great awakening, under Johnathan Edwards, about a hundred years before. But so far from his inheriting anything from that remarkable movement, he was brought up a Unitarian, and had not even heard the Gospel of the grace of God till he was about seventeen years of age. Going, about that time, to Boston, to be trained for business in the establishment of an uncle, he one day went into the church of Dr. Kirk, a Congregational minister in that city. There, for the first time, he listened to an evangelical sermon. It had the effect of making him uncomfortable, and he resolved not to go back. He felt that his heart had been laid bare, and he wondered who had told the preacher about him. Not long after this Mr. Moody left Boston and proceeded to Chicago, where he entered into business for himself. Being full of the desire to be useful, he went into a Sunday school, and asked the superintendent if he would give him a class. In this school there were twelve teachers and sixteen pupils; and the answer to this application was that if he could gather a class for himself he would be allowed to teach them. Mr. Moody went out to the streets, and, by personal application, succeeded in bringing in a score of boys. He enjoyed so much the work of bringing in recruits, that instead of teaching the class himself he handed it over to another teacher, and so on, until he had filled the school. Then he began to entertain the notion of having a school of his own. He went to work in a neglected part of the city, where Roman Catholics and Germans abounded. Chicago contains a large number of each, and, among other things for which they are notorious, disregard of the Sabbath is conspicuous. Sunday is the day devoted by many to concerts, balls, and pleasure generally. Mr. Moody saw that, to succeed in such a population, a school must be

exceedingly lively and attractive, and, as he observed that the Germans made constant use of music in their meetings, he was led to consider whether music might not be employed somewhat prominently in the service of Christ. Not being himself a singer, he got a friend who could sing to help him, and for the first few evenings the time was spent between singing hymns and telling stories to the children, so as to awaken their interest and induce them to return. An earnest student of the bible, and with the rare gift of imparting to others that which he himself had acquired, he became a leader amongst them with whom he was acquainted, and from being a student grew to be sought after as a teacher.

The opportunity for carrying out a work so dear to his heart was not, to a man of Mr. Moody's stamp, allowed to slip, and, throwing his whole energy into the self-imposed task, we next hear of him holding services at a place which during the week was a music and dancing saloon, and so blessed was his ministrations that he speedily became "a leader in Israel," and his gift of swaying the hearts and interesting those to whom he addressed himself at once pointed him out as a man whose success in the ministry was assured. Beloved alike by young and old—his hearers went out into the highways and brought in the stragglers that they might also participate in the blessed truths as expounded by him, in language as truthful as earnest, in example as edifying as his precept was convincing, and the result was that he was installed pastor of a church which was erected especially for him—a well deserved tribute to the self-taught minister.

This arrangement necessitated his giving up the situation which he had until then held as clerk in a boot and shoe store, and he had accomplished the great wish of his life—to be a servant, a worker in the vineyard of the Lord he loved so well—that, untrammelled by the cares of business, he could devote his time to the service of his divine master.

The civil war found in Mr. Moody, one who could share the dangers of the field of battle that he might be the means of affording consolation and spiritual comfort to those who were participants in that great strife; and, bible in hand, and the Gospel of Peace on his lips, he did much to the glory of his Lord. These services with the army were of no little use, not only in producing direct fruit but also in developing that prompt and urgent method of dealing with men, that strenuous endeavour to get them to accept immediate salvation, which is so conspicuous a feature of his mode of address. With wounded men hovering between life and death, or with men on march, resting for an evening in some place which they were to leave to-morrow, it was plainly, so far, at least, as he was concerned, the alternative of "now or never;" and as he could not allow himself or allow them to be satisfied with the "never," he bent his whole energies to the "now."

Mr. Moody's labours in the army were often much blessed. Of all his campaigns of this kind there was none on which he looked back with more pleasure than one in the State of Tennessee, in connection with troops under the command of General Howard. That General being in the fullest sympathy with Mr. Moody, their work together was very earnest and much blessed. It is pretty well-known that after the war was over General Howard became President of the Freedman's Bureau, and gave a great impulse to the operations for educating the slaves.

