

## The Life of Ira D. Sankey

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### Introduction

This study examines the life of a man who was a soloist, song leader, and dedicated Christian servant during the last part of the nineteenth century. Ira D. Sankey probably sang to more people about the Lord Jesus Christ than any other person in his day. The indoor crowds that he sang to and led in singing numbered as high as seventeen thousand.

Ira Sankey worked closely with the greatly used evangelist Dwight L. Moody for over a quarter of a century. It has been estimated that during Mr. Moody's entire ministry, no less than a hundred million individuals heard the gospel from his mouth. Ira Sankey was with Mr. Moody for the major portion of his ministry, and he was equally involved not only in drawing out the crowds to the meetings, but also in drawing them to Christ once they were there.

The first portion of this [study which follows] looks into various areas of Sankey's spiritual life, his relationships, and his financial stewardship. As a young man, Ira Sankey was forced to make drastic decisions with eternal results. He was willing to follow God's plan instead of his own, and his faith was rewarded with God's blessing.

Working with D.L. Moody, Sankey spent great amounts of time ministering to people, and his desire to win souls grew tremendously. He became very effective in bringing people to Christ, not only in the meetings, but also on an individual basis.

Ira Sankey was also a man of the Word, a man of prayer, and a man of character. His character became clearly visible in his financial decisions, as again and again he sacrificed personal gain to fulfil God's perfect will for his life.

In the second part of the study [not included here], the musical aspects of Ira Sankey's life are examined. Though many others were more thoroughly trained, none had a greater desire to be used of God in a ministry of song. Through solos, congregational singing, choirs, and composition, Sankey used music to reach men's hearts with the Word of God. Moody and Sankey's use of music still influences us today, and much can be learned by studying their purpose and methods in music.

Ira Sankey lived an exciting, purposeful life of untiring service for Christ. His example challenges us to use our music and our life wholeheartedly for the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Chapter 1 - Ira D. Sankey's Spiritual Life**

### **Sankey's Spiritual Decisions and Desires.**

Ira D. Sankey was born in the home of David and Mary Leeper Sankey, August 28, 1840, in the village of Edinburg, Pennsylvania. Although their church was several miles from home, his love for singing led him to attend regularly.

Sankey has recorded that his very first memory of anything regarding a holy life was in connection with an old Scotch farmer named Frazer. He would take Ira by the hand, and lead him with his own children to the old school house where Sunday School was held. He was a plain man, but had a great, warm heart and was loved by all the children. Years later, Sankey could still visualize him standing and praying for the children. Although it was a number of years later that Sankey received Christ as his Savior, his first impressions came from Mr. Frazer when he was very young.

When Ira was sixteen, he was invited to attend revival meetings at a church called The King's Chapel, about three miles from his home. Though he attended every night, he was not interested. Sitting with other boys, they lessened their boredom by whispering and throwing paper wads. One evening, however, an old elder of the church approached Ira during the invitation, and spoke to him about his salvation. Though Ira didn't respond, the old man continued speaking to him every night after that. Finally he went forward and prayed for forgiveness, but he still wasn't satisfied. Following several nights and many long sessions at the altar, Ira felt the assurance of his salvation.

Since Sankey received Christ during his youth, he later stated that his voice was consecrated to the Lord early. As a result, he continually used his musical ability for the Lord in churches, conventions, and meetings of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

About the time he was twenty, he was appointed to lead a weekly class of from sixty to eighty adults. As a result of this responsibility, Ira's duties caused him to carefully study the foundations of his own faith in the Lord. Realizing that he, like many others, had put feeling before God's Word, he determined to study the Bible with more diligence than ever.

Following a brief enlistment in the military, Sankey made a vital spiritual decision regarding marriage, by marrying a godly, Christian

member of his choir. About seven years later, Ira would be faced with another of the greatest decisions in his life as he personally met Dwight L. Moody.

In 1870, Sankey was sent as a delegate to the International Convention of the YMCA in Indianapolis. He had heard about Moody, and was pleased to learn that he would also be present. After not seeing or hearing Moody for the first few days, it was announced that Moody would be leading a six o'clock morning prayer meeting in the Baptist Church. In his autobiography, Sankey described the early morning prayer meeting:

I was rather late, and therefore sat down near the door with a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Robert McMillan, a delegate from my own county, who said to me, "Mr. Sankey, the singing here has been abominable; I wish you would start up something when that man stops praying, if he ever does." I promised to do so, and when opportunity offered I started the familiar hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood." The congregation joined heartily and a brighter aspect seemed to be given to the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting Mr. McMillan said to me: "Let me introduce you to Mr. Moody." We joined the little procession of persons who were going up to shake hands with him, and thus I met for the first time the man with whom, in the providence of God, I was to be associated for the remainder of his life, or nearly thirty years.

Moody's first words to me, after my introduction, were, "Where are you from? Are you married? What is your business?" Upon telling him that I lived in Pennsylvania, was married, had two children, and was in the government employ, he said abruptly, "You will have to give that up."

I stood amazed, at a loss to understand why the man told me that I would have to give up what I considered a good position. "What for?" I exclaimed.

"To come to Chicago and help me in my work," was the answer.

When I told him that I could not leave my business, he retorted, "You must; I have been looking for you for the last eight years."

I answered that I would think the matter over; but as yet I had no thought of giving up my position. He told me about his religious

work in Chicago, and closed by saying that the greatest trouble in connection with his meetings was the matter of the singing. He said he could not sing himself, and therefore had to depend upon all kinds of people to lead his service of song, and that sometimes when he had talked to a crowd of people, and was about to "pull the net," some one would strike up a long meter hymn to a short meter tune, and thereby upset the whole meeting. Mr. Moody then asked me if I would go with him and pray over the matter, and to this I consented — out of politeness. After the prayer we parted, and I returned to my room, much impressed by Mr. Moody's prayer, but still undecided. (1)

Sankey thought about Moody's words all that day and evening, but the next morning he was still inclined to keep the government position and its assured salary. That same morning Sankey received a card from the evangelist, asking him to meet him on a certain street corner that evening at six o'clock. Sankey went there with a few friends, and Moody arrived a few minutes later.

Not stopping to speak, Moody entered a nearby grocery store and asked if he could use a large store-box for a short while. Receiving permission, he took the box to the street and asked Sankey to get up on it and sing something.

Sankey sang "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?" and soon a large crowd gathered. (In a testimony nearly thirty years later, Sankey stated that over three hundred people surrounded them there.) When Moody saw he had an audience, he climbed up on the box and began to preach. The workmen from the factories and mills were just going home, and many of them stopped and listened. The crowd stood spellbound, and Sankey said the effect of Moody's words on the people was wonderful to see. After speaking about twenty five minutes he announced that the meeting would be continued at the Opera House, and invited the audience to accompany them there. Asking Sankey to lead the way while singing a familiar hymn with his friends, they sang "Shall We Gather at the River." Together, they marched down the street with the men following closely on their heels, being so carried away by Moody's store-box sermon.

Crowding into the Opera House, they filled it from top to bottom. After Moody saw that all the workmen were seated, Sankey heard him preach as he had never heard preaching before. When delegates for the evening session of the convention began to arrive, Moody closed his meeting by saying:

"Now we must close, as the brethren of the convention wish to

come in to discuss the question, 'How to reach the masses.'" Here was a man who could successfully reach the masses while others were talking about it. (2)

The next time Moody questioned Sankey about working with him, he was still undecided. Moody kept insisting but Sankey would not make any commitments. He did say he would go home and pray about it, but inwardly he was hoping the Lord would lead him to stay in New Castle. However, he was open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Returning home, Sankey explained Moody's offer to his wife, who was quite amazed at the proposition. Together, they thought and prayed about this important decision. After six months back home in New Castle, and with much urging from Moody, Sankey consented to spend a week with him in Chicago. Earlier, he confided to his wife that he felt it would be foolish to give up his present position. As he was leaving, she began waiting with much anxiety to see what decision he would make.

In Chicago, Sankey joined in the Moody's family devotions, and then began visiting with Moody. Moody was visiting many sick people, and he asked Sankey to sing for them. In addition to visiting the sick, the week was spent holding many meetings including noon prayer-meetings, evangelistic services, and a final mass meeting in Farwell Hall. At that service, Sankey sang his first solo for one of Moody's large evangelistic meetings.

As Sankey was about to leave the following morning, Mr. Moody said:

You see that I was right; your singing has been very helpful in all the meetings, and I am sure you ought to come to Chicago at once, and give up your business. (3)

While traveling home, Sankey was hoping that something would come up to keep him in New Castle. Though he didn't want efforts for the Lord to be hindered, he felt there were other singers who could be considered for this opportunity. In addition, his music was needed at his church, and the church had already grown as a result of it. If he were to leave, he wondered what would happen to his class, as well as the choir. Sankey also had to consider the support of his family. Moody himself would not accept a salary, but promised Sankey twelve hundred a year. It was already difficult meeting expenses with his current salary of fifteen hundred dollars. And what would happen if people tired of his songs, or if Moody died or moved or changed positions? These questions and many others went through his mind as he pondered the decision before him.

Then Sankey determined in himself that he would do whatever God wanted him to do, and that he would seek counsel from others who knew the Lord and trust the Holy Spirit for their direction.

Back in New Castle, Sankey consulted his pastor, rather hoping that he would suggest he stay. However, when his pastor as well as all of his friends felt it was his plain duty to go, Sankey sent his resignation to the Secretary of the Treasury.

It was early in 1871 that Sankey and Moody began their work together in Chicago. Together, they labored tirelessly in their efforts to win thousands to the Lord Jesus Christ through preaching, soul winning, and song. In reference to their work, it has been said that D.L. Moody

had the good fortune to meet Mr. Ira D. Sankey, whose name must ever be associated with his, and who henceforth shared his labors at home and abroad, and contributed, in ways the value of which it is impossible to exaggerate, to the success of his after work. (4)

In October of 1871, the Chicago fire halted Sankey's efforts with Moody. However, in two months Moody telegraphed for Sankey to come, and he was willing to continue serving the Lord with Moody. God greatly blessed their work in Chicago, but soon Moody had a new proposition for Sankey.

