Amos Russel Wells

Twenty-Four
Memory Hymns
And Their Stories

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Twenty-Four Memory Hymns and Their Stories

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Twenty-Four Memory Hymns and Their Stories

By Amos Russell Wells

Boston And Chicago
UNITED SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

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Preface by Lutheran Librarian

In republishing this book, we seek to reintroduce the heritage of these songs of the heart and mind to a new generation of those seeking authentic spirituality.

Amos Russel Wells (1862-1933) wrote and edited many Christian books. He graduated from and later served as Greek professor at Antioch College. He was the editor of the *Christian Endeavor World*, associate editor of *Peloubet's Notes on the Sunday School Lessons*, and member of the "International Sunday-School Lesson Committee". Prof. Wells wrote more than 63 books. [Wikipedia]

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Preface

ON THE WAY to the Denver Christian Endeavor Convention, Mrs. F. E. Clark asked a large number of distinguished clergymen and eminent laymen that were upon the train, to prepare a list of what they considered the most beautiful and helpful Christian hymns. They did so, and a large and exceedingly fine list was the result.

There were many agreements, as, for instance, all had "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "Nearer, My God, to Thee." The hymns that received the most votes may fairly be taken as the leading hymns of the Christian church. It is these twenty-four hymns, together with their stories, that are given in this pamphlet.

It is hoped that they will be committed to memory by all Juniors, and it is suggested that one of these hymns be repeated in concert at every Junior meeting for a month. Let the pastor or superintendent tell the story of the hymn, and give an opportunity for those who can bring in additional stories to do so.

If we can add to our mind treasury the twenty-four leading hymns of the Christian church, what a splendid employment it will be!

I make no claim for originality in this book. The facts given, the anecdotes related, are brought together from the best works on hymnology. Practically nothing is mine except the selection and arrangement.

AMOS R. WELLS.

Boston.

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” by Edward Perronet

THIS, one of the greatest of hymns, was written by Edward Perronet, and is the one thing that has kept his name green in the earth.

Nevertheless, Perronet was a man worth knowing about, quite apart from his magnificent hymn. He was descended from French Protestants, and his father was an English clergyman who joined the Wesleys in carrying on their great revival of religion.

His son Edward also became a clergyman, and for a time labored with the Wesleys. Charles Wesley writes of his boldness in preaching. At one time he and Perronet were beset in a house by a mob of rough revilers, whom Perronet opposed courageously, while they abused him and threw dirt on him.

In his notebook, three years later, Charles Wesley speaks of a journey he made to London, with his brother John and with Perronet. “We were in perils of robbers, who were abroad, and had robbed many the night before,” writes Wesley. But, he stoutly adds, “We commended ourselves to God, and rode over the heath singing.” What a scene that must have been!

John Wesley wanted to hear Perronet preach, and Perronet, for some reason, would not preach before Wesley. One day Wesley, seeing Perronet in the congregation, announced that he would preach the next morning. Perronet did not want to make a scene, so the next morning he mounted the pulpit, explained that he had not consented to preach and felt that he could not, but nevertheless he would give them the best sermon that had ever been delivered. Thereupon he opened the Bible, and read the Sermon on the Mount from beginning to end, and without a word of comment. A song and prayer finished the service.

After eight years of cooperation with the Wesleys, Perronet left them, disagreeing with some of their regulations. They continued, however, to esteem and love each other.

The last years of Perronet were spent at Canterbury, where he was pastor of an independent church, and where he died in 1792, at the age of sixty-six.

He published three volumes of religious poems, one being made up of versified Scripture. Some of these poems deserve to be widely used, as, for instance, the hymn containing the stanza: —

"O grant me, Lord, that sweet content
That sweetens every state;
Which no internal fears can rent,
Nor outward foes abate."

None of Perronet's poems, however, have attained fame except the immortal "All hail the power of Jesus' name." It was written in 1779, and was first printed, in 1780, in *The Gospel Magazine*. The poet gave it the title, "On the Resurrection," and as he wrote it, there were eight stanzas, as follows: —

All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
To crown Him Lord of all!

Let high born seraphs tune the lyre,
And, as they tune it, fall
Before His face who tunes their choir,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Crown Him, ye morning stars of light,
Who fixed this floating ball,
Now hail the Strength of Israel's might,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Crown Him, ye martyrs of your God,
Who from His altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,
Ye ransomed of the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace
And crown Him Lord of all!

Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line,
Whom David Lord did call,
The God incarnate, Man divine,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall,
Go spread your trophies at His feet,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every tribe and every tongue
That bound creation's call
Now shout in universal song,
The crowned Lord of all!

In committing the hymn to memory you may prefer to use it as it now stands in our hymn books, where it is shortened and changed, and one stanza has been added: —

"Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all."

This last stanza was added by the famous hymn collector, Rev. John Rippon, in 1787.

At first the hymn was sung to the tune of "Miles' Lane," written for the hymn by William Shrubsole, a London organist, in 1780. Now, however, we use the tune "Coronation," which was composed in 1792, the year Perronet died, by Oliver Holden, a carpenter of Charlestown, Mass. Holden's queer old organ, on which this glorious tune was first played, is still to be seen in Boston.

The most famous story connected with Perronet's great hymn is told of the missionary to India, Rev. E. P. Scott. One day he saw on the street a man of so strange an appearance that he inquired about him, and learned that he

belonged to a wild mountain tribe among whom Christ had never been preached. Mr. Scott prayed over the matter, and decided to visit that tribe.

As soon as he reached their mountain home, he fell in with a savage band who were on a war expedition. They seized him, and pointed their spears at his heart.

At once the missionary drew out the violin that he always carried with him, and began to play and sing in the native language, "All hail the power of Jesus' name!" He closed his eyes, expecting death at any minute. When he reached the third stanza, as nothing had happened, he opened his eyes, and was amazed to see that the spears had fallen from the hands of the savages, and big tears were in their eyes!

They invited Mr. Scott to their homes, and he spent two and a half years among them, winning many of them to Christ. When poor health compelled him to return to America, they followed him for thirty or forty miles, begging him to come back again. This he did, and continued to work among them until his death.

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” by Martin Luther

MARTIN LUTHER was born in Eisleben, Germany, in 1483, a poor miner’s son. His heart was full of music when he was a boy, and he used to sing from door to door. After he became a man, and had led in the great revolt from the superstitions, sins, and injustices of the Roman Catholic Church, he did two things that more than all others established Protestantism firmly, — he translated the Bible into the language of the common people, and he wrote hymns also in their everyday language, to be sung to attractive, familiar tunes.

The first printed hymn book was published at Wittenberg in 1524, — eight hymns with tunes, and four of them by Luther. Since that beginning it is said that Germans have written more than 100,000 hymns, and the greatest of all is this hymn of Luther’s. Luther wrote some thirty-six hymns in all, but this is his noblest. Some say that the strong tune to which the hymn is always sung was composed by Luther, but he probably merely adapted a tune already in existence.

The hymn was written about 1528, and though many attempts have been made to associate it with various stirring events in the life of the great reformer, it is not known what occasion prompted it. He based it on the Forty-sixth Psalm, but it does not follow the course of the psalm; it merely catches up and carries on the psalm’s leading thought.

Whatever its origin, “Ein’ Feste Burg ist Unser Gott” had an immediate influence in Germany, and became for the Reformation what the great French hymn, La Marseillaise, became to France. It is now the national hymn of the Fatherland.

Says Dr. Benson:

"It was sung at Augsburg during the Diet, and in all the churches of Saxony, often against the protest of the priest. It was sung in the streets; and, so

heard, comforted the hearts of Melanchthon, Jonas, and Cruciger, as they entered Weimar, when banished from Wittenberg in 1547.

"It was sung by poor Protestant emigrants on their way into exile, and by martyrs at their death. It is woven into the web of history of Reformation times, and it became the true national hymn of Protestant Germany.

"Gustavus Adolphus ordered it sung by his army before the battle of Leipzig, in 1631, and on the field of that battle it was repeated, more than two centuries afterward, by the throng assembled at the jubilee of the Gustavus Adolphus Association. Again it was the battle hymn of his army at Lützen, in 1632, in which the king was slain, but his army won the victory.

"It has had a part in countless celebrations commemorating the men and events of the Reformation; and its first line is engraved on the base of Luther's monument at Wittenberg."

Luther comforted his own heart with the hymn, and when his great cause seemed almost lost he would turn to his friend Melanchthon and say, "Come, Philip, let us sing the Forty-sixth Psalm."

There is a story of the use of it by the German troops lodged in a church after the battle of Sedan. They were too excited to sleep. At last some one began to play Luther's hymn upon the organ. The soldiers united in a splendid outburst of song, after which they fell into peaceful slumber.

The hymn has been translated into English more than eighty times, but only twice with such success that the result has won

popular favor. In England, they sing the translation made by Thomas Carlyle, who was the one that introduced the hymn in that land, in 1831. His first stanza is:

A sure stronghold our God is He,
  A trusty shield and weapon;
  Our help He'll be, and set us free
From every ill can happen.
That old malicious foe
Intends us deadly woe;
Armed with might from hell
And deepest craft as well,
  On earth is not his fellow.

Our favorite American version is that by Rev. Frederic Henry Hedge, a great German scholar, himself a poet of no mean ability, whose translation appeared in 1852. Longfellow has a version in his "Golden Legend,"and

one of Whittier's war poems is in Luther's metre, and is called, "Ein' Feste Burg ist Unser Gott." Here is Dr. Hedge's translation:

A mighty Fortress is our God,
  A Bulwark never failing;
Our Helper He amid the flood
  Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
  On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
  Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
  The man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
  And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,
  Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God hath willed
  His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim, —
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
  One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,
  No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
  Through Him who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
  His kingdom is for ever.