The cessation of hostilities found Mr. Moody again at Chicago in pastoral charge of a large chapel; but his labours there were terminated for a time by the fire in that city in 1871, and their building was destroyed, his own house being also amongst those which were burnt; but the Lord raised up friends, and a short time saw him again at the head of a congregation more numerous and influential than before, upwards of twenty thousand pounds being expended on the building of the church alone. His labours through the United States had endeared him to those who had both heard him and heard of him, and he was not suffered to abate one jot of his usefulness.

A pleasing fact is related in connection with the rebuilding of the church. It is that one subscription is said to be from five hundred thousand Sunday school children.

Mr. Moody's shrewd common sense seems never to fail him. It is customary at what are called the "all-day" meetings, to set apart one hour for Mr. Moody to answer questions. What could be fresher and finer than the following replies?—"Ought not Christian women to be more encouraged to work in the Lord's vineyard?—Yes; and especially mothers' meetings pre-eminently afford scope for the exercise of their gifts, as mothers are best addressed by a mother; and a class of young women is most suitably addressed by a young woman, who can enter into their feelings and sympathise with them in their difficulties.—What is to be done with persons who make long, cold prayers at prayer-meetings?—They must, at all hazards, be induced to refrain from killing the

meeting by such an injurious course of procedure. The Revival of 1857-58 in America completely revolutionised many prayer-meetings, which before had been dull, tedious, and cold; and brought in the plan of having short, lively addresses and prayers, of three or five minutes, from a number of different speakers. The prayer-meeting should be thrown open for any one, briefly to speak or pray, who may feel led to do so.¹⁷

Mr. Moody on one occasion alluded to an incident connected with a young converts' meeting, held the preceding evening. Last night, he said, a young woman, who is a domestic servant, rose, and said one morning when she got up she felt a great desire to do something for the Master. She had received so much herself that she wanted others to share her happiness. There was another servant with her cleaning the window, and she thought she would speak to her. They stopped cleaning the windows, and went down on their knees together. The case of a fashionable and worldly-minded lady in Newcastle also deserves mention. She attended one of Mr. Moody's meetings, and was asked by him, "Are you a Christian?" She curtly replied "I am not, and don't want to be." He spoke to her, and said, "I shall pray for you." Two days afterwards she came again to the meetings. A few days later she began to address meetings of working men upon their religious condition, beseeching them, as kindly women can do so well, to secure for themselves that peace of mind and blissful prospect she could now claim as hers.

An exceedingly large number of appeals for special prayer is made at most meetings. The requests presented at one of the gatherings—and this tabulated statement is given only as a specimen of what frequently happens—were as follow: Three persons for themselves; three wives for their husbands; nine persons for their families; two daughters for their parents; nine brothers for sisters; nine sisters for brothers; for two nephews; four persons who were in anxiety on behalf of six persons who felt themselves unconcerned about their souls; one who lamented that he was in a backsliding state; for a person present who felt himself to be bordering on despair; seven teachers for Bible-classes; and on behalf of an aged widow lady occupying a high position, who desired to consecrate her all to Christ. At a meeting in Glasgow, the Rev. G. Stewart said there had just come in five earnest requests for prayer. One was from some undergraduates of Cambridge, who were to have a meeting that night; another was from a number of divinity students who were at that hour holding a prayer meeting; and a third was for a young woman who had become insane in a ball-room, and was then in a dying state.