Having visited England, Moody felt called to return there for a number of meetings. After Philip Phillips and P.P. Bliss each decided not to go with him, Moody believed it was God's will for him to ask Sankey.

Moody spoke to Sankey about this, but at nearly the same time Philip Phillips also desired Sankey's help on a six month tour of the West Coast. Phillips had returned from Europe, where he had sung one hundred nights in succession. At the time, he was the most famous gospel singer in the United States. Sankey greatly respected Phillips because of his vocal quality, and because he was the one who inspired him to sing gospel music. In addition to these considerations, Phillips offered Sankey a large salary and all expenses paid if he would accompany him on this tour as they presented "evenings of song." Sankey gave serious consideration to the offer, as it would greatly benefit his future musical and spiritual ministry. In addition, another child was on the way, and they needed the money this opportunity would provide. But prior to making this important decision, Sankey determined he would first talk and pray with Moody about it.

Sankey prayed, and also mentioned the situation to a friend, asking for his advice. The friend suggested: "Two workers in the same line, and

especially two singers, are certain not to agree. Go with Moody; then you can do your work, and he can do his and there will be no occasion of conflict between you." (5)

As previously determined, Sankey met with Moody, who explained that though he didn't have a definite itinerary for the trip, he had been called by three reliable men. Moody continued to explain other reasons why he was excited about this opportunity. Financially, they would be trusting the Lord completely to provide their needs.

Moody and Sankey went to their knees to pray. When the time of prayer was completed, they got up from their knees and Sankey announced that he would go with Moody.

As a result of this decision, as well as the original choice to give up his job, it has been truly stated: "... Sankey went to England and Scotland with Moody and sang before Queen Victoria and got a deathless name and crown through the harvest of souls won to Christ through his singing." (6)

The spiritual desire, character, and influence of Moody and Sankey is well described in this portion of a letter by Dr. Horatius Bonar, a distinguished preacher and hymnist in Scotland:

These American brethren bring to us no new Gospel, nor do they pretend to novelty of any kind in their plans, save perhaps that of giving greater prominence to the singing of hymns, conveying the good news to their hearers through this instrumentality. We may trust them. They fully deserve our confidence; the more we know of them in private the more do we appreciate them and the more do we feel inclined to cast in our lot with them. We ask for soundness in faith, and we do well. These men are sound. We ask for a consistent humble life, and we do well. These men are consistent and humble. We ask for self-denial, and we do well. These men are self-denying, hard-working men, who are spending and being spent in a service which they believe to be not human but divine. We ask for definite aims, an ultimatum in which self shall have no place, and we do well. These men have the most definite of all definite aims — winning souls to everlasting joy, and they look for no fame and no reward save the Master's approval: the recompense in reserve for those who turn many to righteousness. They have in view no sinister nor sordid motives, as their past history shows, as every one who associates with them must feel. Besides all this, it is vain to try to stop them. They will work and they will speak, whoever shall say nay. Let us work along with them. Rowland Hill was once asked

the question: 'When do you intend to stop?' 'Not until we have carried all before us,' was his answer. So say our brethren from Chicago. We say, Amen. This needy world says Amen. Human wickedness and evil say Amen. Heaven and earth say Amen. The work is great and the time is short, but strength is not of man but of God. (7)

The message Moody and Sankey presented was commented on editorially by the New York Tribune:

Thirdly, in regard to their message. They preach no new doctrine, no dogma of this or that sect; nothing but Christ and the necessity among us of increased zeal in His service. Which of us will controvert that truth? If the Christian religion is not the one hope for our individual and social life, what is? (8)

It is obvious that Sankey heard Moody preach again and again, yet he stated that he never grew tired of hearing Moody speak.

Sankey had increasing health problems in the later years of life, including the loss of his sight. More and more his desires were focused on his final home in heaven. George Stebbins was a close friend of Sankey's, and made the following remarks concerning the last two years of his life:

...it was plain to be seen that his mind and heart had long been set on his home-going, for the subject would so often intrude our conversations. Once he said, "George, you will find me on Spurgeon Street, when you get up there." And often at the close of a visit did he say: "George, I want you to be at the church next Sunday, (the church known as Dr. Cuyler's, of which he had been a member for many years) for I'll be there, as I am going home.

He had so longed to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord," that his passing had become an obsession with him. (9)

Another personal friend, Fanny Crosby, had this experience on what was to be her last visit with Sankey:

When she told him that "the entire Christian world is praying for your recovery," the sick man shook his head and said to tell his friends that "I hope to meet them all bye and bye in the land where there is no more sorrow or pain and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." Ira bade Fanny to meet him in heaven, "at the pearly gate at the eastern side of the city." There,



he said, "I'll take you by the hand and lead you along the golden street, up to the throne of God, and there we'll stand ... and say to Him: 'And now we see Thee face to face, saved by Thy matchless boundless grace!' (10)

Before Sankey's desire to be with the Lord was fulfilled:

he drifted off into a coma, singing the opening lines of Fanny's "Saved by Grace":

Some day the silver cord will break  
And I no more as now shall sing,  
But, oh, the joy when I shall wake  
Within the palace of the King!

By nightfall, he was gone. (11)

Sankey was finally in the presence of the One he had sung about for so long and to so many.

During his life, Ira Sankey achieved great success in his efforts for the Lord, but he attributed all of it to the work of the Holy Spirit. From early in his ministry he had depended on the Holy Spirit for guidance and help, and he often mentioned the Spirit's infilling in his life.

These spiritual decisions and desires of Ira D. Sankey enabled God to use him in bringing thousands to salvation in Jesus Christ alone. His life is a challenge to us to carefully consider and follow God's leading in each decision we make.

It has been correctly stated:

What a loss it would have been if Ira Sankey, one of America's greatest gospel singers and musicians, had remained simply a government bureaucrat in Pennsylvania — a tax collector. But like Zacchaeus and Matthew of so many generations before, he chose God's path and received both secular glory and eternal reward. (12)

### **Sankey and the Bible**

One of Ira Sankey's greatest motivations to know God's Word was his adult Bible class, as was mentioned earlier. This class gathered weekly, to share their religious experience, and hear instructions from the teacher about living a holy life. Sankey realized he had been measuring his state of grace by what was said by others in various class and prayer meetings, instead of by the Bible passages which are written to define the actual condition of God's children. The sixty to

eighty men under his care seemed to him a large responsibility, and he did not want to lead them astray. Searching the Word more than ever, he sought to give the correct instruction to each class member according to their specific need. Concerning Sankey and his class it has been recorded:

The class was conducted on strictly biblical principles; its members were rooted and grounded in love, resting not upon their own, or upon each other's experience, but upon the never-failing promises of the Word of God. He would say to the class, "Tell us your condition in Bible language. The Scriptures abound with accounts of religious feeling of all descriptions. There is no state of grace which may not be described by a text." And the members being thus instructed, were accustomed to search for their portraits in the Bible, and also to inquire what words of counsel or of comfort it contained for their especial use. (13)

After the Chicago fire, and during the difficult time that followed, Moody and Sankey each became more devoted to the Lord and His Word:

These servants of the Lord thus drew the sweet out of bitterness, and became more devoted than ever to the preaching of Christ Jesus and him crucified. Each was more thoroughly imbued by the Spirit with a thirst for studying the Bible as its own and only interpreter. (14)

Sankey realized that it is just as important for instruction through music to be biblical, as it is for the usual spoken instruction. And once a doctrine or thought is put to music, it is even more likely to be remembered and repeated than when it is merely spoken. For this reason, he searched for songs which clearly taught the truths and doctrines of the Bible.

On one occasion, Sankey, Moody, and other men climbed some hills near the Northfield conference grounds and had a picnic at the top. Moody asked the men which of the mountains of the Bible were dearest to them, and Sankey replied that his choice was Olivet.

When Sankey was actually able to tour the Holy Land, he was well acquainted with many of the notable places in Palestine due to his faithful study of God's Word. Traveling from place to place he described connecting incidents to those with him. He was at times so moved by the historical association of a place, that he would stop and sing an appropriate song.

In 1875, Moody and Sankey were invited to hold a series of meetings

in New York. In preparation for the meetings, the sentiment of the Presbyterians was expressed in "The New York Observer." This article expresses their assurance that the doctrines and teaching of Moody and Sankey were in harmony with God's Word:

The men who have been invited to New York have given full proof of their efficient ministry by their labors in other places, and our pastors know whom they are addressing when they ask their aid. These evangelists have been proved by the ministers and churches, who of all others were most likely to condemn them if their doctrines and measures had not been in harmony with the Word of God and approved by sound judgment. They have been in the midst of the most orthodox and well-instructed religious communities in Great Britain. Excellent, learned, thoughtful pastors and the most eminent laymen, statesmen, jurists, and bankers have attended their meetings and given their favorable opinion in writing. Presbyteries, Synods, General Assemblies, dignitaries in the Church of England, and officers under government, men who are not emotional or enthusiastic, who are the furthest removed from religious fanaticism, testify to the great value of the labors of these evangelists.

Their discourses have been published and widely read by those who disapprove of such labors, as well as by their audiences. 'I have found no fault in them' is the general verdict. They are simple, scriptural calls to the unconverted. God has followed them with His blessing, and has made them useful in turning sinners from their wicked ways and in bringing them to Christ. We have also personal testimony from wise men who have been on the ground after the evangelists had been away for a year, and they assure us that the work of grace goes forward with no unhappy reaction and with every evidence of continued good. (15)

In 1899, the year that Moody went to be with His Savior, Sankey wrote this brief summary of his faith: "Hold fast to the good old ways of our fathers;— believing the good old Bible from back to back ... I have found no new way to heaven." (16)

In 1907, the year before Sankey himself died, he wrote a letter to the New Castle Y.M.C.A. expressing his belief in God and salvation as explained in the Bible:

I have great joy in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. These three are one, and his name is Love.

