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SAVED BY A SONG
By Duane V. Maxey

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Music Hath Charm
More Harm Than Charm
Heaven's Music Can Out-Charms Evil Music
The Chorus Of Christianity

* * *

SAVED BY A SONG

- 01 -- A Woman Saved From Death By A Song
- 02 -- Thomas Ware Saved From Sin By A Song
- 03 -- A Backslidden Preacher Saved By His Own Song
- 04 -- Saved From Death On The Battlefield By A Song
- 05 -- Carradine Saved From Secular Employment By A Song
- 06 -- Alfred Cookman Saved In Suffering By A Song
- 07 -- Billy Bray Saved From Fear By A Song
- 08 -- John Lawley Saved From Sin By A Song
- 09 -- Louise Robinson Saved From Discouragement By A Song
- 10 -- Canaries Saved Amidst A Fearful Storm By Their Song
- 11 -- Saved From Sin's Darkness The Song Of Divine Light
- 12 -- Saved From Bachelorhood And Discouragement By A Song
- 13 -- Thomas Cook, Saved From Inbred Sin By A Song
- 14 -- Lyle Potter Saved From Carnality By A Song
- 15 -- Saved From Cowardice By A Song
- 16 -- Saved From Exposure To The Elements By A Song

- 17 -- John Stewart Saved From Harm By A Song
- 18 -- C. B. Fugett Saved From Sin By A Song
- 19 -- Amos L. Haywood Saved From Discouragement By A Song
- 20 -- A Card-Player Saved From Skepticism By A Song
- 21 -- One Boy, Then Many, Saved From Sin By A Song
- 22 -- Jesse Lee Saved From Warfare By A Song
- 23 -- Queen Victoria Saved From Cold Formality By A Song
- 24 -- A Roman Catholic Saved From Sin By A Song
- 25 -- Gipsy Smith Saved From Hunger By A Song
- 26 -- A Husband Named "Will" Saved By A Song
- 27 -- Saved From Suicide, Sin, And Sickness By A Song
- 28 -- Saved From Battlefield Dangers By A Song
- 29 -- Saved From Danger On The Mission Field By A Song
- 30 -- Saved From Complaint During Great Suffering By A Song
- 31 -- Many Souls Saved By A Song In An Empty Auditorium
- 32 -- A Family Saved From Sin, A Church Built, By A Song
- 33 -- One Saved From False Doctrine, Another From Sin, By A Song
- 34 -- Saved From A Preaching Failure By A Song
- 35 -- Saved From 30 Years Of Fruitless Seeking By A Song
- 36 -- The Mighty Baptism Of The Holy Ghost Received By A Song
- 37 -- Sadhu Sundar Singh Saved From Persecution By A Song
- 38 -- The New Birth Received By A Song
- 39 -- Saved From Hindered Revival Meeting By A Song
- 40 -- Cowboys Saved By A Song
- 41 -- William Schreck Saved From Sin By A Song
- 42 -- George Peck Saved From Sin By A Song
- 43 -- Saved From Crime's Penalty By A Song

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INTRODUCTION

MUSIC HATH CHARM -- English dramatist William Congreve (1670-1729) is credited with originating the oft-quoted saying, "Music hath charm to soothe a savage beast; to soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak," and probably few would question the fact that music is often endued with power -- either with power from God to produce much good, or with power from Satan to produce much evil.

Music endued with satanic power is seductive, draws one into sin and eventually into eternal destruction. It is said that one memorable night, a young lad and an old Scotchman, being in Paris together, found themselves in front of one of the dens of infamy. The fragrance of the spices of Araby seemed to float in the air, and the sounds of music and dancing broke upon the ear. The glitter and dazzle of fairyland was at the door. The young lad asked, "What is that?" The hand of the Godly, old Scotchman came like a vise to the wrist of the lad who was with him and the voice hardened to a tone the boy never forgot, as he said, "Man, that is hell!" What? It was a new idea to the country lad -- Hell, with an entrance like that? -- with the beautiful music, with all the colors of

the rainbow; with all the flowers, beauty, and delightful attractions? He had thought hell was ugly. But music empowered by the devil "hath charm" to drag one into the bottomless pit! Millions shall forever languish in the lake of fire, having been charmed and led into those eternal flames by the fiendish, "Pied Piper" of Hell, at least partly through the seductive power and enticements of evil music.

Music endued with holy power from God has exactly the opposite effect, as has been recorded both in the Bible and in the pages of history. Students of the Bible will recall the story of how, when threatened by powerful foes, "Jehoshaphat... appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten" (2 Chr. 20:18-22).

Again, during Old Testament times we read of how "when the evil spirit" came upon king Saul "David took an harp, and played with his hand" and "Saul was refreshed" and "the evil spirit departed from him" (1 Sam. 16:23). Endued with God's influence, David's music had that beneficial "charm" and effect upon the troubled king.

The holy and heavenly empowered impact of music can be seen in the New Testament as well. Acts 16:23-34 records the story of how Paul and Silas, having been beaten with "many stripes" and having been "thrust them into the inner prison" with "their feet fast in the stocks... at midnight... prayed, and sang praises unto God." Whereupon "suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

You know "the rest of the story" -- how Paul persuaded "the keeper of the prison" not to kill himself; how that jarred jailor cried out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and Paul and Silas "said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" and best of all how, in desperation that shaken jailor DID BELIEVE, freed those two midnight singers, dressed their wounds, fed them, "and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

Yes, empowered either by heaven or hell, "music hath charm"!