“Calm on the Listening Ear of Night” by Edmund Hamilton Sears

To be the author of two of the most famous and helpful of Christmas hymns is glory enough for any man. That was the blessed result of the life of Rev. Edmund Hamilton Sears, D. D. He was a busy pastor; he wrote four or five books and many other poems, but long after all his other work is forgotten those two Christmas hymns will be remembered and sung.

Dr. Sears was born, lived, and died in a narrow region in Massachusetts. His birth was in 1810, at Sandisfield, and his death was on January 14, 1876, at Weston. He was a Swedenborgian in belief, but he was the pastor of Unitarian churches.

When he was a young man, in 1834, Mr. Sears wrote the first of his two splendid Christmas odes; when he was in the prime of life, in 1850, he wrote the second, “It came upon the midnight clear.” It is the first that is here given to commit to memory, “Calm on the listening ear of night.” The two hymns are alike and yet different. In Dr. Sears’s volume, “Sermons and Songs,” they stand, the one preceding and the other following a sermon for Christmas Eve on 1 Tim. 2:6. And here is our hymn, just as it appears in that book: —

Calm on the listening ear of night
  Come heaven’s melodious strains,
Where wild Judaea stretches forth
  Her silver mantled plains;
Celestial choirs from courts above
  Shed sacred glories there,
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,
  Make music on the air.

The answering hills of Palestine
Send back the glad reply,
And greet from all their holy heights
The Day-Spring from on high;
O'er the blue depths of Galilee,
There comes a holier calm,
And Sharon waves, in solemn praise,
Her silent groves of palm.

"Glory to God!" The lofty strain
The realm of ether fills;
How sweeps the song of solemn joy
O'er Judah's sacred hills!
"Glory to God!" The sounding skies
Loud with their anthems ring,
"Peace on the earth; good will to men
From heaven's Eternal King."

Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!
The Saviour now is born,
And bright on Bethlehem's joyous plains
Breaks the first Christmas morn,
And brightly on Moriah's brow
Crowned with her temple spires,
Which first proclaim the newborn light,
Clothed with its orient fires.

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,
And Christian hearts be cold?
Oh, catch the anthem that from heaven
O'er Judah's mountains rolled,
When burst upon that listening night
The high and solemn lay:
"Glory to God, on earth be peace,"
Salvation comes today!

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” by Bishop Brooks

When Phillips Brooks, the beloved and great preacher, was a boy, his parents had him and his brothers learn hymns. They used to enjoy reciting them on Sunday evenings, and when Phillips went to college he could repeat some two hundred of them. He never forgot them, and they often came up in his wonderful sermons.

It is not at all surprising, then, that Phillips Brooks began to write hymns himself. He often composed poems, and some of his poems have become very dear to all Christians. One of the best of these is the beautiful Christmas hymn that we are to commit to memory this month.

It is not at all surprising, either, that the great preacher should write poems for children. He loved all children, and liked nothing better, giant of a man as he was, than to get down on the floor and romp with them. He often wrote letters to his child friends, and these letters are among the most delightful bits of his writing.

Mr. Brooks preached in Philadelphia first, and then in Boston. Our hymn was written when he was rector of the Holy Trinity Church of Philadelphia, and for his Sundayschool. It was used by the children at their Christmas service in the year 1868. How little they understood what a famous song they were singing for the first time!

The lovely tune, “St. Louis,” to which the hymn is usually sung, was written for it at that time by Mr. Lewis H. Redner, the organist of the church, the superintendent of the Sundayschool, and teacher of one of the classes. It was in the middle of the night before that Christmas service that Mr. Redner woke up suddenly with angelic strains ringing in his ears. He took a piece of music-paper and jotted down the melody of the tune; then the next morning, before going to church, he filled in the harmony. So little did he, too, understand what a great thing he was doing.

It was a long time before the churches realized the beauty of the song. Not until 1892 was the hymn admitted to the hymnal of Bishop Brooks's own denomination.

Here is the Christmas carol, as Phillips Brooks wrote it. The fourth stanza is unfamiliar, because the writer himself left it out of the later copies of the poem; but you will want to see it, and probably to learn it with the others.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth;
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

Where children pure and happy
Pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to Thee,
Son of the Mother mild;
Where Charity stands watching,
And Faith holds wide the Door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

“From Greenland’s Icy Mountains” by Bishop Heber

ONE OF THE GREATEST and noblest of all hymn writers is Reginald Heber. He was born April 21, 1783, at Malpas, Cheshire, England. His father gave him every advantage, and he made the best use of his opportunities. He became a distinguished poet when a young man at Oxford. The first year after entering, when only seventeen years old, he took a prize for a Latin poem, and two years afterward he won a prize by a remarkable poem on Palestine, which was received with such applause as had never before been heard in that sedate gathering. After this success his parents found him on his knees in grateful prayer.

He became a minister of the Church of England, and began to write hymns. It was just becoming the custom to use hymns in Episcopal churches, and there were no hymn books.

The Christians of England were aroused at that time to the great call of foreign missions, and a collection was ordered to be taken for that object in all the churches.

On Saturday, May 29, 18 19, young Heber happened to be visiting his father-in-law, in whose church he was to preach the next day. This collection was to be taken, and a suitable hymn was wanted. They asked Heber to write one.

He retired to another part of the room, and in a short time read the first three stanzas of his famous hymn.

“There! That will do very well,” they told him.

“No, no, the sense is not complete,” answered Heber; so he added the splendid fourth stanza, the entire hymn being as follows, according to the poet’s own manuscript, which has fortunately been preserved for us (bringing $210 when sold, — a sum larger than the missionary collection received when it was first sung): —

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden strand,
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain.

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile:
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown;
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! O salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learned Messiah's Name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till like a sea of glory
It spreads from pole to pole;
Till o'er our ransomed nature
The lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign.

The beautiful and stirring tune to which the hymn is always sung was written as rapidly as the hymn itself.

A printed copy of the poem reached Miss Mary W. Howard, of Savannah, Ga. She admired it greatly, and wanted a tune for it. The metre was a new one at that time. So Miss Howard sent the poem to Lowell Mason, then a young bank clerk and singing-teacher in Savannah. In half an hour he sent back the "Missionary Hymn" tune that is universally used.

When Heber was forty years old, he became first bishop of Calcutta. He refused the appointment twice, for he dearly loved his quiet home and church, but his sense of duty finally compelled him to accept. As he went out to the India of which he had sung, he had an opportunity to breathe the "spicy breezes" that "blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle," and that carry the fragrance of the aromatic forests far out to sea.

His duties and authority extended all over India, Ceylon, Mauritius, and Australasia. He entered upon his work with great energy. It was he who ordained the first native minister, Christian David. He traveled far and wide, but the climate and the heavy tasks quite wore him out. In less than three years, on April 3, 1826, the good bishop suddenly died. Heber was greatly beloved. Thackeray called him "one of the best of English gentlemen." He wrote fifty-seven hymns, which were published after his death in one book. It is said that every one of these hymns is in use — an honor paid to no other hymn writer that ever lived.

His missionary hymn is his most famous production, and some one has ventured to say that it has accomplished as much for foreign missions as all the missionary sermons ever preached, — a statement he would be the first to rebuke.

But Heber wrote other great hymns, the greatest being the noblest hymn of adoration in the language, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" Tennyson pronounced this the finest hymn ever written in any language.

He also wrote the noblest warrior hymn ever composed: "The Son of God goes forth to war." Another favorite is his "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning." Still others are: "By cool Siloam's shady rill," "Lord of mercy and of might," and "Bread of the world in mercy broken."

Altogether, though not the greatest of English hymn writers, Heber may fairly be called the most poetical of them all; and his beautiful personal character, when one knows about it, adds a new beauty to his lovely hymns.

“Speed Away!” by Fanny Crosby

FANNY CROSBY is one of the greatest of the world’s hymn writers; perhaps only Watts and Wesley would rank above her. She is great in the number of her hymns — more than three thousand, and in the large number of them that have found favor with Christians and seem destined to live forever. To name only a few, what immortal glory belongs to the author of “Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,” “Rescue the perishing,” “I am Thine, O Lord,” “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,” “Jesus, keep me near the cross,” “’Tis the blessed hour of prayer,” “Safe in the arms of Jesus,” “Some day the silver cord will break,” “Thou, my everlasting portion,” “Saviour, more than life to me,” “All the way my Saviour leads me,” “Hide Thou me,” “Jesus is tenderly calling thee home,” “Lord, at Thy mercy seat humbly I fall,” and many other hymns almost as well known.

Frances Jane Crosby was born in Southeast, N. Y., on March 24, 1820. She is now, therefore, eighty-six years old, but is still, I believe, in excellent health.

She has been blind since she was six months old, but she is of a happy, contented disposition, and refuses to be pitied because of her great affliction. Indeed, when only eight years old she wrote: —

"O what a happy soul am I!
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be;

How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don’t!
To weep and sigh because I’m blind,
I cannot, and I won’t."

Fanny Crosby spent twelve years as a pupil in the New York Institution for the blind, and then she was a teacher from 1847 to 1858, teaching language and history. While she was yet a pupil she was a splendid illustration of what education can do for the blind, and once she recited a poem on the subject before the Senate and House of Representatives at Washington, and also before the governor and legislature of New Jersey.

In 1845 she began to write words for the music of George F. Root, who became music-teacher in the institution. Many of these songs became famous, and the royalties on one of them, "Rosalie, the Prairie Flower," amounted to nearly three thousand dollars. Another well-known song of hers is "There's music in the air."

It was not, however, till February 5, 1864, that she wrote her first hymn. It was written for W. B. Bradbury, and ever since that time he, and his successors, Biglow and Main, have been her publishers, accepting and paying for all that she writes. She has written many hymns for such singers and composers as Sankey, Doane, Lowry, Philip Phillips, Sweney, Sherwin and Kirkpatrick. Her songs have blessed thousands of lives, and there is scarcely one of them but has won many souls to the Saviour.