I believe that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I believe in Him who said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

I believe in the Son of God with all my soul, might, mind, and strength, and am therefore saved by the word of One that cannot lie. I have only a little longer of earthly darkness, and then the sunshine of the Father's throne. So sure am I of meeting in heaven those of my friends who are following the Lamb, that I send them this final message that God is love. Good night, Good night. (17)

### **Sankey and Prayer**

Jeremiah 33:3 states "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

The way Ira Sankey went continually to God in prayer shows us that he believed and practiced the instruction of this verse.

It is said that when Sankey served a three month enlistment in the military, he was active as a diligent worker in the soldiers' prayer meetings. Certainly there must have been a great deal of serious praying during those days of the Civil War.

As a young man, we have already seen that Sankey made some crucial decisions concerning his life's work and ministry. When Moody challenged Sankey to join him in Chicago, Sankey prayed about it alone, as well as with others.

Concerning the prayers he and Moody prayed, Sankey said: "I presume I prayed one way and he prayed another; however, it took him only six months to pray me out of business."(18) Later, Sankey was asked to accompany Moody to England, and again Sankey sought the Lord's guidance through prayer.

While Moody and Sankey worked together, there were some differences, as in most relationships. Refusing to allow these to hinder God's work, however, they would settle their differences in prayer.

The music ministry of Ira Sankey was not one that was based on his self confidence. Sankey was aware of his complete need for God's blessing, and the fear of a difficult situation was an additional motivation for him to cast his cares on the Lord.

While Sankey was still a young man in New Castle, he continually prayed that the Holy Spirit would bless the words he sang to the salvation of the many people who came to hear him.

Sankey strongly believed that singing "should be prayed for as much as the preaching."**(19)** Practicing this belief, he prayed over his own singing as a minister prays over his message.

A number of times, Sankey sang to congregations which were generally opposed to "human hymns." However, he found that if these hymns were sung in a prayerful spirit, that the Lord could use them to communicate the truth of the gospel.

On one such occasion, Sankey was especially concerned about the response to his singing, but through prayer he received peace about singing the song.

The question of solo singing, as to its propriety and usefulness, was not yet fully understood or admitted; hence it was with much fear and trepidation that we thus really entered, this third night, upon our three months' campaign.

As I took my seat at the instrument on that, to me, most memorable evening, I discovered, to my great surprise, that Dr. Horatius Bonar was seated close by my organ, right in front of the pulpit. The first gospel-song music I had ever composed, written since coming to Edinburgh, was set to words which he wrote — "Yet There Is Room."

Of all men in Scotland he was the one man whose decision I was most solicitous. He was, indeed, my ideal hymn writer, the prince among hymnists of his day and generation. And yet he would not sing one of his own beautiful hymns in his own congregation, such as "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," or "I Was a Wandering Sheep," because he ministered to a church that believed in the use of the Psalms only.

With fear and trembling I announced as a solo the song, "Free from the Law, Oh, Happy Condition."

No prayer having been offered for this part of the service, and feeling that the singing might prove only an entertainment, and not a spiritual blessing, I requested the whole congregation to join me in a word of prayer, asking God to bless the truth about to be sung.

In the prayer my anxiety was relieved. Believing and rejoicing in the glorious truth contained in the song, I sang it through to the end.

At the close of Mr. Moody's address. Dr. Bonar turned toward me with a smile on his venerable face, and reaching out his hand he said, "Well, Mr. Sankey, you sang the gospel tonight."

And thus the way was opened for the mission of sacred song in Scotland. (20)

Sankey also found congregations would show greater acceptance of his organ, when he had a word of prayer prior to his song.

Sankey before sitting down to play his own accompaniments at his small reed Estey organ always prayed with the congregation that God would bless his singing and use the music to bring salvation to many hungry, lost souls. This intimate approach prefaced by prayer helped to dispel the antagonism of the "unco guid" who hated organs as they hated sin. (21)

Concerning choirs and their rehearsals, Sankey believed that practices should be started and ended with prayer.

In January of 1877, Moody and Sankey were scheduled for meetings in Boston. there was great anticipation among the people for Sankey's singing, and after the announcement of the song "The Ninety and Nine," Sankey made the following prayer:

Our heavenly Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus we come to thee at this moment, asking that thy blessing may rest upon the singing that has already been done, and shall be done, in this great Tabernacle. Bless, we pray thee, the message of thy love as found in these songs. And we pray, our Father, that thou wouldst bless the singers who have just come here, and will come day after day, to lift up the voice of praise unto thee. And as in days of old, when singers were wont to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, do thou meet with thy people in this temple dedicated to thy service. And, our Father, shall we not ask that ere long we may even see the prodigals being brought home by the Good Shepherd himself; having wandered far away, from thee, they will hear that ringing voice of thine, and say, 'I will arise and go to my Father.' Lord Jesus, bless us now in all that we shall do here, and we will give thee the praise for evermore. Amen. (22)

Ira Sankey was a faithful and greatly used soul-winner, and as he

spoke with individuals he relied upon the Lord for wisdom. In his autobiography he describes a conversation with a young man who had come into the inquiry room. As the young man told about his need, Sankey later said that he lifted his heart in prayer so that he would not make a mistake as he dealt with him. Sankey understood the importance of James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God."

The following account of an exciting and moving prayer meeting was given by Ira Sankey:

My heart was moved last night at the Young Men's meeting. I can truly say that during all my wanderings I have never attended a better meeting than the one held last night in Roby Chapel — a more hopeful and prayerful meeting —I am looking for great results from that place. My dear friend, Mr. Drummond, was there, whose father you all know has done so much work in publishing and distributing tracts in Scotland, and, I may say, all over the world. When Mr. Drummond had opened the meeting, he asked all who had been recently converted to (word missing) and tell it. Many stood up and told what the Lord had done for their souls. Old men stood up, young men, and even boys. When we were engaged in silent prayer, Mr. Drummond asked that any who wished prayer for themselves, or for friends, would just stand up and ask it, while the Christians were praying. One by one from all parts of the chapel came the requests, 'pray for me,' 'pray for my soul,' 'pray for my father,' 'for my mother,' 'for brothers,' 'for sisters,' 'for wives.' Mothers! fathers! your sons were there in Roby Chapel last night, praying for you, pleading for you. Won't you join them? (23)

It is evident that the music of Ira Sankey was a ministry, and not mere entertainment. His life was totally involved in other people. He gave up financial security so that through song he might tell others about true security found only in Christ. As a result of his total dependence on the Lord, his efforts were blessed and thousands were saved.

### **Sankey's Christian Character**

As a child, Ira Sankey was known by his friends and at home as a truthful, honorable youth. He was also recognized as a leader among the boys he associated with.

Those who worked with Sankey during his secular employment, as well as those whom he served, thought very highly of him. For almost ten years he worked for the government, and a man who worked at the desk beside him gives this fine testimony about Sankey:

In the civil service, as in other departments of labor, he was noted for conscientiousness, and patient, faithful attention to duty. In his rank he stood first in the district, and had the entire confidence of all the officers and tax-payers with whom he had official dealings. His superiors in office regarded him as one of the most prompt, correct, and reliable officers they had, and they were always ready to accord to him the honors of a faithful public servant. In his long connection with the service, there were never known any irregularities in his accounts or any loss to the government. He never took advantage of his office to his own gain or preferment, but faithfully and honestly cared for the interests of the government. On this account he left the service with honor, and with the regret of those who were associated with him.

He also found favor with the people of the district whose business demanded his official supervision. He proposed at one time to reenter the army, and give his services to his country; but from every quarter all the tax-payers who had official relations with him sent in urgent remonstrance's against his retirement from the civil service, and he was constrained to remain in this department of the government, where his services were so greatly in demand. (24)

A European Baptist pastor, Mr. Rees, said after working with Moody and Sankey: "Both these brethren are genuine to the backbone." (25)

William Hoyt Coleman also commented about them and said: "Both men impress you as honest and good, hearty and wholesome in body and mind, and thoroughly in earnest." (26)

It was said that Sankey had power as a life changer, and that his thirty three years of blameless life helped him there.

Concerning friendship, George Stebbins stated that Sankey "was one of the most companionable of men and loyal of friends." (27)

Sankey was quite successful as he dealt with people individually, and it appears this was especially true with women. He was very cautious in these situations, however, as can be seen in this comment:

It must be insisted, however, that Sankey, like Moody, was scrupulously careful in such relations, and in all the fierce hostility that prevailed in many quarters I do not find one word of scandal about the singer any more than about his greater friend. (28)



In spite of all the greatness and worldwide fame Sankey achieved, his desire was to be nothing but as an ambassador for Christ. Gamaliel Bradford has made some interesting observations into this matter:

What interests the psychological observer in all this, as with Moody, is the effect of it upon the singer himself. Here was a man born in comparative obscurity, who passed his early years in the weary drudgery of small government office. Suddenly he finds himself swept into one of the most conspicuous positions of the world. Distinguished ministers recognize him and turn to him. Men and women of rank and wealth salute him humbly, and attribute to his agency the greatest comfort and contentment of their lives. The papers feature him. Crowds throng about him, wherever he goes, with eager adulation, or with noisy mockery almost as stimulating and delightful. He is a great man and knows he is, cannot help knowing. No triumphant actor, or opera tenor, or public orator, ever had more enthusiastic audiences or more praise and flattery. What did it do to him and how did he take it? Was he eager, anxious, sensitive to admiration, sensitive to criticism? Did the comparative falling off of his later years distress him, or was the shadow of past glory enough for any man to live on? There is no light as to all this, even less than with Moody, because there is no obvious or obtainable self-analysis in the man whatever. Even the formula of such analysis as I have suggested above would have been rejected with indignation. All thought of worldly glory and success was assumed to be indifferent and forgotten. These men were about their Master's service, and personal considerations dropped completely out of sight. And so we hear over and over again that they had no thought of self, and were only anxious to do something for the glory of the Lord. It may be so. Very likely they believed it was entirely so. All I can say is, if it was entirely so, they were different from all the men I have been familiar with and profoundly different from me. (29)

As one of Sankey's closest personal friends, George Stebbins is well qualified to speak about the genuineness of Sankey's humility. While Sankey was involved with Moody in their work in Great Britain Stebbins states:

I had occasional letters from him couched in the same cordial and friendly terms characteristic of him, with never the slightest intimation that he was conscious of being one of the most talked of men in the Empire; and on his return to his native land after two years of absence in which he had risen from comparative obscurity to world-wide fame, the friendly intercourse was

resumed that continued unbroken the remainder of his life. (30)

### **Faith and Determination in Trials**

Early in 1871, Ira Sankey left his family in New Castle to join Moody in Chicago. Together they preached and sang to the large crowds that came to hear them. And because of the way they complemented each other, people began to refer to them as Jonathan and David.