* * *

MORE HARM THAN CHARM -- In modern times, Bulldog Charlie Wireman ruefully related one instance in which music of the wrong sort ruined what might have been a good revival service. The following is taken from "Bulldog Charlie and The Devil":

I was engaged in a meeting in a country church. For some reason the pastor and song leader could not get to the service that night. They notified me they would not be present and asked me to get someone to lead the singing. When I arrived at the church some of the good brethren approached me. They informed me of the presence of a young man who was visiting friends. If desired, he would lead the singing. I said, "That will be fine." When he was introduced he took over the singing and the other part of the devotions. He was really a good singer. After the

congregation had sung three or four songs, he called on the relative he was visiting to lead in prayer. Then he led in two more songs and commented at great length. Then, he took the offering, and began to pick his guitar, meanwhile talking. He said that the Holy Ghost had been burning a song on his heart all day long. He knew when God put a song on his heart, He would give him opportunity to sing and so he had brought his instrument. When he began to sing the song the Holy Ghost burned on his heart it was 'That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine.' Adding insult to injury, when he came to the chorus, he out-yodeled any cowboy I ever heard. Then he took ten or fifteen minutes to introduce me to people I had been preaching to for more than a week. By now it was time to go home and we went "away sorrowfully."

* * *

HEAVEN'S MUSIC CAN OUT-CHARM EVIL MUSIC -- In her book, "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," Hannah Whitall Smith wrote:

I have been greatly instructed by the story of Ulysses, when he was sailing past the islands of the sirens. These sirens had the power of charming by their songs all who listened to them, and of inducing them to leap into the sea. To avert this danger, Ulysses filled the ears of his crew with wax, that they might not hear the fatal music, and bound himself to the mast with knotted cords; and thus they passed the isle in safety. But when Orpheus was obliged to sail by the same island, he gained a better victory, for he himself made sweeter music than that of the sirens, and enchanted his crew with more alluring songs; so that they passed the dangerous charmers not only with safety, but with disdain. Wax and knotted cords kept Ulysses and his crew from making the fatal leap; but inward delights enabled Orpheus and his crew to reign triumphant over the very source of temptation itself. And just so is it with the kingdom of which we speak. It needs no outward law to bind it, but reigns by right of its inward life. So that it is said of those who have entered it, 'Against such there is no law.' "

* * *

THE CHORUS OF CHRISTIANITY -- Under the preceding title in his book, "Nuggets of Gold," George Brubaker Kulp presented the following selection. The author's name was not given, the item simply listed as "Sel.":

I remember hearing a story in connection with our battlefields. One weary, dreary night, while our army was on the eve of a great and important battle, a soldier paced up and down before the tent of his General. Wearied with his monotonous work, he began to sing, half to himself:

"When I can read my title clear,"

After a little his voice grew louder, and he sang the hymn as though it were a song of victory. His tones rang out on the still night air. After a little, another soldier, off yonder, hearing the music, and fascinated by it, joined in. There was a duet. A little longer, and another voice, farther off, joined, and there was a chorus; and it was not long before the whole army, as far as the ear could reach on either side, was joining in that wondrous chorus, and singing in the presence of the enemy,

"When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the sky."

When I heard this story, it seemed to me that I could see in the far-off distance that wondrous carpenter's Son of Nazareth standing alone and singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men." After a little twelve disciples took up the refrain, and joined in the chorus. After a little longer -- in the next century -- a still larger company gathered, and sang it with all their hearts. In the next century a still larger number added their voices, and now, after eighteen hundred years have gone by, the music of that wondrous song which began with Him who stood in His father's workshop, is sung and echoed and re-echoed the whole wide world over. It is our revelation from God; and it is the impulse that lifts us all up to God.

* * *

God, can, and often has, used music to bring about some dramatic deliverances. The following stories vividly illustrate how, in various ways, people have been "SAVED BY A DIVINELY-ANOINTED SONG." I thought of categorizing these stories according to the type of salvation that was brought about through song, but I finally decided to present them in a random order, which may hold the reader's interest even more. It is my hope that this article which I have compiled, edited, and written will be a source of inspiration and blessing to all who take the time to read it. -- DVM

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01 -- A WOMAN SAVED FROM DEATH BY A SONG

In his book, "Effective Illustrations," William Moses Tidwell tells of a dramatic incident in which heaven empowered music had charm to soothe a savage beast:

One night a big, hungry tiger caught a woman in the woods by her house. He threw her down to the ground and was going to have a feast. She could feel his hot breath in her face.

Something seemed to tell her to sing. She began to sing hymns, as she was lying under the strong body of the great beast. This seemed to charm him. He did not go away, but he did not hurt her. He just stood over her and listened. But she did not dare to stop singing, or he might have eaten her up. She kept on singing till her husband returned home in the morning, for he had been off to work, and shot the fierce animal.

This woman believed her life had been saved because she sang praises to the Lord Jesus. She obeyed His voice when she felt that He told her to sing, and He caused the songs to save her life. How sweetly the Lord takes care of His children when they trust and obey Him.

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02 -- THOMAS WARE SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

Several early M. E. Historians recorded the marvelous story of how Thomas Ware was saved by a song. One of those records is found in "Heroes of Methodism" by Joseph B. Wakeley. The following occurred when Thomas Ware was a Patriot Soldier in the Revolutionary War. Quoting next from Joseph B. Wakeley:

Thomas Ware informs us that once, while he was in a thoughtful mood, in a thicket, a stranger passed him. The traveler, who could not see Mr. Ware in his concealment, began to sing as he passed by:

"Still out of the deepest abyss
Of trouble I mournfully cry,
And pine to recover my peace,
And see my Redeemer, and die.