Mr. Moody is of a robust habit, with thick dark beard and moustache, and impresses you with the idea of being a man of great energy and decision of character; his love of work is marvellous, and his activity untiring. Who, but a man upheld by a vigorous mind, in a body equally insensible to fatigue, could, for week after week, address two, three, sometimes even four large gatherings, and in buildings capable of holding, as at Bingley Hall, 15,000 people, yet his voice seems as fresh at the conclusion of a day's course of service as if he had ascended the platform after the repose of a week. His delivery is more rapid than the great majority of preachers in this country: his accent slightly marked with the American twang; (this is the best term as being the one most easily understood,) his illustrations and anecdotes always to the purpose, always interesting, and couched in language as simple as if he had written, re-written, and written again, for the purpose of omitting any one word that might present the slightest difficulty to the understanding of the most illiterate amongst the thousands whom he might be addressing. Hesitation seems to be unknown to him; without any claim to rank as an orator, he has in the highest degree the gift of speaking to children, and that is no mean compliment. One may listen to him without being led to draw any comparison between him and the popular preachers who are household words with us, and this is a great advantage. He is a man without mannerisms, nor does he seem to have adopted any of the mannerisms of other speakers. A good voice, an earnest manner, rapid speaking, and enunciation well nigh perfect, are recommendations which may well bespeak the favourable verdict of all who go to hear, even if inclined to be critical.

Much that has been written of Mr. Moody, applies equally to his companion in his tours, Mr. Sankey, a good natural voice, good enunciation, so perfect indeed,¹⁸ that the words are as distinct in his rendering them as if they were being read, is saying more for Mr. Sankey than can be said of many whose pretensions rank far higher than his? It would be unjust to criticise when criticism is disarmed by the great simplicity of songs rendered by Mr. Sankey; the songs are all that can be desired for the purpose, and the singing is all that can be desired for the music, and as a leader of very large numbers of persons, but a small per-centage of whom can be expected to know anything at all of

music Mr. Sankey's manner leaves little to be desired. The musical portion of the service is under the supervision of Mr. Sankey, who uses an American organ to accompany the solos sung by himself and the hymns in which the audience take part, and the unobtrusive way in which this instrument is handled by him leads one to suppose that he is adverse to the displays of instrumental music in the Gospel Meetings presided over by Mr. Moody and himself.

Mr. Sankey, who in personal appearance is very unlike his colleague, is some years younger than Mr. Moody, having been born in 1840. Brought up to business, he took great interest in the concerns of a Sunday School attached to the Chapel, which as a youth he attended, and in maturer years continued his connection with it. Having a taste for music and possessed of a good voice, he was much in request at musical services, and his endearment in that portion of the worship of the Lord were much appreciated. Some years since, meeting Mr. Moody at a Conference at Indianopolis, they became much attached to each other, and from the date of their meeting their lives have run in the same groove. Their originality and success became more and more widely known; and at length—chiefly through the solicitations of the Rev. Mr. Pennyfather, a well-known London clergyman, and Mr. Cuthbert Bainbridge, a merchant of Newcastle-upon-Tyne—they were induced to visit England. Unhappily, however, both Mr. Pennyfather and Mr. Bainbridge died before the Evangelists landed at Liverpool. The Americans, on reaching our shores, were strangers in a strange land. "We arrived in York on a Saturday night in July, 1873," Mr. Moody himself states, "and did not know a soul in the place." Nevertheless, their aim was so unselfish and noble, and their powers and gifts were evidently so extraordinary, that ere long they were surrounded by numerous friends? Having, moreover, come here to preach and sing the Gospel, they were not the men to fold their arms in despair and return to America without doing the work which they felt themselves divinely commissioned to perform. In York they, therefore, commenced to hold their meetings, and soon they became almost as well known in religious circles in the United Kingdom as in the United States. Pressing invitations poured in for them to visit other towns, and so in succession they have laboured in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Belfast, Cork, Manchester, Sheffield, and a goodly number of smaller places—Mr. Moody everywhere stirring great gatherings by his bold, yet simple, enunciation of the truth, and Mr. Sankey giving to many new insight into Divine mysteries by his power of song.

Although the place assigned to Mr. Sankey in the service is conducting the musical portion of it, he is no mean speaker, and occasionally officiates on the platform in the absence of Mr. Moody—he is a pleasant speaker and addresses himself to the feelings of the audience with much success.

The portraits of Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey, were taken at Bingley Hall, during one of the revival meetings, and may be relied upon as faithful representations of these eminent men.