Sankey had indeed given up a good job, but now he found that the happiest work in the world was leading others to Jesus Christ. He sang to many unsaved individuals, and this increased his passion for souls.

On Sunday evening, October 8, 1871, Moody was closing his message to the large Farwell Hall crowd, asking in his title "What Shall I Do with Jesus?" Before Sankey sang, Moody said, "Now I want you to take that question home with you and think it over, and next Sunday I want you to come back and tell me what you are going to do with it." (31) (Moody later said "that this statement was one of the greatest mistakes in his life and that he would gladly give his right arm if he could recall it.") (32)

Sankey was closing the service with a hymn, but by the third verse,

"Today the Savior calls  
For refuge fly;  
The storm of justice falls  
And death is nigh," (33)

he was drowned out by the noise of fire engines, bells, and the great city bell ringing out an alarm.

Hearing the great confusion outside, the crowd became restless and alarmed and Moody closed the meeting at once. As the people left, Moody and Sankey walked out of the building, and then were able to see the reflection of the fire on the west side of the city, about a half mile away.

As Sankey separated from Moody, he went to the area where the fire was burning, and spent several hours trying to help prevent the flames from spreading. After realizing they could not be stopped, he returned to his room and office at the Farwell Hall Building to save what he could of his possessions. Through tremendous effort as well as many trips by himself and others he was able to hire, Sankey was eventually able to get many of his possessions (including his music) to the shore of Lake Michigan.

At the shore, Sankey found some rowboats for rent and asked the

owner if he might use one. The man said he could have it if he was able to manage it, since they weren't likely to have much boating in that area for some time. Sankey loaded his belongings into the boat and rowed out to a piling. From, this place, he could see the great Chicago fire advance, and consider what this meant to his future:

Throughout his gospel singing career, Sankey recalled his personal turmoil at the time of the great Chicago fire and made much of the fact that the devil, in a very real and specific way, had come into his and Moody's lives, attempting, it seemed, to disrupt and destroy their ministry together ... Sankey's career with Moody had hardly begun that year when it seemed doomed to end as a result of the conflagration sweeping across Chicago. As he sat in the boat and dodged sparks, watching the flames against a dreary black, smoke-filled sky, Sankey felt bewildered by what then seemed to be a derailment of an exciting new career for the Lord. Nevertheless, at the same time, he found comfort as he recalled the words of the hymn, "Dark is the Night," by Fanny J. Crosby:

Dark is the night, and cold the wind is blowing,  
Nearer and nearer comes the breakers' roar;  
Where shall I go, or whither fly for refuge?  
Hide me, my Father, till the storm is o'er.

The words and the memories of the souls saved in his yet brief career with Moody lifted his spirits. Thanking God for the miracles in his life, he asked for continued direction in the service of Christ.

"I knew God still was in control," he recalled later, "and that He always is, no matter where, or in what state we may find ourselves."

In communicating with God in prayer that night — from a boat in a lake — he gained renewed faith and was given reassurance that the Lord still had much work for him to do. **(34)**

With no immediate future in Chicago, Sankey took a train East to his home. However, within two months after the fire destroyed Farwell Hall (Moody's church), Moody had a new tabernacle erected and telegraphed for Sankey to come. Despite Satan's efforts, these men were determined to go ahead with God's help. In regards to this disaster and the faith of Moody and Sankey, it has been said:

This disaster strengthened instead of shattering the trustful faith of these evangelists, for it opened the hearts of the people more readily to receive their message of the Savior's love, and made the frame

building a sanctuary for relieving the bodily and spiritual wants of multitudes of the homeless. (35)

Since the new structure was built in the midst of the destroyed section, there was some doubt as to the building being filled. However, on the dedication day, over one thousand children came.

Moody and Sankey continued holding services, as well as helping the poor and needy who had lost everything. They both slept in a corner of the new tabernacle, with only a single lounge for a bed. Often, drifting snow was blown into their room by the strong winter winds.

Before the new building had been constructed, Moody had a very special spiritual experience, and now a great revival took place. There were so many people attending that they were forced to have eight services each Sunday, and many of them made definite decisions for Christ. Though it had not been easy, the determined faith of Moody and Sankey was being rewarded with God's blessing. Together, they experienced the promise of Galatians 6:9, "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Throughout their ministry, Moody and Sankey would be faced with many and various trials. Often these trials would come in the form of criticism or opposition directed towards the men themselves, their motivation, or their methods.

In the British Isles, people actually said that Moody and Sankey were advanced agents for P.T. Barnum, and that Sankey was there to sell American organs. In addition, it was stated and published in a pamphlet that neither Moody nor Sankey had a good reputation in Chicago. When this was heard about in Chicago, the most influential ministers of that city immediately signed and sent a denial of it.

At about the same time, Sankey learned that the ship carrying his friend Mrs. Spafford and her four children had sunk. Upon reaching land ten days later, Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband in Chicago, "Saved alone."

Upon hearing about the loss of the children, both Moody and Sankey were heartbroken. The children had all received Christ as a result of Sankey's work in Chicago.

All of these things grieved the evangelists, but they continued the meetings with God's strength and were encouraged by great results. Over a thousand attended the daily noon prayer services, and no building in town was large enough to hold all who desired to hear the evening meetings.

Sankey received additional charges in relation to his use of the organ. It was said by some that he was sent to England by an organ manufacturing firm, who gave him a large salary as long as he would use their organs in his meetings. This was denied, of course, by both the organ company and Sankey.

The greatest criticism of the organ however, was directed by those who felt the organ itself was evil. This was not a new problem with Sankey though, for he had experienced a similar situation at his church in New Castle:

When I first took charge of the singing, it was thought by many of the church members that the use of an organ, or any kind of musical instrument to accompany the voices of the singers, was wicked and worldly. The twanging of an old tuning-fork on the back of a hymn-book was not objected to, nor the running of the whole gamut in subdued voice to find the proper key, nor the choir trying to get the proper note to their respective parts in the never-to-be-forgotten "Do, Mi, Sol, Mi, Do," before beginning the hymn. For several years we kept on in this way, but by and by we found that the majority were in favor of having an organ in the choir. I shall never forget the day on which the organ was first introduced. I had the honor of presiding at the instrument, and I remember well how carefully I played the opening piece. Only one or two of the old members left the church during the singing. It was reported that an old man who left the church on account of the introduction of the organ, was seen on his dray the next day, driving through the main street of the town, seated on top of a large casket of rum, singing at the top of his voice:

"A charge to keep I have," etc. (36)

Along with the organ, the singing of solos was also opposed by many in Europe. In Sunderland, England, Sankey did not realize that their host pastor was one of those in opposition:

At the very beginning of the campaign the pastor requested Sankey to go with him over to the home of his treasurer, Mr. Longstaff, the author of "Take Time to Be Holy." Going into the living room, Sankey noticed a small organ similar to his own. He was told that this one had been used by Philip Phillips in a recent concert tour. They asked him to sing, and so he sat down to the organ and sang "Come Home, O Prodigal," "Free from the Law," and "More to Follow." He did not dream that the minister, an extreme conservative, was very much against solos, choirs, and organs and never permitted them in his church under any circumstances.

When Sankey discovered Mr. Rees's intolerant view toward music and musical instruments, he was very much perplexed. A few days afterwards, however, he lost his anxiety when he saw huge posters all over the city, reading:

D. L. Moody of Chicago will preach the gospel, and Ira D. Sankey of Chicago will sing the gospel in Bethesda Chapel every afternoon and evening this week, except Saturday, at 3 and 7 o'clock. All are welcome.

The notice had been written by Rev. Rees! And it was in this statement that the phrase "sing the gospel" was first used. Mr. Sankey was especially impressed when he learned that the author of the advertisement was known all over the section as "the pope of the North." (37)

Thus, a situation which at first caused much concern resulted in one of the best references Moody and Sankey could have obtained.

On another occasion, D. L. Moody spoke about the need for the Church to give greater attention to praise. He recognized that there were some who only believed in singing the Psalms, and refused to use "human" hymns. He felt they should also sing "new songs," which were as good as sermons. In this way, the gospel could be sung into many men's hearts. He desired the Church to feel alive towards praise, not being held back by prejudice, the twin sister of unbelief.

In Edinburgh, Scotland, the people rejoiced over the wonderful results in the evangelists' meetings, but some of them did not learn to enjoy "human" hymns:

At one meeting Sankey had just started a solo when "a woman's shrill voice was heard in the gallery, as she made her way toward the door, crying, 'Let me oot! Let me oot! What would John Knox think of the like yon?' When he had finished his song, he went across the street to sing at an overflow meeting in the Tolbooth Church. He had just started to sing when the same voice was heard, "Let me oot! Let me oot! What would John Knox think of the like of yon?" (38)

In his autobiography, Sankey related that the first meeting in Edinburgh was indeed a trying time for him. Moody could not be there due to a severe cold, so another minister would preach, and Sankey would lead the service of song.