In 1858 Miss Crosby was married to another pupil of the institution, Alexander Van Alstyne, a musician, and the two lived together in tender sympathy and mutual helpfulness. She sometimes uses her full name, but often signs her hymns with pen names: A., C, D. H. W., V. A., Ella Dale; Jenny V., Mrs. Jenie Glenn, Mrs. Kate Grinley, Viola, Grace J. Francis, Mrs. C. M. Wilson, Lizzie Edwards, Henrietta E. Blair, Rose Atherton, Maud Marion, Leah Carlton, and still others!

She writes very rapidly, and some of her most famous hymns have been dictated almost as fast as the words could be taken down. Her hymns are full of the Bible with which her memory is stored. When she was a mere child she committed to memory the first four books of the Old Testament and the four Gospels.

In her home at Bridgeport, Conn., the aged singer sits peacefully awaiting the call to the world where she shall see all beautiful things and shall join — and what voice will be sweeter? — in the song of Moses and the Lamb.

The memory hymn by her which we are to learn this month is "Speed away" — a song that has done much to arouse interest in missions. It has

become the missionary farewell hymn, being sung at the parting with hundreds of missionaries as they set out upon their noble errands.

Speed away! speed away on your mission of light,
To the lands that are lying in darkness and night;
'Tis the Master's command; go ye forth in His name,
The wonderful gospel of Jesus proclaim;
Take your lives in your hand, to the work while 'tis day,
Speed away! speed away! speed away!

Speed away, speed away with the life-giving Word,
To the nations that know not the voice of the Lord;
Take the wings of the morning and fly o'er the wave,
In the strength of your Master the lost ones to save;
He is calling once more, not a moment's delay,
Speed away! speed away! speed away!

Speed away, speed away with the message of rest,
To the souls by the tempter in bondage oppressed;
For the Saviour has purchased their ransom from sin,
And the banquet is ready. O gather them in;
To the rescue make haste, there's no time for delay,
Speed away! speed away! speed away!

“How Firm a Foundation” Probably by Robert Keene

OUR MODERN HYMN BOOKS give but six of the seven original stanzas of the hymn, “How firm a foundation.” We give here the entire hymn. Those that prefer may, of course, learn it in the modern form.

It first appeared in a book entitled “A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors,” published in 1787 by a Baptist minister of London, Dr. John Rippon, who, though an ardent admirer of Watts, desired to have some hymns in addition to those by the great hymn writer. Many of the hymns in his collection were there gathered for the first time, and have been in use ever since. We print the hymn precisely as it stood in Dr. Rippon’s book, old style s’s and all: [Note: f’s have been replaced with s’s.]

Scripture Promises

CXXVIII. Elevens. K——

***Exceeding great and precious Promises*, 2 Pet. 3:4**

1 How firm a Foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your Faith in his excellent Word;
What more can he say than to you he hath said?
You, who unto Jesus for Refuge have fled.

2 In every Condition, in Sickness, in Health,
In Poverty’s Vale, or abounding in Wealth;
At Home and Abroad, on the Land, on the Sea,
“As thy Days may demand, shall thy Strength ever be.”

3 “Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismay’d,”
“I, I am thy God, and will still give thee Aid;”
“I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,”
“Upheld by my righteous omnipotent Hand.”

4 “When thro’ the deep Waters I call thee to go,”
“The Rivers of Woe shall not thee overflow;”
“For I will be with thee, thy Troubles to bless,”
“And sanctify to thee, thy deepest Distress.”

5 “When thro’ fiery Trials thy Pathway shall lie,
”My Grace all sufficient shall be thy Supply;"
“The Flame shall not hurt thee, I only design”
“Thy Dross to consume, and thy Gold to refine.”

6 “Even down to old Age, all my People shall prove”
“My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable Love;”
“And when hoary Hairs shall their Temples adorn,”
“Like lambs they shall still in my boom be borne.”

7 “The Soul that on Jesus hath lean’d for Repose,”
“*I will not, I will not* desert to his Foes;”
“That Soul, tho’ all Hell should endeavor to shake,”
“*I’ll never — no never* — no never forsake.”

[Last line agreeable to Dr. Doddridge’s Translation of Heb. 13:5.]

Notice the “K” following the “Elevens,” which indicates the number of syllables. That K is all that is positively known about the author. After Dr. Rippon’s death some one changed the “K” in later editions to “Kirkham,” but it is not thought that Thomas Kirkham wrote it. Daniel Sedgwick, an old-time student of hymns, heard an old lady in an almshouse say that the hymn was written by George Keith, a hymn writer of the day, and on that slender ground most of our modern hymnals attribute it to him. It is quite certain, however, that the author was Robert Keene, who was precentor in Dr. Rippon’s church, and who also wrote the tune “Geard,” to which it was originally sung.

We sing the hymn to the tune called “Portuguese Hymn,” because some one heard it in the chapel of the Portuguese Embassy in London, and jumped to the conclusion that it was Portuguese in its origin. It is not, however, but is the music of a Latin Christmas hymn, “Adeste Fideles” — the hymn which we have translated in the familiar “O come, all ye faithful.”

“John Reading” is falsely given by many books as the composer of this tune.

General Curtis Guild, Jr., has told in The Sunday- School Times how this hymn, “How firm a foundation,” thus wedded to a Christmas tune, was sung on a famous Christmas morning. The Seventh Army Corps was encamped on the hills above Havana, Cuba, on Christmas Eve of 1898 — a beautiful tropical night. Suddenly a sentinel from the camp of the Forty-ninth Iowa called, “Number ten; twelve o’clock, and all’s well!” A strong voice raised the chorus, and many manly voices joined in until the whole regiment was singing. Then the Sixth Missouri added its voices, and the Fourth Virginia, and all the rest, till there, as General Guild said, "on the long ridges above the great city whence Spanish tyranny once went forth to enslave the New World, a whole American army corps was singing:

> "‘Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
> I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
> I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
> Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.’

"The Northern soldier knew the hymn as one he had learned beside his mother’s knee. To the Southern soldier it was that and something more; it was the favorite hymn of General Robert E. Lee, and was sung at that great commander’s funeral.

“Protestant and Catholic, South and North, singing together on Christmas day in the morning — that’s an American army!”

Notice the Scripture reference that follows the title, “Exceeding great and precious Promises.” Look it up, and note its appropriateness.

Notice also the second stanza, omitted from many modern hymnals. Would you willingly lose it? When it is omitted, the real beginning of the Scripture quotation which answers the question, “What more can He say?” is left out. After the first seven lines, the rest of the hymn is all Bible.

Notice, too, the last line, with its footnote referring to Doddridge’s translation of Heb. 13:5. This translation brings out more clearly than our Revised or Authorized versions the multiplied negatives of the original Greek: “I will not, I will not leave thee, I will never, never, never forsake thee.”

The story is told of the venerable Dr. Charles Hodge, so greatly honored and beloved at Princeton, that one evening, when conducting prayers, the old man was reading this hymn, but was so overcome by its exalted senti-

ments, especially in view of his own close approach to the better land, that he had no voice for the last line, but could only indicate it by gestures, beating out the rhythm of the words.

Andrew Jackson, after retiring from the Presidency, became a devout member of the Presbyterian church. One day in his old age a company of visitors was with him, when General Jackson said, "There is a beautiful hymn on the subject of the exceeding great and precious promises of God to His people. It was a favorite hymn with my dear wife till the day of her death. It begins thus: 'How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord.' I wish you would sing it now." So the company did what was asked by the old hero.

Miss Willard wrote once: "Mother says that at family prayers in her home they were wont to sing together, 'How firm a foundation'; and her parents used to say it would never wear out, because it was so full of Scripture. When mother came back to us after being confined to her room six weeks, we sang that hymn for her, and she broke in at the verse about 'hoary hairs' and said: 'How I enjoyed that for my old grandmother who lived to be ninety-seven, and I enjoyed it for my dear father who was eighty-six when he passed away; and now my daughter enjoys it for me, who am eighty-four, and perhaps she will live on to be as old as I, when I feel sure she will have friends who will enjoy it just as tenderly for her.'"

A beautiful story is told of that noble woman, Fidelia Fisk, the devoted missionary to the women of Persia. One time when she was worn out with her heavy and difficult labors, she was attending a meeting. Her weary body greatly needed rest. Of a sudden a native woman came behind her as she sat on a mat, and whispered, "Lean on me." Miss Fisk heard, but scarcely heeded. Then again came the whisper, "Lean on me." Miss Fisk then leaned gently on her unknown friend. But again came the whisper, "If you love me, lean hard." The worn-out missionary took the words as a message from her Father in heaven, urging her, if she loved Him, to lean hard upon Him.

At one time a pastor told this touching story to his people in a Kansas village. They were greatly discouraged because of the failure of their crops. As soon as the story was finished, the minister sat down and let the people make their own application. At once a voice struck up our hymn, and one after another joined in until the little company had begun once more to "lean for repose" on the never-failing Arms:

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”

“My Country, Tis of Thee” by Samuel Francis Smith

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote many poems for the reunions of his class at Harvard, the famous class of 1829, and one of them, written when all the class were gray-heads, contains these lines: —

> “And there’s a nice youngster of excellent pith, —
> Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
> But he shouted a song for the brave and the free, —
> Just read on his medal, ‘My country,’ ‘of thee.’”

This “Smith” was Samuel Francis Smith, who wrote our American national anthem. He was born in Boston, October 21, 1808; graduated from Harvard, and studied for the ministry at Andover, becoming a Baptist clergyman.