"I cannot, I cannot forbear
These passionate longings for home;
O, when shall my spirit be there!
O, when will the messenger come!"

Mr. Ware goes on: "As he walked his horse slowly, I heard every word distinctly, and was deeply touched, not only with the melody of his voice, which was among the best I ever heard, but with the words he uttered, and especially the couplet,

"I cannot, I cannot forbear
These passionate longings for home?"

Mr. Ware was so charmed with the melody of the voice and the sentiments of the hymn, that he followed on at a distance, hoping to hear another of the songs of Zion. The stranger stopped at the house of a Methodist, and dismounted. Mr. Ware then concluded he must be a Methodist preacher, and would probably preach in the evening. This happy stranger, cheerful as an angel on an errand of mercy, was Caleb B. Pedicord.

Some Methodists in the town informed Mr. Ware that Mr. Pedicord, a most excellent preacher, would preach in the evening, and invited him to come and hear him. This was at Mount Holly, New Jersey.

Mr. Ware told him he presumed he had seen the preacher, and heard him sing along the road. Mr. Ware inquired of the brother if he knew such a hymn; he replied he did very well, and immediately commenced and sung it to the same tune; and, as he was an excellent singer, it so thrilled through the soul of Mr. Ware that it melted him to tears.

In the evening Mr. Ware went to hear this sweet singer of Israel preach. The singing had charmed him; what effect would the sermon have?

He says, "Mr. Pedicord sung and prayed delightfully." His text pleased him. It was just such a one as an early pioneer of Methodism would have taken -- repentance and remission of sins, the atonement, "the sinner's short way to God," the fullness and freeness of salvation. His text was from the 24th chapter of Luke: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "Soon," says Mr. Ware, "was I convinced that all men were redeemed, and might be saved -- and saved now, from the guilt, practice, and love of sin. With this I was greatly affected, and could hardly refrain from exclaiming aloud, 'This is the best intelligence I ever heard.'"

[Concerning this same story, another author wrote:]

A memorable instance of Caleb Pedicord's usefulness occurred on the highway to an appointment at Mount Holly. He was an excellent singer, and while riding slowly along he was singing,

"I cannot, I cannot forbear,
These passionate longings for home;
O! when shall my Spirit be there?
O when will the messenger come?"

A young soldier of the Revolution, wandering in a neighboring forest, heard him, and "was deeply touched not only with the melody of his voice, which was among the best he ever heard, but with the words, especially the last couplet."

"After he ceased," writes the listener, "I went out and followed him a great distance, hoping he would begin again. He, however, stopped at the house of a Methodist and dismounted. I then concluded he must be a Methodist Preacher, and would probably preach that evening." That evening the youthful soldier heard him, and Caleb B. Pedicord thus became "the spiritual father" of Thomas Ware, one of the most pure minded and successful of early Methodist itinerants -- for fifty years a founder of the denomination from New Jersey to Tennessee, from Massachusetts to the Carolinas, and, by his pen, the best contributor to its early history.

* * * * *

03 -- A BACKSLIDDEN PREACHER SAVED BY HIS OWN SONG

It was Beverly Carradine, in his book, "Remarkable Occurrences," who told the story of the preacher who wrote the song, "The Prodigal Boy," was himself reclaimed after he heard that song being sung:

The subject of this sketch, whose name was D____, had the double gift of writing religious verses or hymns and composing melodies to wing them on their flight. He collected a number of his own composition and had them published in book form. God honored this little volume of

Gospel song, as He had already blessed the ministry of His servant. Among these hymns was one he called "The Prodigal Boy." The chorus ran:

"But for one far away there remains a place,
For his father doth love him still;
And he can come back to his loving embrace,
Yes, he can come back if he will."

This hymn seemed to be peculiarly honored of heaven. The author scarcely ever sung it without seeing someone leave his sins and backslidings, and come home to God.

By and by something got in between the disciple and his Lord. Then followed a gradual loss of joy and power, later a greater drifting, and at last a heart-sickening distance from the Saviour, which the man perfectly realized in himself and which was equally manifest to others.

What bent led to the commencement of the backsliding is not known. The man may have been betrayed into the habit of scolding, fault-finding, unkind suspicion, and harsh judgment. Many go this way.

He may have unconsciously presumed on the prerogative of the Pope and became infallible. He may have spoken where God has been silent, set up a standard of Christian living according to his own ideas and notions, and insisted that his brethren adopt it or be excommunicated if not actually run out of the ministry and country for nonconformity to his opinions.

It may have been a grosser though not a more hardening sin that led him astray. Anyhow, his face clouded, his voice got rasping, his shouts ended, his songs ceased, his testimony was no more, and soon he was out of the ministry.

News came that he had taken up some kind of secular work, and then had moved to a large city. After that he was lost sight of for several years.

At this time the writer was sent to the same city as the preacher in charge of one of the churches. He was conducting a meeting in his own charge, and had a singer employed to assist him in that part of the work.

One night after the sermon had been preached, the altar call made, and many were coming forward, the leader of song, who was at the organ rendering hymn after hymn of invitation, suddenly saw Brother D____, the subject of this sketch, sitting in the back seat of the crowded auditorium. The singer knew D____ and his history well, and seeing him thus suddenly after the lapse of years; felt like one beholding the face of a man looking at him from the crest of a sea wave, who was supposed to be at the bottom of the ocean.