In Scotland, a great deal had been spoken and written against "human"

hymns for public worship, and even more had been said in opposition to the "kist o' whistles," the term they used referring to his small cabinet organ. (By universal consent, organs had not entered churches in Scotland for over three hundred years.)

Following the opening prayer, Sankey asked everyone to sing a portion of the One Hundredth Psalm. The response to this was good, since it was safe and common ground for all. Following this was the Bible reading and prayer.

At this time, Sankey faced the problem of "singing the gospel," and for his first solo he selected "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By." As he sang, there was an intense silence over the congregation, indicating to Sankey that the Lord could even use prayerfully sung "human" hymns to bring the gospel into the hearts of men in Scotland, as elsewhere. Following a powerful message and closing prayer, Sankey was asked to sing an additional solo. Choosing "Hold the Fort," still relatively new in Scotland, he asked the congregation to join him on the chorus. The heartiness and strength with which they sang it was a further indication to Sankey of the future usefulness of the gospel hymns in Edinburgh.

The gospel hymns were easily remembered, and this seemed to bother some:

Occasionally some of the elders of the Highland Churches felt a little troubled about Mr. Sankey's hymns, so unlike the psalms in Rouse's version. One of them came to his pastor with no little anxiety, saying, "I cannot do with the hymns. They are all the time in my head, and I cannot get them out. The psalms never trouble me that way."

"Then I think you should keep to the hymns," said the pastor.  
(39)

It is apparent that the hymns were effective in keeping the gospel and other scriptural truth going through the mind.

Once again we have seen the faith and determination of both Moody and Sankey as they strove diligently to spread the gospel. They would not refrain from using something new or different, even though there was much opposition to it. As long as the method was scriptural and useful to God's cause, they would prayerfully go forward with it.

Following the second evangelistic campaign in London, Sankey sailed home sick. During this campaign, Sankey's oldest son and his father had both passed away. Commenting on Sankey's response to his

father's death, Whittle wrote:

The reality of Sankey's consecration to the Lord, is impressed upon me in my intercourse with him this winter. His father's death has been blessed in bringing him nearer to God, and Christ and the Gospel are dearer to him than ever. His prayer with us this morning was very real and blessed. (40)

During Sankey's later years, he spent many hours working on his autobiography and stories of the hymns. Sankey had been collecting and writing material for years, when the manuscript was destroyed in a fire while he was in Battle Creek. Sankey had to start over from memory, and the work was not completed when his sight began to rapidly fail in January of 1903. In spite of these difficulties, Sankey was encouraged by friends to finish the book, and he did.

It has already been noted that during the trials of Sankey's last years, his desires turned sharply from this earth to his final home in heaven. These were trying times for the singer, but Ed Reese has made the following comments:

As blindness overtook him in 1903, he lived out his days at his Brooklyn, New York home on South Oxford Street. During his last five years, he had extreme weakness and much pain as glaucoma had destroyed the optic nerve. Sankey maintained a sweet spirit of patience and his mind remained clear to the end. Of all his earthly friends, who cheered him during his lonely hours, none proved a greater benediction than his beloved friend, Fanny Crosby. They would sing, pray, and fellowship in their blindness and discomfort. How they rejoiced in knowing that they would soon be together in glory with the Saviour they adored and reunited with D. L. Moody and other loved ones.

## **Chapter 2 - Sankey's Relationship and Ministry With Others**

### **His Upbringing and Parents**

Ira Sankey was raised in a happy home, and as a child he showed the joyful spirit, confiding disposition, and bright smile that would characterize him throughout his public ministry. He was praised even in his early days as being "the finest little fellow in the neighborhood." (42)

His father, David Sankey, was elected to public office, including the State Senate in 1847. David Sankey was also a bank president and worked for the government as a collector of internal revenue.

According to one source, "the habits of his father's household were



puritanical. All its requirements were severe; the boys were not even allowed to whistle on a Sunday but this influence seems to have been blessed to the children, who were early brought to the Savior." (43)

Sankey's first experience with music was in his home, where the family gathered for evenings of joyful singing. He also heard various styles of music from different church services he attended with his father.

Concerning school, Sankey received the ordinary privileges for the children of that day. While attending high school in New Castle, he was given every opportunity to study higher branches of learning, depending on his desires.

When Sankey was about twenty years old, he attended a musical convention that William Bradbury was conducting. Upon his arrival home, his parents had the following discussion:

'I am afraid that boy will never amount to anything; all he does is to run about the country with a hymnbook under his arm. 'Mother replied that she would rather see me with a hymn-book under my arm than with a whisky bottle in my pocket. (44)

### **In the Military**

In the spring of 1860, President Lincoln called for men to sustain the government. A regiment was raised in the New Castle area, and Sankey was one of the first to enlist. Some felt this would halt his musical activities, but it actually gave him additional opportunities. Many of the young soldiers missed home, and were hungry for the gospel music.

Sankey's company was sent to Maryland, and he often led the singing at religious meetings held in the camp. Finding other musical soldiers, he led and used them to help in the prayer meetings he was active in. They would also sing to cheer the sick and discouraged. It wasn't long before people in the area, heard about the singers in the Union camp, and often they were invited out by families who wanted to listen to the "boys in blue."

Sankey later recalled the astonishment of the Southern people as they heard some of the soldiers playing the piano in their lovely homes. By singing the old-time "home songs," all the feelings of enmity seemed to be dispelled. These singing soldiers were always received with the greatest hospitality and kindness, and many long lasting friendships were formed from these times.

In addition, Sankey also organized a male choir in his company, and

they were regularly called to help the chaplain with the meetings in the camp.

By the time Sankey's enlistment term of three months was over, he was ranked a sergeant, and desired to re-enlist. However, many friends discouraged this, and persuaded him to go back into civilian life.

According to a tract published by the Pilgrim Tract Society, Sankey learned some years later of a most unusual event during his enlistment. The tract records that on Christmas Eve, 1875, Sankey was traveling up the Delaware River by steamboat. Many passengers were on the deck, and Sankey was asked to sing. Though he intended to sing a Christmas song, for some reason he was driven to sing the "Shepherd Song." (Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us)

The people listened intently, and at the conclusion of the song, a man with a rough, weather beaten face approached Sankey and said:

"Did you ever serve in the Union Army?"

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

"Can you remember if you were doing picket duty on a bright moonlit night in 1862?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Sankey, very much surprised.

"So do 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 on 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 cannot 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.'

"These 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 this Christmas night the two went together to the manger in Bethlehem. There the stranger found Him who was their common Saviour, and Good Shepherd, who seeks for the lost sheep until He finds it. And when He had found it He lays it on His shoulders, rejoicing.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." — Psalm 91:1.

### **His Wife and Children**

After securing a position with the Internal Revenue Department, Sankey married Miss Fanny V. Edwards on September 9, 1863. Miss Edwards was the daughter of a state senator. Rev. E. J. Goodspeed stated:

Mr. Sankey chose an attractive member of his choir and a teacher in his school. They were happily mated and she proved herself to be equally self-denying with her husband. They have three sons, to whom she proves herself an affectionate and intelligent mother, while she is the cheerful, bright companion and helper of the evangelist. (46)

In the same book it is recorded that Sankey's wife was an earnest Christian woman, in full sympathy with her husband in his work. Bernard Ruffin had made the following comments about Sankey's wife: "A quiet, retiring woman, Frances Sankey was seldom seen in public and took no part in her husband's career, but devoted her time to making a home for him and their sons, Harry, Edward, and Allan. She was considered by her husband's friends a paragon of graciousness and goodness."(47) Another writer states that she was very pleasant and

friendly, and Richard Ellsworth Day comments, "...she was altogether worthy of Emma Charlotte Revell."(48) In his autobiography Sankey declared that she had been a blessing and helpmate to him throughout his life and in all his work.

Before Sankey determined to leave New Castle and join Moody, he spent time praying, and talking with his wife about it. When he finally joined Moody, he left his wife and children in New Castle. After the fire temporarily halted the work, Sankey came back to Chicago, and in October of that year, moved his family there with him. The tabernacle was their only place to go, so they started housekeeping with Moody and his family there.

The Sankey's first two boys were born prior to his joining with D.L. Moody. In June of 1873, Moody and Sankey sailed for England. Moody took his wife and children, and Sankey took his wife, leaving his boys with their grandparents. During this trip, Mrs. Sankey's hands were busy with baby things. Sankey's third son was born while they were in Edinburgh, Scotland. (Sankey was born in Edinburg, Pennsylvania.)

There does not appear to be a great deal written about the Sankey's older sons, though it is mentioned that Henry worked as an evangelist among boys. However, I. Allan Sankey has had a good amount written about his life, because of his success in music. Charles Gabriel records that this youngest son:

made no attempt at composition until his father became blind, when, hoping that he might carry on the lifework of that great man, his first two songs were written and presented to his father as a Christmas present, in 1902. One of these, "There is Joy in My Soul," was much used by Gipsy Smith. "Never Give Up" was written the next year, and others succeeded, until his published compositions number over sixty-five. (49)

Fanny Crosby was very pleased with the work of her close friend's son and said:

Mr. Sankey's son, Ira Allan Sankey, now president of the Biglow & Main Co., has taken his sainted father's place, and has written some very impressive music for some of my songs. I was at a certain church a little while ago, and heard the soloist sing 'Grandma's Rocking Chair,' set to music by I. Allan Sankey, and I really thought the son had surpassed the father in sweetness of tone and harmony of expression. On the same evening the congregation sang my hymn, 'Never Give up' (music by the same

composer), and I was delighted with the work of the son of the man who made 'The Ninety and Nine' famous. (50)

I. Allan Sankey was the editor and compiler of "Hallowed Hymns, New and Old," which sold nearly two hundred thousand copies during the first fourteen months. In the preface to this book, the younger Sankey makes some good comments regarding the words and tunes of the new songs selected:

In choosing these new songs, particular attention has been taken in each case to see that the tunes were entirely suited to the action and sentiment of the words. Many a very beautiful hymn has been so miserably read aloud as to lose all its beauty and attractiveness. How much worse, then, must it be, to set a sprightly, life-like, "whole-souled" hymn to a dull, low, stiff, slow, sleepy tune: and how often the effect a grand, stately tune has been absolutely ruined by the use of unsuitable words or by being hurried through at an absurd tempo. The music, while adapted to the words, should be so attractive, so musical, as to win the love of the hearer, and then, when once learned, will never be forgotten. Thus, through the medium of the tune, the lesson the hymn embodies will be forever imprinted on the memory. Consequently all the words of the new hymns have been most carefully edited to make sure that they were *not only suitable and poetical, but scriptural*.