One great feature in the movement set on foot by Messrs. Moody and Sankey is the harmony which exists between them and the whole body of clergy of all denominations in the services which have been rendered by them. It is not an unusual occurrence to find a body of 50 or 60 ministers surrounding these gentlemen at their meetings, and for a time all doctrinal differences seem to be forgotten. This may be accounted for by the fact that the addresses given by Mr. Moody are entirely free from any approach to theological disputations, the whole subject seeming to be from Christ, the Saviour of the World, the Sinner's Friend, the Shepherd seeking the lost sheep, the God who reigns in that Heaven where there is more joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance. Unlike many men equally zealous for the good of souls, Mr. Moody does not attempt to allure men to heaven by frightening them about hell and its terrors and fire and brimstone for ever and ever, but invites them to "Come to Jesus," for the sake of the love of Jesus. Take but one step towards the Lord and you will find him.

It is a great sight to look upon one of these revival meetings—the doors of a vast hall opened an hour and a half or two hours before the time advertised for the service to commence; the people are ever more flocking in, some from parts of the country afar off: they noiselessly seat themselves. There are no reserved seats excepting a few chairs and forms for the clergy. Presently a hymn is begun, and from time to time singing beguiles the time until the hour for commencing has arrived; then, looking round, every available nook and corner of a building holding, perhaps, 10,000, 12,000 or 15,000 people is found to be crowded, and the service begins. From its commencement until its close,

every minute is occupied. A portion of a chapter read by Mr. Moody will be followed at once by a solo or hymn; not once does the service flag, and the mind is so occupied that when the service is concluded the expression on most faces is surprise that the time has been so shortened.

We will conclude this sketch of Messrs. Moody and Sankey and their work, with some extracts from the *Birmingham Morning News*, a paper, the proprietors of which have been most energetic in advocating the good cause, and in reporting all that could be interesting during the stay of these American evangelists in Birmingham.

TRACING THE REVIVAL WAVE.

In concluding these articles it may be useful to give a more succinct and detailed account than has hitherto appeared, of the movements of Messrs. Moody and Sankey in this country, so that the reader may trace with ease the direction taken by the present Revival wave.

The Evangelists arrived in England, from America, about the middle of 1873, and at once commenced to break ground in the city of York. The two gentlemen who invited them to cross the Atlantic having been carried off by death before they reached our shores, Messrs. Moody and Sankey were at first placed at considerable disadvantage. But they by no means lost heart, and in course of time, as their powers came to be known, large congregations were drawn to their different services.

It was not, however, until they began to labour in Newcastle-on-Tyne that they attracted general attention.

Leaving the North of England, the Revivalists next proceeded to Scotland, holding services in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Greenock, and numerous other towns. Wherever they went a wonderful work was done. Sectarian differences and jealousies disappeared, and thousands, both outside and inside the pale of the Christian Church, confessed and showed in their lives that they had received much good. A well qualified witness (Professor W. G. Blakie) said some time ago:—“It is certainly not beyond the mark to say, in point of extent, power, and wide-spreading influence, the religious movement of the last six months is unprecedented in the history of Scotland. We mean that never within the same space of time has so large a harvest been gathered into the Christian garner.” Dr. Horatio Bonar writes:—“We can call them (ministers of religion) by hundreds, and they will bear testimony. Is this testimony not to be believed? If not, what is to be believed, or who? There is another class of witnesses, no less credible and important—the Sabbath-school teachers of Scotland, amounting to thousands. They can tell of the wonderful changes in their scholars, such as they never saw before—changes which betoken the Spirit’s hand, and indicate genuine renovation of heart. There is yet another class of witnesses whom I would summon—the parents of Scotland. One of the remarkable things about this work, especially in Edinburgh and Glasgow, is, that so many of the children of pious parents have been gathered in. What changes in families have been accomplished! What different households do we now see! There are hundreds of fathers and mothers who could come forward as witnesses to tell of the fruit among their children.”