Calling me quickly to his side the singer told me that D____ was present, and where he could be found. After a few moments I turned my eyes in the direction which had been whispered, and saw one of the most melancholy faces I had ever beheld. The man had black hair and eyes, and

possessed a striking face naturally, but the deep-settled sadness on his countenance would alone have attracted attention in any assembly. It was not simply grief that had left its stamp, but the dull, dead look of a hopeless sorrow. The initials of the man's name were S. A. D., and if ever I saw a face that measured up perfectly to these initials, it was the countenance of D____, the man pointed out to us.

As I was looking at the wanderer, who had been washed up by a billow of God's providence from the great Deep of the world outside and thrown on the strand of our meeting, I noticed that the singer was playing the organ with one hand and busily turning over and looking at a number of different song books that were piled up on a shelf in the instrument. At last he seemed to get the one he wanted. glancing at the title on the back we saw it was a copy of D____'s own song book.

Opening quickly at a certain page, the musician deftly placed the book before him and began playing and singing "The Prodigal Boy." We never heard him sing better, and when he came to the chorus he fixed his eyes on D____ and fairly poured forth the words:

"But for one far away there remains a place,
For his Father doth love him still;
And he can come back to His loving embrace,
Yes, he can come back if he will."

The instant the singer began singing the hymn D____ gave a sudden start, and cast a look at the singer that was indescribable in its mingled surprise, pain and despair. But R____, the singer, sang on through each stanza, and reaching the chorus he would repeat it again and again, throwing his very soul into the words, until we saw D____'s head going down, his face buried in his hands and his form shaking violently; when he suddenly arose and, almost staggering up the aisle, fell down at the altar with groan that went to every heart. The song which he had composed and had often sung with the result of bringing sinners and backsliders to salvation, had been used by the Holy Spirit to draw the author himself back to God.

R____, with his face shining with joy, left the organ, ran to D____, and, throwing his arms around him, wept and prayed aloud a marvelous prayer in his behalf.

D____ was reclaimed that night, and before the week ended swept back into the blessing of full salvation, and he then joined our church.

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04 -- SAVED FROM DEATH ON THE BATTLEFIELD BY A SONG

George Brubaker Kulp records the following dramatic story in his book, "Nuggets of Gold." The story came originally from one who was present when the facts were related:

A party of northern tourists formed part of a large company gathered on the deck of an excursion steamer that was moving slowly down the historic Potomac one beautiful evening in the

summer of 1881. A gentleman who has since gained a national reputation as an evangelist of song, had been delighting the party with his happy rendering of many familiar hymns, the last being the sweet petition so dear to every Christian heart, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." The singer gave the first two verses with much feeling, and a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines that thrilled every heart. A hush had fallen upon the listeners that was not broken for some seconds after the musical notes had died away. Then a gentleman made his way from the outskirts of the crowd to the side of the singer and accosted him with, "Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?"

"Yes, sir," the man of song answered, courteously; "I fought under General Grant."

"Well," the first speaker continued, with something like a sigh, "I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed am quite sure, I was very near you one bright night eighteen years ago this very month. It was much such a night as this. If I am not mistaken you were on guard duty. We of the South had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my hand; the shadows hid me. As you paced back and forth you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart, as I had been selected by our commander for the work because I was a sure shot. Then out upon the night rang the words:

Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

"Your prayer was answered. I couldn't fire after that, and there was no attack made upon your camp that night. I felt sure when I heard you sing this evening that you were the man whose life I was spared from taking."

The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with emotion: "I remember the night very well, and distinctly the feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat, thinking of home, and friends, and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that He had created came to me with peculiar force. If He so cares for the sparrow, how much more for man created in His own image; and I sang the prayer of my heart, and ceased to feel alone. How the prayer was answered I never knew until this evening. My heavenly Father thought best to keep the knowledge from me for eighteen years. How much of His goodness to us we shall be ignorant of until it is revealed by the light of eternity! 'Jesus, lover of my soul,' has been a favorite hymn; now it will be inexpressibly dear."

The incident related in the above sketch is a true one, and was related to the writer by a lady who was one of the party on the steamer.

[A. B. Earle relates the same story very similarly, and in his book, "Pointed Illustrations," W. M. Tidwell seems to relate the same story, but somewhat differently, making the Confederate soldier the would-have-been, but saved "target" and Union soldiers -- plural -- as the would-have-been shooters. With no desire to reflect on him, I will state here that I suspect

Tidwell's story is variation of the same story that is related more accurately above. Preacher stories have a way of changing sometimes as they are mistakenly recalled and repeated, and, it could be that the source from whom W. M. Tidwell got the story also had it wrong. Regardless of which version is the most accurate, it is a striking incident of how one was "Saved by a Song."]

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05 -- CARRADINE SAVED FROM SECULAR EMPLOYMENT BY A SONG

In the following account, taken from "Graphic Scenes" by Beverly Carradine, we read of how Carradine was "clinched" into his call to preach. While it might be true that he would have faithfully answered the call without hearing the song mentioned below, it seems very obvious that God used that song to help Carradine "cross the Rubicon," abandon all secular employment and enter full-time into the ministry:

One night I entered this place, trying to persuade myself that it was impossible for me to preach, that I did not have the ability, the eloquence, and many other things that I thought to be necessary. I found that as I thus mentally argued against my entering upon such a calling and life, that I was becoming more and more darkened in mind and wretched in soul. About the time I reached the darkest portion of the woods, I felt that the valley was not as black as my spirit in its conscious lack of all spiritual light and comfort. I was in such misery, and there came upon me such a horror of darkness, that I fell upon the ground, and rolled upon the leaves in the most acute and overwhelming distress.