The melodies are harmonized fully and correctly, and printed *with all the words in the music*. This should be of great service in helping to teach the reading of music by note. (51)

In his book of biographical sketches, J.H. Hall states, "The musical mantle of the great singer and musician seems to have fallen on his son Allan, and he has already achieved much success in the music business." (52)

### **His Relationship with D.L. Moody**

The relationship of Ira Sankey with D.L. Moody is a wonderful example for Christian workers, especially for relationships between musicians and preachers. Though they were together constantly for nearly thirty years, to our knowledge, no serious quarrel ever came between them. They learned early to meet their problems with prayer.

In their personalities, Moody and Sankey had some distinct differences. Sankey displayed smoothness and tactfulness while Moody's manner was rough and blunt. Sankey tended to be cheerful and yielding, while Moody was rather abrupt and dictatorial. Moody

considered himself too busy to worry greatly about his dress, but in contrast, Sankey was careful about his. In spite of their differences, they were the best of friends.

Both of these men knew the benefit of humor, and learned to laugh at each other and at themselves. On one occasion, Sankey described to Moody a ride on a horse he had taken while it was raining. Sankey was holding an umbrella in one hand, when the horse was suddenly startled and plunged quickly ahead from under him. Sankey was left sitting in the mud still holding the umbrella over his head. Moody loved the story and told it again and again. He liked nothing better than getting a good joke on Sankey. And Sankey also had a number of jokes that he would tell on Moody.

Moody and Sankey were in strong agreement concerning the usefulness of music. Moody said, "I believe that music is one of the most powerful agents for good or for evil."**(53)** And Moody highly respected Sankey's ability as a singer who was able to communicate God's truth through music. An illustration of this is a portion from Major Whittle's Diary:

We went with him to take dinner with his Uncle Cyrus, over the Connecticut River, and as we were crossing the beautiful stream ... Bliss and Sankey sang together "Only Waiting for the Boatman" and "There Is a Land of Pure Delight." Moody was helping the ferryman. We all thought the crossing was very slow. After the third or fourth song Sankey looked around and discovered Moody holding on to the wire and pulling back while the ferryman pulled forward, his object being to get in a good many songs, not only for his own enjoyment, but for the good of the ferryman, a boyhood friend in whose conversion he was interested. **(54)**

In June of 1873, Moody wrote from England to Mr. Farwell and said: "...Sankey sang the hymns finely, all seemed to be much pleased with it. I think he is going to do much good here." **(55)**

At another time, Sankey was conducting a discussion about church music. When questioned if he preferred a large quantity of solos in a service, he said he did not. When Moody heard this he stood up and declared that he preferred a large quantity of solos when he had Sankey!

Though Moody himself had no sense of pitch or harmony, he clearly understood its value, and realized it was used to draw many to his meetings. However, he had no use at all for music which appealed only

to the sense of beauty. He wanted music which would delight an audience, and he judged music completely by its mass effect.

He could form no judgment ... by hearing it played or sung in private. He must see it tried in a crowd, and could discover in an instant its adaptation to awaken the feelings which he needed to have in action. If it had the right ring he used it for all it was worth. "Let the people sing," he would shout — "let all the people sing. Sing that verse again. There's an old man over there who is not singing at all, let him sing." No matter how long it took, he would keep the people at work until they were fused and melted. (56)

In addition to helping in the selection of the music, Moody also made certain there was participation in the music.

Sankey acknowledged the help that Moody was in his music ministry:

"Mr. Moody has always been an inspiration to me in preparing hymns for gospel work; not that he was a musician or claimed to be, but I soon learned to prize his judgment as to the value and usefulness of a hymn for our work. What moved him was sure to move others, and what failed to do so could be safely omitted." If Moody said, "You can do it," Sankey felt that he could do it, and he did. In Scotland Moody urged him to use the Scotch dialect. "I realized it was rather a hazardous proceeding to sing a hymn in the vernacular, but Mr. Moody, though he knew he had put me in a tight place, said, 'Go ahead, Sankey.' I did go ahead, and that was one of the reasons why I and Mr. Moody got on so well during our thirty years' work together." (57)

The following two accounts clearly show that the union of Moody's preaching and Sankey's songs was an effective combination:

"Mr. Moody treats spiritual themes in a businesslike way. ...Hence the songs of Sankey, marked by a certain tenderness, come in to complement what is wanting in the speaker, — a fitting union of the two that makes the whole complete." —A Philadelphia newspaper editorial.

"Men untouched by anything Mr. Moody says, break down under the song-question, 'What Will the Harvest Be?' They go into the inquiry rooms ... Song-words of Mr. Sankey, made sharp by the Spirit, account for his power." —An 1874 issue of "The Moravian." (58)

In a statement by Moody, we again see the importance he placed on

the ministry of hymns:

"It is a mistake to regard the sermon as the only important thing or even the main thing. There is often more gospel in gospel hymns than in the sermon. Song carries the gospel into many hearts the sermon does not reach." (59)

Moody's favorite hymns were 'When the Mists Have Cleared Away' and 'The Ninety and Nine.'

As mentioned earlier, Moody tended to be dictatorial. As a result, he dominated others and commands were always coming from him. This may have bothered Sankey, but if it did, it never caused a problem in their friendship. In a similar way to R.A. Torrey, Sankey often describes how, in order to get along, he did anything Moody told him to do. This never upset him, though, since he had complete trust in Moody's decisions.

At the same time, Sankey also had the tactfulness to get Moody to do something without asking him, as the following illustrates:

One time at Northfield Sankey found a girl who was an exceptionally fine violinist. He wanted her to play a selection from the platform, but realizing that Moody was prejudiced against such a performance, he did not know what action to take. At last he found the solution. He asked her to play a composition written by May Whittle Moody, one of D.L.'s granddaughters! Moody listened and did not raise a single objection. (60)

Before Moody's death, Sankey received a nine-page letter from him, asking him to meet him at a certain New York hotel. Sankey took the first train following a meeting, but Moody had to leave for Philadelphia before he arrived. On December 22, 1899, Moody went to be with the Lord. Though Sankey knew from Moody's overwork that he might be nearing death, he was still shocked by the news. Some had thought Moody and Sankey had earlier gone their separate ways, but Sankey declared: "It is said we parted; but no, we never parted until death parted us at Northfield." (61)

Ira Sankey's true feelings towards Moody can be seen in this heartfelt tribute in the "Success" magazine:

I consider Dwight L. Moody the most remarkable man of the century, distinguished especially for his devotion to the cause of Jesus Christ, and the betterment of the world. His character is marked by great common sense and by the utmost sincerity, his heart by singleness of philanthropic purpose, and his life by the



tremendous power of achievement. His work has resulted in the conversion of hundreds of thousands of men and women in the two great English-speaking nations, England and America, marking him as the greatest religious general of his day. I believe his name will be held in everlasting remembrance by millions of the best people in the world. (62)

As a result of Moody and Sankey's dedication to the Lord as well as their determination to work so smoothly together, George Stebbins was able to truthfully say:

Prior to the work in which he and Moody were engaged in Great Britain, no other evangelist ever had associated with him a singer who not only assumed the direction of the musical part of the work, but whose name was linked with that of the evangelist as an associate, and everywhere given equal prominence. Nor was there before that movement the title of "Singing Evangelist" ever known. Mr. Sankey was the first to receive that designation, and he, therefore, became the pioneer of the ever growing army of consecrated singers who have for fifty years been following in his train. (63)

### **His Ministry to Children**

As the Lord Jesus Christ did not want the children to be kept from Him, so Moody and Sankey did not want children excluded from their ministry. Whether in Chicago or in Europe, they often held meetings exclusively for children. At one such meeting in London, between six and seven thousand children gathered to hear and participate in Moody's talk and Sankey's songs. In Liverpool, the newspaper recorded that over twelve thousand children attended a similar service. The young people especially enjoyed Sankey's singing, and sang along on the choruses with great enthusiasm.

The children's meetings were usually held on Saturday, and in addition to singing, Sankey sometimes spoke to the children. He felt such meetings could be enjoyed by the children by having brief, simple talks from several speakers, as well as songs which the children could participate in. Moody and Sankey were thrilled to see many children receive Christ as their Savior through these opportunities. As previously mentioned, it was through Sankey's earlier efforts in Chicago that the Spafford children found Christ before they were lost in the Atlantic.

After the Chicago fire, a mother sent for Sankey to come visit her little girl who had often attended their Sunday school. The family had lost all their property, and were living in one of the temporary houses built

for the poor. Sankey remembered her well and was glad to visit her. He perceived that she was beyond hope of recovery, and that the family was waiting for her to pass away:

'How is it with you today?' I asked. With a beautiful smile on her face, she said, 'It is all well with me to-day. I wish you would speak to my father and my mother.' 'But,' said I, 'are you a Christian?' 'Yes' 'It was last Thursday. I believed on the Lord Jesus, and now I am going to be with Him to-day.' That testimony from that little child in the neglected quarter of Chicago has done more to stimulate me and bring me to this country than all that the papers or any persons might say. I remember the joy I had in looking upon that beautiful face. She went up to heaven, and no doubt said she learned upon earth that Jesus loved her from that little hymn. (64)

When Sankey returned to America for rest in 1892, he kept himself busy by compiling a hymnal for youngsters. This was recreation to Sankey, but it kept him busy all winter.