It was while he was at Andover that he wrote the famous hymn. Lowell Mason, the eminent composer, had given him some collections of German songs for children, that he might translate them into English. “One dismal day in February, 1832,” Dr. Smith wrote long afterward, “about half an hour before sunset, I was turning over the leaves of one of the music books, when my eye rested on the tune which is now known as ‘America.’ I liked the spirited movement of it, not knowing it, at that time to be ‘God Save the King.’ I glanced at the German words and saw that they were patriotic, and instantly felt the impulse to write a patriotic hymn of my own, adapted to the tune. Picking up a scrap of waste paper which lay near me, I wrote at once, probably within half an hour, the hymn ‘America,’ as it is now known everywhere. The whole hymn stands today as it stood on the bit of waste paper, five or six inches long and two and a half wide.” This is the hymn: —

My country, ‘tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
  Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims’ pride,
From every mountain side
  Let freedom ring.

My native country, — thee,
Land of the noble free, —
  Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
  Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
  Sweet freedom’s song:
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
  The sound prolong.

Our fathers’ God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
  To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom’s holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
  Great God, our King.

“I never designed it for a national hymn,” Dr. Smith said afterwards; “I never supposed I was writing one.” Many of the best things come in just that unconscious way.

On the Fourth of July of that same year, 1832, the hymn was first sung, under Mr. Mason’s superintendency, at a children’s celebration in Park Street Church, Boston, and soon the song of the young poet became popular everywhere. It has never been adopted by our government as a national anthem, but it has been adopted by the people themselves, which is far better.

Dr. Smith became an honored pastor, in several important churches. At one time he was a professor of modern languages, for he was familiar with fifteen languages, and some one who visited him in his eighty-sixth year

found the vigorous old man looking around for a text book with which to begin the study of Russian!

At one time he was editor of *The Baptist Missionary Magazine*; at another time of *The Christian Review*. For fifteen years he was secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union. He was deeply interested in missions, and only second in fame to his national anthem is his missionary hymn, "The morning light is breaking." It was he who did much toward saving the "Lone Star" mission in India, by writing his poem with that title. Other well-known hymns of his are "Today the Saviour calls" and "Softly fades the twilight ray."

The fact that "My country, 'tis of thee" is written to the same tune as the English national anthem, "God save the King," has given rise to many stirring scenes at Christian Endeavor conventions all over the world. Very often one stanza of each anthem is sung, the conclusion being one stanza of "Blest be the tie."

This was done at the magnificent meeting on Boston Common, at the Christian Endeavor Convention of July, 1895. Eleven thousand persons were present in the great tent, and Dr. Smith probably never received such an ovation as when he came forward to read the poem which he wrote for the occasion, "Arouse ye, arouse ye, O servants of God." The noble verses were read with much fervor, though in a voice whose strength had been stolen by many years.

On November 19 of that same year the aged poet passed away. He died in the harness, just as he was taking the train to preach in a neighboring town on the following Sunday. And so passed from earth the Christian patriot, whose love for his country widened out into the missionary love for all the world.

“God Bless Our Native Land” by Charles T. Brooks and John S. Dwight

THIS BRIEF HYMN of only two stanzas is one of the best patriotic hymns ever written. Strangely enough, it is uncertain just who wrote it, and when it was composed. At least four different writers have declared positively that the hymn was their own.

It is certain, however, that the poem was written jointly by two Unitarian clergymen, life-long friends, — Rev. Charles Timothy Brooks and Dr. John Sullivan Dwight. These were both Massachusetts men, the first being born in Salem, and the second in Boston. They were born the same year, 1813, and graduated from Harvard the same year, 1832. Their deaths occurred in each case at an advanced age, but there was here a separation of ten years, for Mr. Brooks passed away in 1883, and Dr. Dwight in 1893.

Both were men of gentle and retiring disposition. Mr. Brooks was active in literary work, especially as a translator. Dr. Dwight was for many years a leader in the musical interests of Boston, and founded in 1852 *Dwight’s Journal of Music*, which he continued until 1881. Dr. Dwight was one of the band of enthusiasts who joined in the famous experiment of Brook Farm, where a company of lofty thinkers endeavored to put into practice their theories of simple, ideal living.

Both Mr. Brooks and Dr. Dwight laid claim at different times to be the author of this hymn, but the truth seems to be that each had a hand in the matter, and it is possible that it was translated from the German, or, at least, that a German poem furnished the fundamental idea. At any rate, the hymn first appeared in Lowell Mason’s *Carmina Sacra*, in 1841.

The following is the form in which it was there printed. Although there are several versions, this is the one best worth committing to memory:

God bless our native land;
Firm may she ever stand
    Through storm and night:
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do Thou our country save
    By Thy great might.

For her our prayers shall rise
To God, above the skies;
    On Him we wait;
Thou who art ever nigh,
Guarding with watchful eye,
To Thee aloud we cry,
    God save the state.

“Jesus, Lover of My Soul” by Charles Wesley

THE THREE GREATEST HYMN WRITERS of our English tongue are Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, and Fanny Crosby. There are many who think that the hymn we are to learn this month is the greatest hymn ever written; all men agree that it is the best of Wesley’s hymns, though he wrote no less than six thousand. Many of these six thousand, too, rise to the highest rank of religious poetry, such as those beginning: “Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,” “Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,” “A charge to keep I have,” “Arise, my soul, arise,” “Love divine, all love excelling,” “Depth of mercy! Can there be,” “Soldiers of Christ, arise,” “Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing,” and the noble Christmas hymn, “Hark! the herald angels sing.” That is a wonderful list of great hymns to be written by one man.

Charles Wesley, next to the youngest of nineteen children, was born at Epworth, England, on December 18, 1708. His father was Rev. Samuel Wesley, and his mother, Susannah Wesley, was a very remarkable woman. When he was a lad of fifteen, an Irish member of Parliament, Garret Wesley, a wealthy man, wanted to adopt him. His father left him to decide the matter, and he decided in the negative. The boy that was finally adopted became the father of the Duke of Wellington (Lord “Wellesley,” as he spelled “Wesley”), who conquered Napoleon at Waterloo. How history might have been changed if young Charles Wesley had not decided as he did!

In 1735 Wesley became a clergyman of the Church of England, and went with his brother John on a missionary journey to Georgia, becoming secretary to Governor Oglethorpe. Within a year, broken in health and discouraged, he was compelled to return to England.

Years before this, when Charles Wesley was at Oxford, he and his comrades were so strict in their religious methods that they were nicknamed “Methodists.” But both Charles and John had to learn more truly what religion really is. Charles first learned it from Peter Bonier, a Moravian of de-

vout spirit, and from Thomas Bray, an unlearned mechanic who knew Jesus Christ. John soon after had the same experience, and from their vivified preaching sprung the great Methodist churches of today. Under the preaching of the Wesleys — especially that of John Wesley, for Charles soon withdrew from the more active work — revivals flamed all over England. There was much persecution. Charles himself was driven from his church. Many of his hymns were written in time of trial, and it is said that "Jesus, Lover of my soul," was written just after the poet and his brother had been driven by a violent mob from the place where they had been preaching. Another story (and neither tale can be verified) says that the hymn was written just after a frightened little bird, pursued by a hawk, had flown into Wesley's window and crept into the folds of his coat. The probable date of the hymn is 1740. After a long life of nearly eighty years, Charles Wesley died, March 29, 1788.

Here is his great hymn, including the third stanza, which is now never sung: —

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh, receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me!
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Wilt thou not regard my call?
   Wilt thou not accept my prayer?
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall —
   Lo! on Thee I cast my care:
Reach me out Thy gracious hand!
   While I of Thy strength receive,
Hoping against hope I stand,
   Dying, and, behold, I live!

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
   More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
   Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy name;
   I am all unrighteousness:
False and full of sin I am;
   Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
   Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
   Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art;
   Freely let me take of Thee:
Spring Thou up within my heart,
   Rise to all eternity!

This was Finney's last song, sung by him the day before his death. The hymn has brought comfort to innumerable deathbeds.

Just before the battle of Chickamauga a drummer-boy dreamed that he had gone home and was greeted by his dear mother and sister. He awoke very sad, because both mother and sister were dead, and he had no home. He told the little story to the chaplain before he went into the battle. He was left on the field with the dead and dying, and in the quiet of the night his voice was heard singing "Jesus, Lover of my soul." No one dared go to him. When he reached the lines,

"Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
 Still support and comfort me,"

his voice grew silent; and the next day his body was found leaning against a stump, beside his drum. He had indeed gone home to his mother and sister.

Another beautiful story is told of this hymn in connection with the Civil War. In a company of old soldiers, from the Union and Confederate armies, a former Confederate was telling how he had been detailed one night to shoot a certain exposed sentry of the opposing army. He had crept near and was about to fire with deadly aim when the sentry began to sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul." He came to the words,

> "Cover my defenseless head
> With the shadow of Thy wing."

The hidden Confederate lowered his gun and stole away. "I can't kill that man," said he, "though he were ten times my enemy."

In the company was an old Union soldier who asked quickly, "Was that in the Atlanta campaign of '64?"

"Yes."

"Then I was the Union sentry!"

And he went on to tell how, on that night, knowing the danger of his post, he had been greatly depressed, and, to keep up his courage, had begun to hum that hymn. By the time he had finished, he was entirely calm and fearless. Through the song God had spoken to two souls.

“Nearer, My God, to Thee” by Sarah Flower Adams

THIS IS THE GREATEST HYMN ever written by a woman. Its author was the daughter of Benjamin Flower, an Englishman whose liberal views on politics caused his imprisonment in the Newgate Prison, London, for six months. While there, he was visited by Miss Eliza Gould, whose views were like his. After his release she married him, and they had two daughters, Eliza and Sarah.

It was Sarah who wrote the great hymn. She was born at Harlow, February 22, 1805. The mother died five years later of consumption, and both girls inherited her delicate constitution. Eliza was musical, and often wrote music for her sister’s songs. Sarah, beautiful and vivacious, was fond of acting, and had an idea that the drama could be made to teach great truths as well as the pulpit. Fortunately, however, her frail body compelled her to give up the actor’s career.