Suddenly, I know not why, I looked up, and cried out, "Lord, I will preach," when instantly the glory of God filled me, the dark valley fairly flashed and glittered, and laughing, crying, and shouting, I leaped along the path, jumped the branch, ran up the hill-side, on the top of which was my home, and fairly quivering with joy, and with my face all aglow with the happiness in me, I stood before my wife in the sitting-room, crying out, "I will preach."

This joy remained in me for several days, when I began looking again at my unfitness. I remembered I had never been trained to speak in public, had not gone to a theological college, was far from sure that I could preach a sermon, etc. Whereupon all the old gloom came back upon me.

I struggled along with the depression the best I could while I attended to the work at the store. One day I was out on a collecting tour, and had ridden from house to house, and plantation to plantation, with my bills and accounts, and was so wretched I could scarcely speak to the people I was calling upon. Happening to pass in the neighborhood of my home in the afternoon, my wife, seeing my fatigue and melancholy, insisted on my stopping while she had me a lunch prepared. I sat down at the table mechanically, and did not even notice what was placed before me. I fear I did not hear her when she spoke to me. I was in a gloom that God himself was putting on me to bring me to my senses.

I can not tell why I did so, but without any mental process leading up to the speech, without having anticipated saying it a minute beforehand, and just as if it was hurled out of me by some internal force, I struck the table with my clenched hand, and cried, "I will preach the gospel!"

Instantly the glory of God filled me, so that I laughed, wept, and rejoiced uncontrollably for fully a half hour.

Will the reader be out of patience with me, when I state that, in spite of all this evident will of God in my case, I allowed Satan in the next hour to direct my mind to the fact that I was no speaker, never had been one, and that the twenty-sixth year of one's life was a very late hour to get ready for such an important work. The consequence was, another spell of gloom followed. For in less than a minute after I allowed the doubt to enter, God's Spirit withdrew, and left me in the old-time horrible gloom.

It gives me pleasure to state that the next battle I fought proved a victory, and one that was glorious, complete, and permanent.

Several days after the occurrence just related, I was sitting one night in company with my wife in our room. She was sewing by lamplight on one side of the center-table, while I was on the other side unable to read, talk, and scarcely think, because of the burden on the heart and conflict in the mind. Forgetful of her presence and everything else in my misery, suddenly as had happened twice before, without any studied purpose of saying such words, here they came again, "God helping me, I will preach the gospel," when such a flash of light, such a tender, melting, thrilling joy entered my soul, that I leaped to my feet, and stood all trembling and transfigured before my wife. To this day I recall her words: "Beverly, how can you doubt God's will in this matter any longer after what he has just done for you?"

Thank God! I never did any more. From that hour to this, there has never been a question in my mind but that God, in his infinite condescension, called me to preach the gospel of his blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few weeks after this, I was recommended by the Church Conference of Yazoo City, Rev. R. D. Norsworthy pastor, to the Quarterly Conference for license to preach. The last named body licensed and recommended me to the Mississippi Annual Conference. A single vote was cast against me; it was that of the old man who had wept over me when I joined the Church. He doubtless could not see how so much could be done for a young man in so brief a period: converted July 12th, and here in October licensed to preach and recommended to the Annual Conference. It all looked like undue haste and general prematureness to him. He did not know that sometimes people can live a year in one day, and that God can marvelously carry on His work in a surrendered soul and life.

I was outside of the church while they were balloting on my name, having been requested to withdraw. I can see the old brick building now, the place where I had gone to Sunday-school as a child, and attended Church with my mother, brother, and sisters. My mind was not on what the Quarterly Conference was doing inside. I was in the shadow of an old tree which grew near the pavement, and was looking up at the distant stars, filled with thoughts of Christ, and feeling what an honor and responsibility was laid on me in preaching the gospel.

Some one came to the church door and called me. I went in, and was told by the presiding elder, the Rev. H. H. Montgomery, that I had been licensed to preach, and recommended for the

traveling connection in the Mississippi Annual Conference, the next session of which was to be held in December, 1874, in the town of Hazelhurst.

That night, when assigned to a room in the hospitable home of the Methodist pastor, I could not sleep; but lay thinking and praying on the bed. It seemed so strange to be a preacher. Then I felt so keenly my littleness and helplessness that I was quite cast down. Suddenly I had such a view of Christ presenting me to his Father, protecting and covering me by his love, grace, and power, that I was filled with one of the sweetest blessings I had ever experienced.

Having a long ride before me the next day, I arose before daylight without disturbing the family, saddled my horse, and left Yazoo City asleep behind me, while the firmament was twinkling above my head, and the morning star hung, a great orb of beauty, in the east, the beautiful forerunner of the unrisen sun.

I was five miles from town when the day began to break. The cotton and corn fields had little spots and banks of silver haze upon them. A sweetness and freshness was in the air of the early dawn that was like an elixir to brain and heart. The hills were standing up in the indistinct light, solemn and gray, like great altars. A slight mist on their heads looked like rising incense. Nature seemed to be sacrificing to God. I was drinking it all into my already over-flowing soul, when fully a quarter of a mile away, on one of the hills, I heard a man singing. His voice was rich, deep, and solemn. The hymn was a plaintive old melody. The words and music God brought to me through the misty, tremulous, beautiful morning air were:

"Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on;
A heav'nly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown."