In Sankey's autobiography, he tells a fascinating story which began with some brief words spoken to a youngster:

While holding meetings at Burdett road, London, in 1874, Mr. Moody and I one Saturday took a drive out to Epping Forest. There we visited a gypsy camp. While stopping to speak to two brothers who had been converted and were doing good missionary work, a few young gypsy lads came up to our carriage. I put my hand on the head of one of them and said: "May the Lord make a preacher of you, my boy!"

Fifteen years later, when Gypsy Smith made his first visit to America, I had the pleasure of taking him for a drive in Brooklyn. While passing through Prospect Park he asked me:

"Do you remember driving out from London one day to a gypsy camp at Epping Forest?" I replied that I did. "Do you remember a little gypsy boy standing by your carriage," he asked again, "and you put your hand on his head, saying that you hoped he would be a preacher?"

"Yes, I remember it well."

"I am that boy," said Gypsy Smith.

My surprise can better be imagined than described. Little had I

thought that the successful evangelist and fine gospel singer of whom I had heard so much, and whom I had so much admired, was the little boy I had met in the gypsy camp. Truly God has granted my wish of fifteen years before, and has made a mighty preacher of the gypsy boy. (65)

### **A Souwinner**

The purpose which was the goal of all the efforts of Moody and Sankey was that souls be won to Jesus Christ. This was Moody's desire before he met Sankey. And it was his desire to "draw the net" that motivated Moody to request Sankey's assistance.

As Ira Sankey began singing and visiting in the Chicago area, his burden for souls continued to grow. He strove to do everything he possibly could to reach these people with the gospel, and he became more skillful as a fisher of men.

When Moody first went to England, he left Sankey in charge at the tabernacle, and the church and Sunday school had conversions every week. Moody was pleased upon his return to see that the work had gone ahead far more than he had expected.

Sankey believed that people were lost and that it was his responsibility to win as many to Christ as possible. He once wrote to his brother, "I hope you are catching fish; we are catching men." (66) Since he believed the world was lost, he would never sing without spending time in prayer. As he would sing "Throw Out the Life Line," he genuinely meant what was expressed by the words. This sincere prayer and burden for the lost was communicated in his voice, and it was this concern that enabled his singing to be so effective.

At one time, a woman was greatly convicted as she heard one of Sankey's hymns in the street. Asking to see him, he met with her and she was at once led to Jesus Christ. Sankey was used to bringing many to the Savior in the meetings, but he continued to faithfully give the gospel to individuals as well.

Following the larger meetings, Sankey was effective in the inquiry room with those who decided to come. It has been said that he was quite gifted in his dealings with individuals, and it seems that he may have been especially successful with women:

Indeed, it would appear that in this respect he surpassed Moody, whose robust and direct methods were perhaps less appealing to the feminine temper. The most severe satirical critic of the evangelists even avers that when Moody took one inquiry room and Sankey the other, Moody had one female out of just one

hundred and Sankey ninety-nine. The numbers sound suspicious, but the general proportion may be suggestive. (67)

Sankey was very cautious in such dealings, as was mentioned earlier.

An instance is related that a lady found a girl for whom she was very concerned. When the girl was not able to feel peace, she brought her to the hall, and Sankey was speaking in the corridor to eight or nine that surrounded him:

He was dwelling upon "He that believeth hath everlasting life," dwelling specially upon the word "hath." The young woman listened intently, and at last grasped it, saying, "I have got it. That word 'hath' has done it all." And she went away rejoicing in Christ. (68)

A young man recalled that he had gone into the inquiry room where "Mr. Sankey walked up and down with me, and talked with me as if he had been my own father; and I found Christ."(69) Another man gave testimony at a revival meeting that he had found Christ in the same hall when Moody and Sankey were there: "I was brought face to face with God, and in the after meeting Mr. Sankey led me to Christ, and I am happy in Him today." (70)

On one occasion, the showman P.T. Barnum came to a service, and remained for an inquiry meeting, where Sankey was able to talk with him about his spiritual condition. Barnum told him to keep singing "The Ninety and Nine," and that when he got the lost sheep in the fold they would all be saved. Sankey later found out that he was a Universalist.

Sankey also tells of another gentleman that remained for an inquiry meeting. As the man was leaving, Sankey asked if he was a Christian. The man replied, "No, I am a Missourian."

Though some were not immediately receptive to God's plan of salvation, many were. Some went through a great struggle before they would accept Christ as their Savior. The following conversation shows the burden and wisdom Sankey had as he dealt with others concerning their eternal destiny. This young man had been under deep conviction and entered the inquiry room with many others:

I asked him if he was willing to accept Christ as his only Saviour. He bowed his head in his hands as he sat by my side. With great earnestness, while his whole frame shook with deepest feeling, he replied:

"Jesus will not accept me."

"Why not?"

"Because I have been an infidel for many years, a follower of Charles Bradlaugh, and for the last eight years have not ceased to speak in private and public against Christ. I have traveled over nearly all the world and have spoken everywhere against him and all those who professed to be Christians; now I fear he will not forgive me for what I have done"

"Do you want him to forgive you?" I asked.

"Well, sir," he said, "I do not know what is the matter with me or why I am here to-night. Some power that I do not understand has been working upon me for the last two days, and I am in a despondent state of mind."

I lifted my heart in prayer that I might make no mistake in dealing with this man. I waited for a moment, and then said, "My dear friend, what you need to-night is Christ; he will dispel your gloom and sorrow."

"But," he exclaimed, arousing himself from what seemed to be a deep reverie, "I have fought against him all my life, and I thought I was right, too."

"Did you have peace in your heart when you were preaching against Christ?"

He looked up at me. "No, I was a coward," he confessed. "I remember, while coming home from a long journey on the sea, we were one night driven by the storm near the rocks off a certain cape, and when I thought we were sure to go to the bottom of the sea, I got down on my knees and prayed to God to save us. The storm died, and with it went my prayers. For as soon as I thought we were safe, like a coward I went back to my old ways, and denied that there was a God."

"Well," I said, "let that go. What brought you here to-night?"

"I don't know," he replied. "I have not been in church for eight years; I have not spoken to a Christian in that time, as I have lived entirely among infidels and skeptics. But about a year ago I received a letter from my poor old mother, away over in Dundee,

Scotland. She asked me to make her one promise, that when Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey came back to America I would go to hear them, if they came to the place where I was. I answered her that I would. When you came here I thought I would have to keep my word to my mother, so I went to the Rink two nights in succession. Since that time I have had no rest. Yesterday and today I have had to close up my office. I am a civil engineer. I have been walking the streets all day, thinking, thinking. Not being acquainted with any Christians to whom I could speak, I thought I would go once more to the Rink. And now here I am, talking to you."

"My dear friend," I said, "it is an answer to your mother's prayer. She may be praying for her wandering boy this very night. Now, do not delay any longer. Yield to Christ and he will receive you."

He bowed his head, while his trembling form told how deeply his heart was moved. After a hard struggle he took my hand and said: "By the grace of God I take Jesus Christ as my Saviour now!"

After a word of prayer I asked him if he would not write to Scotland at once and tell his mother all about it, and he promised that he would. A few evenings later I met him at the door of the Rink. As he came up to shake hands and bid me good bye I asked him if he had written to his mother.

"Oh, yes," said he, "but not until I had sent her a cable dispatch first."

"What did you say in the dispatch." I asked.

"Well, I just said, 'I've found Jesus,' and signed my name to it."

"Thank the Lord," said I.

"Yes," he exclaimed, "that is just what my dear old mother cabled back to me, 'Thank the Lord, O my soul.'" (71)

### **Chapter 3 - Sankey's Financial Stewardship**

During his life time, Ira Sankey faced a number of crucial decisions which involved finances. The choices he made not only affected he and his family, but also the thousands and thousands that God wanted him to influence. Some of these decisions have been discussed in

relation to his spiritual decisions and desires, but will briefly be mentioned again.

We would probably have never heard the name Ira Sankey, had he been controlled by finances. His decision to join Moody was clearly one of faith, and not one of sight. Humanly speaking, to stay where he was meant greater security, a higher salary, and future benefits. And it was hard to determine the short or long term results of leaving. Yet Sankey had already learned to use his abilities for the Lord, and to do so without charge. Therefore, when it came time to give his abilities completely to God's service, allowing Him to provide, he was able to make the proper choice. It was then that he passed a vital test, choosing God's will over Sankey's.

Of course this was not the last time for this test. Certainly the Chicago fire must have given support to some of his early doubts. But Sankey returned to Chicago, to live in the corner of the cold and windy tabernacle. All his life he had enjoyed the comforts that a good income could provide. Now he was sacrificing personal enjoyment for the cause of Christ, putting the welfare of others before his own.

Once again, a larger salary and greater security was apparently available, this time through Philip Phillips. Here was an opportunity to use one's abilities completely in God's service, and to be well provided for in the process. The alternative was to accompany Moody to England, with little apparent means of support. Though the Sankey's were expecting another child, he was willing to follow God's leading while trusting in His provision. The Lord did lead, and Sankey went to England.

In Europe, the evangelists were very cautious concerning collections and finances, lest they be accused of preaching for money. Gradually, the people they labored with became convinced that they were sincere.

When Sankey first realized the need for a hymn book, no one appeared willing to publish them. Though everybody desired the hymns, he couldn't even give them away to publishers.

Mr. Moody finally determined to print the hymns through an arrangement with Morgan and Scott, and he personally guaranteed the initial costs. Sankey selected twenty three of his favorite songs, and the sixteen page collection of hymns was known as "Sacred Songs and Solos."