Miss Flower married, in 1834, a civil engineer, JohnBrydges Adams, and they made their home in London. Her beauty, her gay manners, her bright conversation, and her exalted character, made a deep impression upon many.

Eliza, the elder sister, became weakened in caring for Sarah through a long illness, and Sarah’s death, in turn, was hastened, doubtless, by her care for Eliza in her last sickness. The two passed away within a short interval, the elder in December, 1846, and Sarah on August 14, 1848. The hymns sung at both funerals were by Sarah, with music by Eliza.

The great hymn was written in 1840, and was first published the following year in a book, “Hymns and Anthems,” prepared by Mrs. Adams’s pastor, Rev. William Johnson Fox, for the use of his congregation. In 1844 Rev. James Freeman Clarke introduced the hymn in America, but it did not gain genuine popularity until, in 1856, there was published the beautiful tune, “Bethany,” which Lowell Mason wrote for it. In the Boston Peace Ju-

bilee of 1872 the hymn was sung to this tune by nearly fifty thousand voices, and the venerable composer himself was in the audience.

Many changes have been made in the immortal hymn by the editors of hymn books, but it is best to learn it and use it just as Mrs. Adams wrote it, which is as follows: —

Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song would be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee.
Nearer to Thee!

Though like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

There let the way appear,
Steps unto heaven:
All that Thou send'st to me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Or if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upwards I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Some interesting incidents are connected with this hymn. In 1871, three eminent theologians, Professors Hitchcock, Smith, and Park, were traveling in Palestine, when they heard the strains of “Bethany.” Drawing near, to their amazement they saw fifty Syrian students standing under some trees in a circle, and singing in Arabic “Nearer, my God, to Thee.” Professor Hitchcock, speaking afterward of the event, said that the singing of that Christian hymn by those Syrian youths moved him to tears, and affected him more than any singing he had ever heard before.

During the Johnstown flood, May 31, 1889, a railroad train rushed into the swirling waters. One car was turned on end, and in it was imprisoned, beyond the hope of rescue, a woman on her way to be a missionary in the far East.

She spoke to the awestruck multitude, gazing helpless at the tragedy. Then she prayed, and finally she sung " Nearer, my God, to Thee," in which she was joined by the sorrowing, sympathizing throng. As she sung, she passed away, coming nearer indeed to the God of her worship.

But the most inspiring of all the associations of this hymn is that connected with the death of the martyred McKinley. Dr. M. D. Mann, the physician, heard him murmur among his last words, “‘Nearer, my God, to Thee, E’en though it be a cross,’ has been my constant prayer.” On the day of his burial, Thursday, September 19, 1901, at half-past three, in all our cities and villages and wherever the daily press made way, by previous arrangement the people paused in their occupations. Trolley cars stopped. The streets were hushed. Men stood with bared heads. There were five minutes of silence over the land. In Union and Madison Squares, New York City, following this impressive silence, bands played “Nearer, my God, to Thee,” and the same hymn was used in countless churches at memorial services. Among others, it was used in Westminster Abbey, at the memorial service celebrated by command of King Edward.

“Just as I Am” by Charlotte Elliott

PROBABLY NO HYMN ever written has brought so many souls to Christ.

It was written by Charlotte Elliott, who was born in London, England, in 1789. She lived to be an old lady of 82, but all her life she was an invalid. Her suffering made Miss Elliott most thoughtful for others in distress, and most of her hymns were written with such persons in mind. Did not God have that purpose in permitting her to become sick?

This very hymn was written when she was in great pain and trouble, and it must have helped her to take to Christ her poor, worn-out body and find the help she so much needed.

The hymn first appeared in *The Christian Remembrancer*, of which Miss Elliott became editor in 1836. Soon after it was published a lady, who admired it greatly, had it printed in leaflet form, and widely distributed. Miss Elliott was very sick, and one day her physician gave her one of these leaflets to comfort her, not knowing that she was the author. It is said that the sufferer wept tears of grateful joy when she saw this evidence that God had so used her efforts, though put forth from a feeble body.

The hymn, as first printed, had six verses. The seventh stanza was added later, but certainly no one would be willing to lose it. Here is the hymn entire, — and will you not wish to learn all of it? —

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in Thee to find,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, (Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down),
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, of that free love
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
Here for a season, then above,
> O Lamb of God, I come!

Miss Elliott's brother, a clergyman, Rev. H. V. Elliott, once said, "In the course of a long ministry, I hope I have been permitted to see some fruit of my labors, but I feel far more has been done by a single hymn of my sister's." After the author's death more than a thousand letters were found among her papers, giving thanks for blessings received from "Just as I am." Moody once declared that no hymn has done so much good, or touched so many hearts.

For example, in the summer of 1895, the young people of the Lenox Road Methodist Church of Brooklyn sung this hymn in their service, and, as it happened, the hymn was sung also in the church service following. A few doors away lay a young lawyer in his room. All windows were open, and he heard the hymn twice repeated. At the time he was in the midst of a fierce struggle with conscience, and the hymn determined him to be a Christian.

One day Mr. Wanamaker told his great Sunday school in Philadelphia that one of their number, a young man who had been present only a week

before, lay dying, and had asked the school to sing in his behalf "Just as I am, without one plea." The hymn was sung with so much feeling, and especially the third stanza, that a visitor who was present was led to Christ, being freed on the spot from "many a conflict, many a doubt."

Once John B. Gough was placed in a pew with a man so repulsive that he moved to the farther end of the seat. The congregation began to sing "Just as I am," and the man joined in so heartily that Mr. Gough decided that he could not be so disagreeable after all, and moved up nearer, though the man's singing "was positively awful." At the end of the third stanza, while the organ was playing the interlude, the man leaned toward Mr. Gough and whispered, "Won't you please give me the first line of the next verse?" Mr. Gough repeated,

> "Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,"

and the man replied, "That's it; and I am blind — God help me; and I am a paralytic." Then as he tried with his poor, twitching lips to make music of the glorious words, Mr. Gough thought that never in his life had he heard music so beautiful as the blundering singing of that hymn by the paralytic.

“Rock of Ages” by Augustus M. Toplady

“Rock of Ages” and “Jesus, Lover of my soul,” are the two favorite hymns of most Christians.

The author of “Rock of Ages,” Augustus Montague Toplady, was an Englishman, and was born November 4, 1740. His father, Major Toplady, died in the siege of Cartagena in Colombia, South America, while his boy was only a few months old. Young Toplady was converted when on a visit to Ireland by an ignorant Methodist preacher, a layman, who was preaching in a barn.

His mind was vigorous, but his body was weak, and soon consumption seized upon him. He fought it for two years before it conquered, and it was during this period that he wrote his immortal hymn. It appeared first in the *Gospel Magazine* for March, 1776 — a magazine of which he was the editor. It was in the midst of an article in which he tried to figure out the number of a man’s sins, and then broke into this hymn, which sets forth our only remedy for sin: —

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law’s demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyestrings break in death,
When I soar through tracts unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne, —
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!

Toplady's title for the hymn was "A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world." The title fitly expressed the triumphant faith in which he himself passed away on August 11, 1778, saying, "My prayers are all converted into praise." He was only thirty-eight years old. The hymn was actually used as a dying prayer by Prince Albert, the beloved husband of Queen Victoria. It was sung in Constantinople by the Armenians during the fearful massacre. When the steamship London went down in the Bay of Biscay in 1866, the last man to escape from the ill-fated vessel heard the remaining passengers singing this hymn:

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

The hymn was an especial favorite with Gladstone, who was often heard humming it in the House of Commons, and who translated it into Latin, Greek, and Italian. His Latin translation is one of great beauty. Major-General Stuart, the famous Confederate cavalry officer, sung this hymn as he lay dying after the Battle of the Wilderness. Of many other death-beds this hymn has been the solace and the crown.

The story is told of a Chinese woman who, for the purpose of "making merit" for herself with her heathen gods, had dug a well twenty-five feet deep and fifteen in diameter. She was converted, and a traveler speaks of meeting her when she had reached the age of eighty. She was bent with age, but she stretched out her crippled hands toward her visitor, and began to sing:

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

The noblest incident connected with this hymn is related of the celebration of the fiftieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria. On this occasion there came an embassy from Queen Ranavalona III., of Madagascar, and in the company was a venerable Hova, who expressed the desires of his people for the prosperity of the Queen, and then asked permission to sing. It was expected that he would render some heathen song, but to every one's amazement he burst forth with

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

It was a striking proof of the power of Christian missions.

"Rock of Ages" was often sung by the Armenians at Constantinople during the terrible massacres.

The hymn is given as Toplady wrote it, and it will be seen that it is often mutilated in our hymn books. The second line of the last stanza is generally written:

When my eyelids close in death.

Toplady's line refers to an old belief that, when a person dies, the "eye-strings" snap.

As to the thought of "Rock of Ages," it probably sprung from the marginal translation of Isa. 26:4: "In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages," but Toplady doubtless combined that with such passages as "I will put thee in a cleft of the rock" (Exod. 33:22), "Enter into the rock" (Isa. 2:10), and "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).

Toplady wrote 133 poems and hymns, but nearly all are forgotten except this. One other, however, is a hymn of great beauty, and is cherished by many Christians: —

Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
Thou Shepherd and Guardian of Thine,
My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking resign;
If Thou art my shield and my sun,
The night is no darkness to me;
And fast as my moments roll on
They bring me but nearer to Thee.

“Take My Life” by Frances Ridley Havergal

Frances Ridley Havergal wrote so many helpful books, and lived a life so earnest and devoted, that she has had a very deep influence over the hearts of Christians. Of all her poems, the one we are to learn this month meant the most to her, and has meant the most to the world.

Miss Havergal was born in Astley, England, December 14, 1836. Her father was an Episcopal clergyman, a skilful composer of music, and himself a hymn writer. She was baptized by another hymn writer, Rev. John Cawood, who wrote “Hark! what mean those holy voices?”