How the sacred song echoed and re-echoed over the fields, in the valley, and was thrown back from the opposite hillsides! I was almost breathless, while the words "heavenly race" and "immortal crown" seemed to linger the longest.

The singer was hidden from me in the trees on the hill. He knew not that his song was reaching, filling, and blessing me, and this made it all the more powerful. I had checked the canter of my horse, and was walking him along the road, that I might catch every strain and hear every word. The singer was deliberate. He may have been employed in some kind of work, and hence took his time; so that a full minute elapsed, giving the strains of the first verse full time to die away in the distance before he resumed again. This time it was:

"A cloud of witnesses around,
Hold thee in full survey;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way."

This time I felt the wonderful strengthening and girding power of the words, and said most fervently, "Lord, it shall be so."

Again, after a pause, came another verse, thrown outward by the mellow, solemn voice of the singer:

" 'Tis God's all animating voice
That calls thee from on high;
'Tis His own hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye."

O, how the strain and words sank into the soul! The contrast between earth and heaven was so profoundly felt. The littleness of the one, and the greatness and blessedness of the other, seemed to be two facts unquestioned by the glowing heart.

As the unseen man sang that morning, would that all could have heard him in one of God's natural temples! And yet, as far as I could see, there was but one listener and worshipper beside himself. What a pity not to have heard such a sacred song, with the sides of the valley for sounding-boards, the opaline sky for a ceiling, the floating mist on the hilltops like incense rising from majestic altars, while the silent woods and fragrant canebrakes seemed actually to be drinking the scene and sound in, like the solitary listener!

The singer reached the fourth stanza. How triumphantly it rang out! Not a note or word was lost:

"That crown, with peerless glories bright,
Which shall new luster boast,
When victors' wreaths and monarch's gems
Shall blend in common dust."

The world looked very little, and its honors and rewards very contemptible, under the words of the last verse. Heaven seemed the only thing worth living for. The heart was all melted, and the tears dropped fast.

I had reined in my horse to hear the last strain and word of the hymn which God had sent to me. I also wanted to impress the scene upon my mind, and carry it away with me, a precious mental treasure forever. And I did so.

After a little, when the silence reigned unbroken over the fields, and the singer had gone, I touched my horse and galloped swiftly away. I had many miles to go, and much to do that day. I had to tell my employer that God had work for me; I wanted to see my mother and get her blessing; and then I wanted to reach my own home by sundown, where my wife was waiting to hear what had happened, and what I was going to do.

All this was attended to that day with a glad and overflowing heart. The die had been cast. I had crossed my Rubicon. I had turned my back on the old-time life forever, and was now the Lord's. I was His servant and ambassador from this time forth to preach his gospel.

But I took that morning picture with me. To this hour I see the dawning day, the outspread misty fields, the motionless woods, the silent, solemn hills, while floating over it all I hear the plaintive song of the unseen singer, whom God sent forth to nerve, encourage, and bless the soul of a young, newly-made preacher.

May he, with all others in the Christian ministry, be able to join in the last verse of the already quoted song:

"Blest Savior, introduced by thee,
Have I my race begun;
Till, crowned with vict'ry, at thy feet
I'll lay my honors down."

* * * * *

06 -- ALFRED COOKMAN SAVED IN SUFFERING BY A SONG

The following is taken from "Life Sketches of Alfred Cookman" by William McDonald, and once again it could be argued that the song mentioned did not really save the subject from anything. Yet, it may have brought Alfred Cookman a beautiful foretaste of the heaven he was soon to enter. It was not long after the song mentioned in this account that this saintly advocate of heart holiness went "Sweeping Through The Gates":

In 1871, in consequence of a laborious evangelist trip to the Pacific Coast, including Salt Lake City, it was thought best to hold but two National camp-meetings; one at Round Lake, and one at Urbana, Ohio. We may say here that Brother Cookman expressed to the writer, on the Sabbath before his death, that it was one of the deepest regrets of his life that he could not accompany the brethren on their tour to the Pacific Coast. "I would have regarded it," he said, "as the event of a lifetime."

The camp-meeting at Round Lake commenced July 4th. This was our second meeting at Round Lake. Alfred Cookman was there in the fullness of the Spirit. His sermon on the occasion was from the text, "I press toward the mark," etc. As we look back upon the scene, he seems to have been impressed that he was doing his last work. Every faculty of his being seemed laid under contribution to press the people into the fullness of God's great salvation. The people were greatly moved and signally blessed.

A writer, speaking of the Sabbath service, says: "Rev. Alfred Cookman preached in the afternoon to one of the largest and most attentive audiences that a camp-meeting ever saw."

A correspondent of the Troy Daily Times says: "At two P. M., Rev. A. Cookman, of the Newark Conference, preached from Philippians iii, 14, 'I press toward the mark of the prize of my high calling.' The speaker claimed that Paul was a man of one idea, but that idea was complete in itself. If he made tents, that was but a part of his religion. His preaching was tributary to his idea of holy living. He defined the mark of the prize as the Bible standard of Christian excellence, and spoke of the evil of a wrong standards. He spoke beautifully of the prize itself in the final

glorification of soul and body in the likeness of Christ. It is hard to do justice to a discourse which, with the happy manner of its delivery, made a deep impression."