When the first five hundred hymnals were delivered to Sankey, the entire quantity was sold the first day. The copyright notice was not in either Moody or Sankey's name, but in the publisher's. It soon became

apparent that the book that couldn't be given away was now a best seller.

In Ireland, it was later rumored that Moody was becoming rich on the hymn book royalties. This he denied, along with some reports that the showman P.T. Barnum was behind the whole movement. In a large meeting of ministers and others, Moody explained how the royalties were being handled. The following statement by Moody, though it may not be the one from the described meeting, gives the details concerning the hymn book royalties and other issues:

A great deal has been said about our making a fine thing financially out of this movement from the sale of the hymn-books, organs, etc. Now I desire to say that up to the 1st of January we received a royalty from the publishers of our hymn-books, but from that date, when the solo book was enlarged, we determined not to receive anything from the sale, and have requested the publishers to hand over the royalty upon all our hymn-books to one of your leading citizens, Mr. H.M. Matheson, who will devote the same to such charitable objects as may be decided upon.

In regard to the organ question, I want to say, once for all, that we are not selling organs — that is not our mission, nor are we agents for the sale of organs; nor do we receive a commission or compensation in any way from any person or persons for the organ that Mr. Sankey uses at our meetings.

I hope now that no one here will think that I have made these statements to create financial sympathy in our behalf. We do not want your money; we want your confidence, and we want your sympathy and prayers, and as our one object in coming here is to preach Christ, we believe we shall have them, and that with God's blessing we shall see many brought into His fold. If we make mistakes, come and tell us. Then I shall not fear for the result. (72)

At the end of the London campaign, a statement from the publishers showed thirty five thousand dollars to the evangelist's credit. Mr. Matheson and an appointed committee would not spend this for general purposes, stating it wouldn't be right to charge Moody and Sankey for the opportunity for preaching and singing to them.

Following the Chicago fire, Moody's church was only partially rebuilt, due to a financial panic which came after the fire. The suggestion was made that the money be sent to the church which had been without its



leaders for two years, and this idea was adopted. With this large amount the church was completed and dedicated free of debt.

The hymnal gradually had new songs added to it, so that Gospel Hymns No. 1 was followed by 2,3,4,5 and 6. These books are still being sold in one volume with twelve hundred selections.

In 1885, only twelve years after the first publishing, the book which sold for only sixpence had earned three hundred eighty-eight thousand dollars. Certainly the publishers who had refused the book would have done most anything to get back the opportunity to publish it. After another fifteen years, the earnings had soared much higher:

G.T.B. Davis, a careful authority, states that in 1900 the royalties on one of the later songbooks, "Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs," reached a million and a quarter dollars, "one of the best paying literary properties in the world." (73)

J.C. Pollock has written concerning this huge amount of money that Moody and Sankey turned down. This they did when wealth was America's one gauge of success. He describes how Moody didn't even retain a yearly amount for his wife and family. Relying on other income, Moody generally maintained a reasonable standard. But occasionally, as large amounts flowed from the hymnbooks, Moody ran distinctly short.

Moody gave up a great deal financially, but Pollock brings out some important considerations regarding Sankey:

Sankey's sacrifice, however, was sharper. Brought up in prosperity, he had thrown away a good salary and pension rights, had refused large offers; and God had brought this unexpected wealth. Sankey loved money, loved to be smart and comfortable. Moody never noticed surroundings or clothes. Moody always would have work; Sankey's voice might fail. Yet he signed away his earnings. (74)

Though Sankey could have accrued a large fortune, he refused to, stating that the money would go to other causes. He did not have independent needs or even a fixed salary, but he released his rights because he felt the money was the Lord's and he didn't want to be accused of singing for financial gain.

Moody and Sankey did not advertise what they had done. It was seven years before Jane Mackinnon knew and she said, "I call it simply a magnificent fact, the relinquishing of a great fortune, as far as I can judge." (75)

When the trustees of the hymnbook funds needed a legal opinion, they selected Charles F. Southmayd. He was chosen not only because of his reputation, but also because he hated Christians, and when Moody and Sankey were mentioned he gave them various bad names and accused them of making big money through the meetings.

After he looked over the papers he called for the trustees' lawyer. Southmayd said then that he withdrew the charge that they were rascals but instead would say that they were fools to let such money slip through their hands.

In addition to completing Moody's church, the hymnbook funds built: "Carrubber's Close Mission in Edinburgh, Scotland, two buildings for the Northfield Schools in Massachusetts, and assisted with those of the Y.M.C.A. and First Methodist Church in New Castle." (76)

In addition to accusations regarding hymnbooks and organs, the evangelists were also said to be financially interested in the sale of cheap photographs sold on the streets. These pictures happened to be little more than caricatures of Moody and Sankey. After reading these reports in the London papers, a photographer wrote "The Times" and stated that he had offered about five thousand dollars to Moody and Sankey if they would pose for a photograph and permit him to copyright it, but his offer was refused. When this letter was published, it was a good help in establishing confidence.

Although Sankey gave up his royalties from the hymnbooks, he was not a poor man. He was adequately supported everywhere he went, but not from collections since Moody opposed that. Often, friends would insist that he take gifts, and he also received legitimate amounts determined by the committee. From time to time Sankey would give a special concert, and he was usually given a sum for this.

Sankey took good care of his homes, and had many simple souvenirs from the big meetings or famous places he had been in. He enjoyed showing friends around his home and sharing the stories relating to the items. Though he lived comfortably, those who knew him well never accused him of being wasteful or extravagant. Sankey didn't try to accumulate great wealth, although he could easily have done so. Even with the money Sankey had, he was generous. For years, he paid Fanny Crosby's rent, as well as sending money each month to provide for her other needs. Ira is a wonderful example to us of seeking God's will first, giving sacrificially, and experiencing God's faithful provision.

## Footnotes:

- (1) Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, (Philadelphia: The Sunday School Times Company, 1906) pp. 18-22.
- (2) Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, p. 23.
- (3) Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, p. 26.
- (4) Henry Drummond, *Dwight L. Moody*, (New York: McClure, Phillips and Co., 1900) p. 67.
- (5) Rev. W.H. Daniels, *D.L. Moody and His Work*, (Hartford, American Publishing Co., 1876) p. 395.
- (6) Caroline Leonard Goodenough, *Highlights on Hymnists*, (no title page), p. 395.
- (7) William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, (Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Sword of the Lord Publishers), p. 191.
- (8) William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, p. 264.
- (9) George C. Stebbins, *Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories*, (New York, George H. Doran Co., 1924), pp. 119-120.
- (10) Bernard Ruffin, *Fanny Crosby*, (n.p. , United Church Press, 1976) p. 225.
- (11) Ibid, p. 226.
- (12) Roger Swanson, "When Satan Lost Out to Sankey," *Faith for the Family*, December 1980, p. 25.
- (13) Rev. W.H. Daniels, *D.L. Moody and His Work*, pp. 232-233.
- (14) M. Laird Simons, *Holding the Fort*, (Philadelphia, John C. Winston Co., 1877) p. XXX.
- (15) William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, pp. 275-276.
- (16) Robert M. Stevenson, *Patterns of Protestant Church Music*, (n.p., Duke University Press, 1953) p.158.
- (17) Charles Ludwig, *Sankey Still Sings*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1947, 1974) p. 193.

- (18) Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, *The Life and Work of Dwight L. Moody*, p. 124.
- (19) Richard Ellsworth Day, *Bush Aglow*, (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1936) p. 160.
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- (21) Robert M. Stevenson, *Patterns of Protestant Church Music*, p. 156.
- (22) Elias Nason, *The Lives of Moody, Sankey and Bliss*, (n.p. B.B. Russell, 1877) pp. 255-256.
- (23) John Hall and George H. Stuart, *The American Evangelists Moody and Sankey*, (New York, Dodd and Mead Publishers, 1875), pp. 316-317.
- (24) Rev. E. J. Goodspeed, *A Full History of the Wonderful Career of Moody and Sankey*, (New York, Henry S. Goodspeed and Company, 1876), pp. 49-50.
- (25) William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, p. 165.
- (26) *Ibid.*, p. 278.
- (27) George C. Stebbins, *Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories*, p. 212.
- (28) Gamaliel Bradford, *D.L. Moody A Worker in Souls*, (New York, George H. Doran Company, 1927) p. 151.
- (29) Gamaliel Bradford, *D.L. Moody: A Worker in Souls*, pp. 173-175.
- (30) George C. Stebbins, *Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories*, p. 204.
- (31) Charles Ludwig, *Sankey Still Sings*, p. 48.
- (32) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- (33) Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, p. 27.
- (34) Roger Swanson, *Faith for the Family*, p. 25.
- (35) Richard S. Rhodes, *Dwight Lyman Moody's Life Work and Latest Sermons*, (Chicago, Rhodes and McClure Publishing Co., 1900) p. XLVII.

- (36) Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, pp. 14-15.
- (37) Charles Ludwig, *Sankey Still Sings*, pp. 71-72.
- (38) Charles Ludwig, *Sankey Still Sings*, p. 95.
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- (43) Rev. W.H. Daniels, *D.L. Moody and His Work*, p. 230.
- (44) Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos*, p. 16.
- (45) *When Sankey Sang on Christmas Eve*, Pilgrim Tract Society, Inc., (Randleman, N.C. 27317)
- (46) Rev. E.J. Goodspeed, *A Full History of the Wonderful Career of Moody and Sankey*, p. 50.
- (47) Bernard Ruffin, *Fanny Crosby*, pp. 157-158.
- (48) Richard Ellsworth Day, *Bush Aglow*, p. 163.
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- (54) Charles Ludwig, *Sankey Still Sings*, pp. 175-176.

- (55) Hon. John V. Farwell, *Early Recollections of Dwight L. Moody*, (Chicago, The Bible Institute Colportage Ass'n) p. 80.
- (56) Robert M. Stevenson, *Patterns of Protestant Church Music*, p. 161.
- (57) Gamaliel Bradford, *D.L. Moody: A Worker in Souls*, p. 158.
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