Studying in England and Germany, Miss Havergal became a good Hebrew and Greek scholar, and knew several modern languages. She became also a brilliant singer and piano player, and a glittering career in society was open before her. But she considered all her talents to be only loans from the Lord, to be used in His service. She would not even sing, except sacred music, and for the purpose of winning souls. She lavished her strength upon work for the Master, teaching in Sunday schools, writing letters, writing many leaflets and books, conducting religious meetings, and making public addresses. She was often sick, and her life was short, but she accomplished a wonderful amount of noble work.

Miss Havergal’s beautiful consecration hymn was written on February 4, 1874. Here it is.

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing,
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own;
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

At the close of 1873 Miss Havergal came to long for a deeper knowledge of God. On Sunday, December 2, of that year she was brought to see, as by a flash of light, that she could not have the full blessedness of a Christian without a full surrender to Christ.

On the first of February, 1874, Miss Havergal was visiting in a home where there were ten persons, some of them not converted, some of them Christians but not very happy ones. A great longing seized upon Miss Havergal that all of these might, before she left, come to know her Saviour as joyfully as she had just come to know Him. That prayer was granted, and before she left the house. On the last night of her stay, February 4, she was too happy to sleep, and spent the night writing this hymn, closing with the triumphant line, “Ever, only, ALL for Thee!”

Miss Havergal made the hymn a standard for her own living. Years afterward she wrote in a letter, “I had a great time early this morning renewing the never-regretted consecration.” Then she went on to tell how she found she had really made her own all but the eleventh couplet, about love; she

felt that she had not given Christ her love as she wanted to, and she made that the object of her morning consecration.

Sometimes the earnest worker would conduct consecration meetings, and there is an account of one such meeting in particular, at the close of which she gave each person present a card bearing the words of the hymn, and asked them to take the cards home, pray over them, and then, if they could make them their own, sign them on their knees.

This gifted and truly consecrated woman died in Wales on June 3, 1879, at the age of forty-three. She was buried at Astley, and on her tombstone is engraved, as she herself wished, her favorite text: “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee” by Ray Palmer

THIS IS PROBABLY the greatest hymn written by an American. Its author, Ray Palmer, was the son of a judge, Hon. Thomas Palmer, and was born at Little Compton, R. I., on November 12, 1808. He became a clerk in a Boston dry-goods store, a student at Phillips Academy and at Yale, a teacher in New York and New Haven, pastor of several churches, and corresponding secretary of the American Congregational Union.

In 1830, immediately after his graduation from Yale, when Mr. Palmer was teaching in New York, he wrote his great hymn. He was then a young man of twenty-two.

“The words of the hymn,” he afterwards said, “were born of my own soul.” He was reading, in the quiet of his own room, a brief German poem of only two stanzas, picturing a suppliant before the cross. Touched by the lines, he translated them and added four stanzas of his own — the immortal hymn: —

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
  Saviour divine;
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
  Be wholly Thine.

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
  My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
O may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
  A living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
  Be Thou my Guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray
  From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
  Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
  A ransomed soul.

Dr. Palmer afterward said that when he was writing the last line, "A ransomed soul," "the thought that the whole work of redemption and salvation was involved in those words, and suggested the theme of eternal praises, moved the writer to a degree of emotion that brought abundant tears."

The hymn was copied into a little morocco covered book, which Mr. Palmer carried in his pocket, reading the verses in his hours of communion with the Father. Its use as a hymn is due to a chance meeting of Mr. Palmer on a Boston street with Lowell Mason, the famous musician. He asked Mr. Palmer for a hymn which he might use in "Spiritual Songs for Social Worship," which he was then preparing, and a copy of "My faith looks up to Thee," was at once made out in a near-by store. Meeting the author on the street a few days later, Mr. Mason exclaimed, "You may live many years and do many good things, but I think you will be best known to posterity as the author of 'My faith looks up to Thee.'"

Of this incident Prof. Austin Phelps once wrote: "One of those fleeting conjunctions of circumstances and men! The doctor of music and future doctor of theology are thrown together in the roaring thoroughfare of commerce for a brief interview, scarcely more than enough for a morning salutation; and the sequence is the publication of a Christian lyric which is to be sung around the world." The tune which Mason composed is the well-known and beautiful "Olivet," to which "My faith looks up to Thee" has always been sung.

The American publication was in 1832. In 1842 the hymn was introduced into Great Britain, and became very popular there. Indeed, it was not

till it had received this approval over the sea that it became widely known in America.

This was Mr. Palmer's first hymn, and he afterward wrote many others, among them "Come Jesus, Redeemer, abide Thou with me" and "Take me, O my Father, take me."

His translations of Latin hymns are especially fine, the best known being "Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,"and "Come, Holy Ghost, in love." Mr. Palmer's own favorite among his hymns was "Jesus, these eyes have never seen." From this hymn were taken the last words the poet uttered, as, the day before he passed away, he was heard faintly murmuring the stanza:

"When death these mortal eyes shall seal
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall Thee reveal
All glorious as Thou art."

Mr. Palmer was a man of gentle, lovable character, a saintly man, but a man of strong feeling and powerful enthusiasms.

The most touching incident connected with this great hymn is perhaps the story of eight young Christian soldiers that met for prayer in a tent just before one of the terrible battles of the Wilderness in the Civil War. They desired to write a statement which should show how they faced death and go as a comforting message to the relatives of those whom the coming battle might remove from earth. They decided to copy this hymn and sign it as their sufficient declaration of Christian faith, and they did so. On the morrow seven of these brave Union soldiers died for their country, and received in their own experience the blessed realization of the hymn's closing stanza: —

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul.

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory” by Sir John Bowring

THE AUTHOR of this hymn was a remarkable man, Sir John Bowring, who was born at Exeter, England, in 1792, and died in 1872. He was a very learned man. He could speak fluently twenty-two languages, and converse in one hundred. He was consul at Hong Kong, China, when the terrible Opium War broke out, and was afterwards governor of that British colony. He was twice a member of the British Parliament, and he made treaties for Siam and Hawaii with six European countries. He was an ardent student of the songs of Europe, and published several volumes of translations from more than twenty languages. His little book, “Matins and Vespers,” is full of beautiful religious poems. He was a sincere Christian, and lived a Christ-like life. The words he wrote, “In the Cross of Christ I glory,” were no unmeaning words to him, and they are fittingly cut in bold letters upon his tombstone. Sir John Bowring wrote other hymns that are often sung by all Christians. Some of these are: “God is love, His mercy brightens,” “From the recesses of a lowly spirit,” and “Watchman, tell us of the night.” The last was written in 1825, and Bowring did not know that it was used as a hymn till ten years later, when he heard it sung in a prayer-meeting of American missionaries in Asiatic Turkey.

But of course Bowring’s most famous hymn is the following: —

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o’er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o’ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming
Adds new lustre to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified:
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

In the cross of Christ I glory:
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

One incident of the siege of Peking during the Boxer massacres shows the hold this hymn has upon the Christian church. After the raising of the siege, and the terrible strain was over, the missionaries gathered in the Temple of Heaven, — that mysterious shrine which no one but the Emperor of China had been allowed to visit, and he only once a year. Around the royal marble altar in that heathen temple gathered the missionaries of the Cross, and sang the hymn which expressed the spirit that had sustained them during those dreadful weeks of suffering and danger — "In the Cross of Christ I glory." Let us never again sing the second stanza without thinking of that inspiring scene: —

"When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy."

“Sun of My Soul” by John Keble

“The Christian Year” is one of the world’s greatest books of poems. Every Christian should own it and read it. It was written by John Keble, and it is a series of poems on the different special services and saints’ days of the Episcopal Church.

The book was published in 1827, and within twenty-six years forty-three editions were sold. Before the writer died, he had seen ninety-six editions, and more than half a million copies had been sold. It is still sold in large numbers.

One Sunday four travelers chanced to meet in the desert of Mount Sinai, and three of them had copies of “The Christian Year.” During the Crimean War a daughter of Dr. Chalmers sent the English hospitals a whole cargo of the book.

But John Keble himself almost never read the book, and never liked to talk about it or hear it praised. He did not want to publish it, in the first place, and at last consented only on condition that his name should not appear in it. All through his life he was modest and retiring.

His life was very quiet. He was born on April 25, 1792, and died March 29, 1866. He was a remarkable scholar at Oxford, but became a country minister, and lived most of his life in charge of a village church at Hursley, — a church which he rebuilt largely out of the profits of “The Christian Year.”

He was a most dutiful son and brother, a tender, loving, pure soul. The last book in his hands, before he died, was a hymn book.

The two poems that begin “The Christian Year” have each given us a famous hymn. One is a morning hymn, beginning “New every morning is the love,” and containing the famous stanza: —

"The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask,
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God."

The other is the still more famous evening hymn. The poem from which it is taken contains fourteen stanzas. The first stanza is a description of the sunset: —

"'Tis gone, that bright and orbed blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze;
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light."

But not so does the "Sun of the soul" set upon our vision. The poet goes on with the stanzas which, taken here and there from among the others, make up our hymn: —

Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
O may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned today the voice divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick; enrich the poor
With blessings from Thy boundless store;
Be every mourner's sleep tonight
Like infants' slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take,
Till in the ocean of Thy love
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

“Am I a Soldier of the Cross” by Isaac Watts

Isaac Watts, who wrote this hymn, was the father of hymn writing in the English language, and the author of many of our greatest hymns.

He was born in Southampton, England, July 17, 1674. His father was not a member of the state church, and was twice thrown into jail for opposing it, so that when he was a baby his mother often carried him in her arms to visit his father in prison.

There are remarkable stories of young Isaac’s boyhood, one of them declaring that he begged for books before he could talk plainly, and others asserting that he began Latin at the age of four and wrote poetry at the age of seven!