Mr. Cookman's testimony at the love-feast is described by one present as follows: "When you were singing of the cross a few minutes since, I thought that I had drawn a circle around the cross, and Jesus had lifted me up from the foot of the cross, and given me a home in his heart. I am dwelling in the supreme center of bliss."

Although very greatly exhausted by the labors of the meeting, at its close, with his sister Mary and a few friends, he made a visit to Saratoga Springs. He seemed extremely happy, running over with joy. On his return to Round Lake, he took his family to Ocean Grove, hoping that a brief stay at the seaside would soon restore him to health... It has been truly said, the people "little thought that he was talking not only from his heart, but was talking away his heart. The last and best of Alfred Cookman was condensing itself into sentences to live and grow in men's minds forever."

At the close of the camp-meeting, Alfred Cookman returned to Ocean Grove, not to rest, for it seemed he could not rest. The "zeal of God's house was eating him up." He seemed to be consumed with desire to proclaim the wonderful love of the Holy Spirit. He spent the Sabbath at Ocean Grove, and preached from his favorite text, "Be filled with the Spirit." After the Sabbath, instead of resting, he is away to Martha's Vineyard, and there he preaches on "Be filled with the Spirit." Like Bishop Asbury, he seems to have felt that he was "divinely commissioned to preach sanctification in every sermon."

On his return from Martha's Vineyard he spent two weeks at Ocean Grove, and then with his family returned to his home to resume his pastoral work.

October 18th, Alfred Cookman attended the annual meeting of the Association, which met in New York, less than one month before his decease. He was in feeble health; but his soul was burning with desire to spread holiness. He urged that at least five National camp-meetings should be held the coming year, pledging himself to be at four of them. His zeal knew no abatement. But here his labors with the National Association ended. One month later he had reached the eternal camp-meeting grounds on the banks of the mystic Jordan, from which he could observe the battle between sin and holiness as it was being successfully waged by his associates, many of whom have since joined him in holy triumph.

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07 -- BILLY BRAY SAVED FROM FEAR BY A SONG

F. W. Bourne records the following in "The King's Son," a memoir of the unique, converted Irish-Miner, Billy Bray. He begins the account with a quotation from the book of James:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." -- James 1:12.

"The devil knows where I live," was a common saying of Billy's, in answer to remarks of persons that he knew but little or nothing of trial and temptation. He was tempted, so he said, to do many bad things, to swear, to tell lies, &c., and sometimes to end his life by throwing himself down the "shaft" of a mine. But he told the tempter, "old smutty-face," to do this himself, and see how he would like it, and not, as too many do, meet Satan more than half-way, go to him, and say, "Hae na ye some dainty temptation for me today now, Daddie Satan? I'm sair wracked for a coaxing temptation;" but Satan he always resisted, "steadfast in the faith." Nor was he in the habit of seeking sympathy from others; but "took joyfully" everything as it came along from the hand of a loving Father. And more than all, perhaps, he thought "it not strange concerning the fiery trials" which were permitted to come upon him, "as though some strange thing had happened unto him." If temptation were a strange thing, it would be still more strange that Jesus himself "suffered being tempted," that He might be "able to succour them that are tempted." It is marvelous that this power to succor Jesus acquired in the actual conflicts of life.

Mr. Gilbert says he has heard that in coming home from the mine on one occasion, soon after his conversion, Billy was thinking of several recent accidents, which had proved fatal to some of his acquaintances. On getting near a "shaft" where one or two persons had been killed, Billy's mind became possessed with the thought (he was not altogether free from the superstitions which still linger among persons of his class) that they would appear to him from the invisible world. His fears were greatly excited, and though, like many other troubles, quite imaginary, they were none the less terrible to endure. But he passed the place in safety, and of course saw nothing. On coming near another "shaft," he thought of one or two persons who had been killed there, and he trembled with the thought that he should see them. But he kept on his way, struggling with his emotions as best he could. In passing this second "shaft," he had to cross a bridge. Just as he was about to step on it, it came into his mind that the "devil himself" would meet him on the bridge. This thought thoroughly aroused him, and he exclaimed, "The devil! who is he? what can he do? The devil is a fallen angel! he was turned out of heaven by God! -- he is held now in chains! I am Billy Bray! God is my heavenly Father! Why should I fear the devil?" Then strong in the consciousness that God was his defense, he said, as if addressing a visible foe, "Come on, then, thou devil; I fear thee not! Come on, Lucifer, and all demons! Come on, old ones and young ones, black ones and blue ones, fiery and red-hot ones; come on, devil, and all thy ugly hosts!" Then, feeling himself delivered from the fears that had distressed and darkened his mind, he began to sing --

"Jesus, the name high over all,
In hell, or earth, or sky:
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly;"

when he was discovered by some of his neighbors leaping and dancing, and praising the Lord who had again given him the victory!

* * * * *

This story comes from "Commissioner John Lawley, A Living Hallelujah," by Salvation Army Gen. Bramwell Booth:

The gallery was cleared when the prayer meeting commenced, and, escaping from his friends, John set out for home, but he had not gone the length of a street when the burden upon his spirit brought him to a standstill. 'I will arise, and go to my Father, and say unto Him, "Father, I have sinned." This was the message of the meeting, and it was the cry of Lawley's soul. Mechanically he retraced his steps. Arrived at the theater, he crept down into the pit, and sat in the shadow of a column. A godly man who knew Lawley's praying parents, moved among the people searching for signs of soul anxiety. Noting the lad, he said to him, 'Johnny, don't you want to come to Jesus?' 'I want something,' replied John. 'Then, come.' As that humble lover of souls watched the lad spring to his feet, climb the ladder to the stage, and fall at the mercy-seat, how little he dreamed that his 'fishing' had captured one who would in the days ahead win thousands to God!