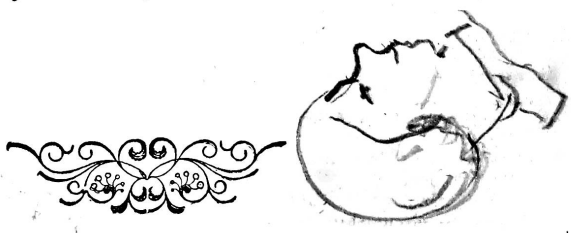
From Scotland—where their labours extended over about nine months—they crossed to Ireland. It may be doubted, whether they were not even more successful—especially taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration—in Ireland than they had been in England and Scotland. In Belfast, Dublin, and Londonderry, they not only attracted large audiences, but accomplished a great work. At some of the meetings in the Exhibition Palace in Dublin, as many as from 15,000 to 20,000 were present. The *Witness* of September 25, 1874, stated, speaking of the work in Belfast:—“One remarkable case

of conversion is that of an entire Roman Catholic family, who heard Mr. Moody, we believe, at one of the open-air meetings, and have left the Church of Rome." Of their labours in the capital of Ireland, the *Dublin Mail* wrote:—"For some weeks past two missionaries, self-moved to the work of persuading sinners, have occupied a Dublin platform, and have gathered round them literally tens of thousands. Is there in the strangers any singular quality—an intellectual pre-eminence, an oratorical skill, a novelty in doctrine, a magnetic force—which leads strong minds captive, and which draws the labourer from his squalid home who had never darkened a church door, and quenches the critical spirit of the scholar, cold and severe, whose religion is of regulation pattern, and his estimate of human nature according to rigid rule? The speaker and the singer alike are simple men—almost fishermen in want of scholastic fitness—and their method is as simple as themselves. Their hymns are sweet and touching, but not more tender or suited to varied feeling than many of the ancient melodies of penitence or prayer which modern composers of hymnals have rashly put aside. The style of singing is equally without special characteristic. The leader is heard by the largest congregation—that is the most of it. The force is not in the preacher, steady and full as is the stream of his earnestness—strong as is the grasp he takes of his hearers by making their reason captive—fertile as are his illustrations, often quaint, always familiar, never wanting in reverence. The message it must be which has this influence." As is known, some of the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church strongly opposed the movement; but even they were helpless in the matter.

Afterwards visiting Manchester and Sheffield, the same power accompanied them. Immense congregations gathered in the Free Trade Hall of Manchester to listen to the Evangelists, and one witness declared they had really "set the city on fire." At their first meeting in Sheffield, on the last day of 1874, Mr. Moody is reported by the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* to have said:—"When at Edinburgh last year, he prayed that 1874 might be the most successful they had had in their work, and it had been. It had been worth more more than ten or twelve years of their former life. He was anxious that 1875 should be even more successful than 1874. What they wanted the Church to do was to wake up. They must work in Sheffield, go round Jericho, and take it. These was not a drunkard reeling in the town that night but whom God could save. It was as easy for God to save a drunkard as it was for him to bring down the walls of Jericho. What they wanted was perseverance and holy enthusiasm—and men willing to die for Christ. If they went out to fight the enemy, who should stand before the Lord's anointed?"

It may not be much out of place to state that the success which has attended the meetings at which Messrs. Moody and Sankey preside, has extended to all matters with which these gentlemen are connected, and that as well in a pecuniary as in a religious sense have they reason to be well satisfied with the results of their mission, a very large sum being derived from the sale of the various editions of hymns and music books which have been published for use at the various places where they have held services. The price charged for the book mostly in use (one shilling,) has been the means of inciting others to publish books with the same music and words at a price more in keeping with the contents, and one such book in particular, "71 Revival Songs," sung by Mr Sankey and others, for the low price of 3d., and certainly well adapted for use at the meetings, is a marvel of cheapness, and got up in a very attractive style.

A gallery of some inquiry, conference.



A few more on the same subject. I have got some, for sale. I have got some, for sale. I have got some, for sale.

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