He became a minister in London. He was a little man, only about five feet tall. His health was very poor all his life, but his church took loving care of him, for he was greatly liked. One day, when Watts was sick, Sir Thomas Abney invited him to his splendid home for a week. He became so dear to the household that they kept him there for the rest of his life, — thirty-six years!

Besides his preaching, Dr. Watts wrote much. He was a most zealous student of geography, astronomy, philosophy, and theology, and he wrote books on all these themes. His great life-work, however, as he himself saw, was his hymn writing.

Early in life he became wearied with the versified Psalms which the churches used and set out to compose hymns of his own. This was a new departure and met with persistent opposition, but his hymns soon became widely popular in nearly all the churches. In 1707 Watts published his famous collection of original hymns, which he entitled “Hymns and Spiritual Songs.” Only two or three copies are now in existence, and one of these sold in 1901 for $700. There were 210 hymns in this first edition, and 144 were added to the second edition.

The greatest of Watts's hymns is probably " When I survey the wondrous cross," and many — Matthew Arnold among them — have called it the greatest hymn in the English language. Among the other great hymns of this splendid Christian poet are "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun," "Before Jehovah's awful throne," "From all that dwell below the skies," "Come, let us join our cheerful songs," "There is a land of pure delight," "Our God! our help in ages past," "Alas! and did my Saviour bleed," "Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove," "Give me the wings of faith to rise." Many of Watts's children's hymns have become famous, such as "Let dogs delight to bark and bite," "How doth the little busy bee," and the sweet cradle-song, "Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber." Watts had no children of his own, but well did he know the child's heart.

The poet died November 25, 1748, and was buried at Bunhill Fields, London, near the graves of John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe. He is to be ranked with Charles Wesley, the two standing together at the summit of English sacred verse.

The noble hymn that we are to commit to memory was written by Dr. Watts in 1709, to follow a sermon on 1 Cor. 16:13, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." It is sometimes condensed to four stanzas, but surely we shall not wish to lose the last two. Here it is: —

Am I a soldier of the cross,
  A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause
  Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
  On flowery beds of ease?
While others fought to win the prize,
  And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
  Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
  To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
  Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
  Supported by Thy word.

Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer, though they die;
They view the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all Thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be Thine.

“Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus!” by George Duffield

In the spring of 1858 there was a great revival in Philadelphia, and one of the leaders of it was an earnest, manly young minister, not quite thirty years old, named Dudley A. Tyng. One day Mr. Tyng’s arm got caught in some machinery and fearfully torn. The arm was amputated, but in a few days the noble young man died of his injuries.

As he was dying he sent a message to the ministers who had worked with him in the revival, and the message began with these words: “Tell them, ‘Let us all stand up for Jesus.’” The words made a deep impression. They were quoted often before large assemblies, and they were made the basis of more than one poem.

Among Mr. Tyng’s most devoted friends was Rev. George Duffield. A few weeks after the sad accident he preached in his own church in Philadelphia, taking as his text Eph. 6:14, “Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness”; and closing his sermon with the hymn which he had just written, “Stand up, stand up for Jesus.” The song at once became popular, was introduced into the hymn books, and became an especial favorite of the soldiers during the Civil War.

Here is the hymn just as Mr. Duffield wrote it, including the two stanzas that are now never printed: —

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss:
From victory unto victory
His army He shall lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.

[Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
The solemn watchword hear,
If while ye sleep He suffers,
Away with shame and fear;
Where'er ye meet with evil,
Within you or without,
Charge for the God of Battles,
And put the foe to rout.]

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
The trumpet call obey;
Forth to the mighty conflict
In this His glorious day:
Ye that are men now serve Him
Against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger,
And strength to strength oppose.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone.
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own:
Put on the gospel armor,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls, or danger,
Be never wanting there.

[Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Each soldier to his post;
Close up the broken column,
And shout through all the host:
Make good the loss so heavy,
In those that still remain,
And prove to all around you
That death itself is gain.]

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
The strife will not be long;
This day the noise of battle,
The next the victor's song:
To him that overcometh
A crown of life shall be;
He with the King of Glory
Shall reign eternally.

Mr. Dumeld was the father of a poet, Rev. Samuel W. Duffield. He was a Presbyterian, and during his long life (1818 to 1888) he served Christ faithfully in many churches; but probably the most fruitful of all his labors was the writing of this hymn, which has inspired so many to speak and act boldly for their Saviour.

The reference, in the second stanza, to the disciples' sleeping in Gethsemane, recalls a sermon preached from that passage by Mr. Tyng during the revival, not long before his death. Note especially also the sixth line of stanza four, which is often changed (foolishly) to "And, watching unto prayer."

“Onward, Christian Soldiers” by Sabine Baring-Gould

THIS STIRRING POEM is the chief marching hymn in the English language. It was written very hastily one evening by a remarkable man, Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, then curate of an Episcopal church at Horbury, Yorkshire, England. It was the day before the Whitmonday holiday, in 1865. The children of his village school were to march to the next village and meet there the children of another school. No good song could be found for them to sing while marching, and it was to meet this emergency that the hymn was written.

It had originally six stanzas, as follows:

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before:
Christ the Royal Master
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See, His banners go.

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before.

At the sign of triumph
Satan’s host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory:
Hell’s foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise.

Onward, etc.

Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod;
We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.

Onward, etc.

What the saints established
That I hold for true,
What the saints believed
That believe I too.
Long as earth endureth
Men that Faith will hold, —
Kingdoms, nations, empires,
In destruction rolled.

Onward, etc.

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.

Onward, etc.

Onward, then, ye people,
Join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumphsong;
Glory, laud, and honor
Unto Christ the King;
This through countless ages
Men and angels sing.

The fourth stanza is now never printed, and is plainly inferior to the others; the second stanza is rarely seen.

Very soon the hymn appeared in our country, and the martial spirit engendered by our Civil War was, as Dr. Benson thinks, the cause of its immediate and great popularity. This popularity was augmented by the splendid tune written for the hymn in 1871 by Arthur S. Sullivan, the tune to which it is universally sung.

Mr. Baring-Gould was born in 1834 (January 28), and is still living, being rector of Lew Trenchard, Devonshire, — a "living" within the gift of his family, to which he presented himself in 1881. He is the owner of 3,000 acres of land, inherited through three centuries of ancestors. He holds the important office of justice of the peace (more important in England than in the United States).

Mr. Baring-Gould is one of the most versatile and industrious of men. His "Lives of the Saints" is in fifteen volumes. His "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages" is a famous work; so is his "Legends of the Old Testament." He has written a large number of learned books, besides many devotional writings and volumes of sermons. In addition, he is one of the most popular of English novelists, regularly producing one novel a year. An incomplete list of his works that lies before me includes seventy-three titles. All this work has been done with the pen, without the aid of a secretary, and Mr. Baring-Gould gives as the sufficient secret of his accomplishments the fact that when he has begun a task, he sticks to it till it is finished. He often does his best work, he says, when he feels least like working, and he never waits for "inspiration," but plunges determinedly at his work.

"Onward, Christian soldiers" is not by any means the only famous hymn Mr. Baring-Gould has written. Others from his graceful and vigorous pen are "Now the day is over," and "Through the night of doubt and shadow."

“Awake, My Soul” by Bishop Thomas Ken

THE FIRST GREAT hymn writer of England was the good Bishop Thomas Ken, who lived during the times of Cromwell and the kings that followed him. He was born in 1637, and died in 1711, after a long and troubled life, in which he took the part of a hero.

His mother died when he was a child, and he was brought up by his brother-in-law, that famous and pure-hearted angler, Izaak Walton. He went to school, therefore, at Winchester, and his name may still be seen there, cut in one of the stone pillars. He graduated from Oxford.

In 1679, the wife of William of Orange, the niece of the English king, asked for a chaplain, and Charles II. sent Thomas Ken to the Hague. But Ken had a dispute there, because he was too bold in rebuking some corruption in the court, and he left the Hague in 1680. Then Charles made him one of his own chaplains.

Once more he lived in Winchester, and in 1683 King Charles came there and asked Ken to give up his house temporarily for the accommodation of a certain dissolute woman who was with the King. “Not for the King’s kingdom,” was Ken’s prompt and unflinching reply.

Charles had sense enough to see that such a man was worth while, and the next year, when the bishopric of Bath and Wells became vacant, he asked: “Where is the little man who wouldn’t give poor Nell a lodging? Give it to him.” And so Thomas Ken became a bishop.

But Charles II. died soon after, and the uncompromising character of Ken soon got him into trouble again with the court. In 1688 he so offended James II. that he was sent to the Tower, but he was soon afterward acquitted. When William III. came to the throne, the heroic clergyman was deposed from his bishopric, and though Queen Anne received him back again into partial favor, and gave him a pension of a thousand dollars a year, he

was not restored to his place as a bishop. However, the last years of his life were peaceful, and he died serenely.

Bishop Ken, though he wrote many hymns, and wished his hymns to live on the lips of all succeeding generations, penned only three hymns that are now in common use. These three, however, are great compositions, and one of them, the "longmetre Doxology," "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," is more often repeated by bodies of Christians than any other set of words except the Lord's Prayer.

The other two hymns that have become famous are the morning hymn here given, and the evening hymn beginning, "Glory to Thee, my God, this night." The four lines of the immortal Doxology were originally printed at the close of both the morning and the evening hymns.

Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Awake, lift up thyself, my heart,
And with the angels bear thy part,
Who all night long unwearied sing
High praises to the eternal King.

Glory to Thee, who safe hast kept,
And hast refreshed me while I slept;
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake,
I may of endless life partake.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew:
Scatter my sins as morning dew;
Guard my first springs of thought
and will, And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day,
All I design, or do, or say;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.

“Abide with Me” by Henry Francis Lyte

Henry Francis Lyte, the author of this, one of the greatest of all hymns, was born June 1, 1793, at Ednam, near Kelso, Scotland, where also was born the poet James Thomson, author of “The Seasons.” He was early left an orphan, and in comparative poverty. Three times in college his poems won him prizes. At first he intended to be a physician, but fortunately he became a clergyman of the Church of England.

One day, in Cornwall, a brother clergyman, on his deathbed, sent to Lyte that the young man might give him spiritual comfort. To their mutual grief, they found themselves groping for the light, veritable blind guides. Their search led them into confident certainty, and Lyte emerged from that sick-room a changed man.

It was this experience, it is said, that prompted Lyte’s noble hymn, “Jesus, I my cross have taken.”

He took charge, in 1823, of a seashore parish, Lower Brixham, in Devonshire. There, amid rough seafaring men, he toiled for twenty-four years, till his death. He gathered a Sunday school of several hundred scholars, and trained a splendid company of seventy or eighty teachers. For this church he wrote nearly all his hymns.

But “the sword was too sharp for the scabbard.” Ever of delicate health and threatened with consumption, he became obliged to spend his winters in the warmth of southern Europe.

Greatly weakened, on the fourth of September, 1847, he was about to leave England for this purpose when he was seized with an irresistible desire to preach to his people once more. Against the protest of his amazed friends, he accomplished this purpose. “O brethren,” he said, as he entered the familiar pulpit for the last time, “I stand here among you today, as alive from the dead, if I may hope to impress it upon you, and induce you to prepare for that solemn hour which must come to all, by a timely acquaintance

with the death of Christ." He closed his service by administering to his weeping people the Holy Communion.

That evening the impulse to poetical composition came upon him, and he wrote his last and greatest hymn: —

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word;
But, as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide, with me.

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;
Come, Friend of sinners, and thus 'bide with me.

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile;
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee:
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

This hymn he handed to a member of his family that very night. Setting out the next day, Lyte reached Nice, where he died on November 20 of the same year, 1847, his last words being "Joy! Peace!" There his body lies, the grave marked simply by that cross which he named in the last stanza of his immortal lyric.

Thus "Abide with me" was written in the shadows of death. Moreover, Mr. Lyte had been having some trouble with his people, and it is said that the words, "When other helpers fail," were prompted by the estrangement of some of his helpers in the church.

In an earlier poem, "Declining Days," Lyte had longed to leave behind him

"Some simple strain, some spirit-moving lay,
Some sparklet of the Soul that still might live
When I was passed to clay."

In the closing stanza he had prayed:

"O Thou! whose touch can lend
Life to the dead, Thy quick'ning grace supply,
And grant me, swanlike, my last breath to spend
In song that may not die!"

Truly that prayer was answered. Few swan songs in all earth's history have been so honored by God and man.

The hymn was based, of course, on the scene at Emmaus, and the words (Luke 24:29), "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." It is not, however, an evening hymn; for the evening thought of by the poet in his hymn was the twilight of life, the night of death.

Of the eight verses originally written, and given above, the third, fourth, and fifth are usually omitted from our hymn books. Contrary to the usual result in such condensations, there is here a gain in force, as most readers will feel. All, however, will wish to commit to memory the entire hymn.

Lyte himself composed a tune for this hymn on the same evening when he wrote it, but the tune that is universally used with it was written by Dr. William Henry Monk, a noted London musician, in 1861. The tune was composed in ten minutes, to fill a blank in a hymn book.

Among Lyte's other hymns the best known are "Pleasant are thy courts above," "As pants the hart for cooling streams," and "Praise, my soul, the King of heaven." "In no other writer," says Dr. Breed, "are poetry and religion more exquisitely united,"

“God Be With You Till We Meet Again” by J. E. Rankin

THIS BEAUTIFUL BENEDICTION HYMN is known all the world around. It has closed, with its sweet strains of Christian farewell, Endeavor meetings beyond number. It is always the conclusion of our great Christian Endeavor Conventions.

The hymn was written in 1882 by Rev. Jeremiah Eames Rankin, D. D., LL. D., who was at that time pastor of the First Congregational Church of Washington, D. C. It was written to interpret the familiar words, “goodby,” which are merely a contraction of the sentence, “God be with you,” and it was composed as a Christian benediction hymn, without being intended for any special occasion. Here is the poem entire. The first, second, fourth, and seventh stanzas are all that are commonly sung:

God be with you till we meet again,
By His counsels guide, uphold you;
With His sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
’Neath His wings protecting hide you;
Daily manna still divide you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
With the oil of joy anoint you;
Sacred ministries appoint you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
When life’s perils thick confound you,
Put His arms unfailing round you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
Of His promises remind you;
For life's upper garner bind you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
Sicknesses and sorrows taking,
Never leaving nor forsaking;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again,
Keep love's banner floating o'er you;
Smite death's threat'ning wave before you
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again.
Ended when for you earth's story,
Israel's chariot sweep to glory;
God be with you till we meet again.

Chorus

Till we meet at Jesus' feet,
God be with you till we meet again.

I copy the poem from Dr. Rankin's own book, giving the form he preferred. He objected very strongly, and quite properly, to the changes introduced by the hymn-tinkers, such as, "Put His *loving* arms around you," "Daily manna still *provide* you," and the repetition in the chorus, "Till we meet *again*." These changes transformed the thought, and are certainly the reverse of an improvement.

Wherever Christian Endeavor has gone this hymn has been adopted, and it has been translated into many tongues. Not only have Christian Endeavorers come to love the song, but it has been adopted by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union as the benediction song of that organization also. It has been sung on many other farewell occasions, as, for example, in Memphis three years ago, when a company of three thousand persons, bidding farewell to President [Theodore] Roosevelt, broke out spontaneously with the familiar "God be with you till we meet again."

The music for this famous hymn was composed, at Dr. Rankin's request, by William Gould Tomer, at that time a schoolteacher in Carpentersville, N. J. Mr. Tomer's music was slightly revised by Dr. J. W. Bischoff, the blind organist of Dr. Rankin's church. It was sung in that church for the first time. It is an interesting fact that Mr. Tomer was a Methodist, and that the Methodists at Ocean Grove first made the hymn popular.

Dr. Rankin was descended from the Scotch Covenanters. He was the cousin of Melinda Rankin, the stout-hearted pioneer missionary to Mexico. He was born at Thornton, N. H., January 2, 1828, and died at Cleveland, O., November, 28, 1904, aged nearly seventy-seven years. His long and useful life included about thirty-five years as a pastor, and about seven years as professor and president at Howard University, that noble institution for colored people, situated in Washington.

Dr. Rankin wrote many poems, and published a volume of hymns. Among his hymns that have become especially famous is,

"Out of my darkness into Thy light,
Out of my weakness into Thy might,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come."

The well-known Christian Endeavor hymn, "Keep Your Colors Flying," was written for the Fifth International Christian Endeavor Convention, at Saratoga, where it was first sung. Dr. Rankin was one of the speakers at that convention, and was from the start deeply interested in Christian Endeavor. Writing concerning his famous benediction hymn, he once said: "It has had no sweeter recognition than that given it by its adoption by the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. Long, long, may they sing it!"

“O Day of Rest and Gladness” by Bishop Wordsworth

CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, who wrote this beautiful hymn of the Lord’s Day, was a nephew of the great poet, William Wordsworth, and his biographer. He was born in England in 1807, and died in 1885.

When a lad, he was athletic, and a famous scholar. At the early age of thirty he won a splendid position, becoming head of the school at Harrow. In 1844 he was made Canon of Westminster Abbey, and opposed the appointment of Dr. Arthur Stanley as dean, because of Stanley’s liberal views. In 1869 he became Bishop of Lincoln, and labored most successfully in that position till his death.

Bishop Wordsworth was a notable scholar, and wrote many books, especially an important work on Greece, and a learned commentary on the Bible. He wrote also many hymns, 127 in all, which he placed in a hymn book called “The Holy Year,” published in 1862. These hymns were written to illustrate his theory that hymns should not deal with personal, individual interests, but that they should teach the truths of Scripture, and voice the worship of the whole congregation.

The first hymn of the book — almost the only hymn of Wordsworth’s that is well known or much used — is the beautiful lyric we are to commit to memory. It is printed here just as it was written, but in our hymn books the fourth stanza is always omitted, as distinctly inferior to the others.

O day of rest and gladness,
   O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
   Most beautiful, most bright;
On thee the high and lowly,
   Through ages join in tune,
Sing Holy, Holy, Holy,
   To the great God Triune.

On thee, at the creation,
The light first had its birth;
On thee, for our salvation,
Christ rose from depths of earth;
On thee our Lord, victorious,
The Spirit sent from heaven;
And thus on thee, most glorious,
A triple light was given.

Thou art a port protected
From storms that round us rise;
A garden intersected
With streams of Paradise;
Thou art a cooling fountain
In life's dry, dreary sand;
From thee, like Pisgah's mountain,
We view our promised land.

Thou art a holy ladder,
Where angels go and come;
Each Sunday finds us gladder,
Nearer to Heaven, our home.
A day of sweet refection
Thou art, a day of love;
A day of Resurrection
From earth to heaven above.

Today on weary nations
The heavenly manna falls:
To holy convocations
The silver trumpet calls,
Where gospel light is glowing
With pure and radiant beams,
And living water flowing
With soul-refreshing streams.

New graces ever gaining
From this our day of rest,
We reach the rest remaining
To spirits of the blest.
To Holy Ghost be praises,
To Father, and to Son;
The Church her voice upraises
To Thee, blest Three in One.

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How Can You Find Peace With God?

The most important thing to grasp is that no one is made right with God by the good things he or she might do. Justification is by faith only, and that faith resting on what Jesus Christ did. It is by believing and trusting in His one-time *substitutionary* death for your sins.

Read your Bible steadily. God works His power in human beings through His Word. Where the Word is, God the Holy Spirit is always present.

Suggested Reading: *New Testament Conversions* by Pastor George Gerberding

Benediction

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

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