James Dowdle knelt beside John Lawley, and began to sing:

There is a Fountain filled with Blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The familiar words sounded new and strangely meaningful to the kneeling lad. He had come to seek the Lord with his whole heart; there were no reservations regarding sin or worldliness, nor how far he should obey God; therefore, no hindrance obstructed the Holy Spirit in coming to meet him. The song went on:

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That Fountain in his day,
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

The thing was as clear as the day. John had been a forgetter of God; he deserved Hell, but the Son of God had died to save him. His heart melted before that wonderful revelation of sin on the one hand, and of redeeming love on the other. An unutterable peace and joy flowed into his soul as he sang:

I do believe, I will believe,
That Jesus died for me;
That on the cross He shed His Blood
From sin to set me free.

On the wings of song he was born into the Kingdom of God.

* * * * *

In her book, "Africa, O Africa," Louise Robinson Chapman relates the following:

Then the day came when the chief sponsor sent a girl to tell me that every available space in room and hall was taken, and that if one more girl were admitted to the home, in one room, they would have to sit up during the night. I had spent many a sleepless night asking God what I was going to do with these many girls. One night I sat outside in the moonlight all night, waiting on God. He wonderfully touched my heart and encouraged me but I had not been able to see any solution for this pressing need. I told the girls we would have to stop admitting others some day, and it might as well be that day. I had scarcely sent this answer to them when a beautiful girl came saying that she would not be safe at her home another night, so she had come to ask for a home with the people of God. When I told her she could not stay, she lifted up her voice and wailed. She said it could not be possible that the home God had given Swazi girls had now shut its doors in their faces; that many, many girls were comforted today by the knowledge that if the way got too hard in their own homes they had another home prepared for them by the Lord. She made such an impassioned plea for the Swazi girls that we could not turn her away, and so we took her in -- the seventy-sixth girl of the home. She became a preacher's wife.

That night I went to the prayer hut to pray. The evening passed. God blessed my soul abundantly. I stood in the little hut in the darkness, my girls and my troubles forgotten and began to sing, "Riches in Glory." A thick fog seemed to come and cover the whole hillside upon which the mission station was built. Presently I saw a group of beautifully constructed buildings coming up out of the fog. Then I saw a great hand reach down and grasp these buildings. The fog disappeared and God's hand put those buildings right where they are today on the Endingeni Mission Station.

A voice spoke to me saying, "I am going to give you a mission station."

I said, "And it will take you, Lord, to build a mission station in this place."

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10 -- CANARIES SAVED AMIDST A FEARFUL STORM BY THEIR SONG

Once again, I will not declare that the subjects of this story were saved "from" anything, but they may have saved their lives by their singing. Like humans, birds do sometimes die of heart attacks. I recall once when helping to load some Thanksgiving or Christmas turkeys seeing one of them thus collapse from fear. Anyway, this story comes from the devotional book, "Consolation," compiled by Mrs. Charles E. Cowman, is the June 27 portion:

"Break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted His people." (Isa. 49:13.)

There is a story of song birds being brought over the sea. There were thirty-six thousand of them, mostly canaries. At first, after the ship sailed, the sea was calm and the birds were silent. They kept their little heads under their wings and not a note was heard. But the third day out the ship struck a furious gale. The passengers were terrified, the children wept. These strange thing

happened. As the tempest reached its height, the birds all began to sing, first one, then another, till the whole thirty-six thousand were singing as if their little throats would burst.

When the clouds of sorrow gather and break, when the storm rises in its fury -- do we then begin to sing?

If we fully understood the covenant of our God and believed His promises, should not our song break forth in tenfold joy when the tempest begins?

"A sweeter song my soul has heard
Than angel anthem, or of bird.

"It cheers my heart in storm and night,
And makes both storm and darkness bright.

"The sweetest song that comes to me --
The Song of Hope -- It may yet be!

"Is Winter here? Have song-birds fled?
They have but flown; they are not dead.

"The snows will melt, and with the spring
The birds return on joyous wing;

"The flowers that faded long ago
Will bloom again in summer's glow.

"So faces that have vanished here
In heaven's bright morn will reappear.

"Sweet voices that are hushed and still
Will there again our spirit's thrill.

"Hope may have flown, but not for aye,
True hope will live a deathless day.

"Above the clouds, beyond the night,
Faith soars and sings in living light.

"There comes the sweetest songs to me,
The Song of Hope -- It yet shall be!"

-- Selected

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11 -- SAVED FROM SIN'S DARKNESS THE SONG OF DIVINE LIGHT

The following is taken from Russell V. DeLong's book, "There Are No Moral Accidents," and can be used to illustrate how what we might term "The Song of Divine Light" has saved millions across the centuries from the darkness of sin:

During the summer of 1941, just before the war, Mrs. DeLong and I visited Mexico City as delegates to the International Congress of Religious Education. It was a glorious experience. En route we stopped at Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. In my opinion this is one of the greatest natural phenomena in America, if not in the entire world. Accompanied by five hundred others we followed the official guide to a depth 850 feet beneath the surface of the earth. We walked single file from one great room to another, squeezing through small openings in the rocks, observing the beautiful formations and gorgeous coloring of the stalactites and stalagmites.

After lunch we took the trip through the great room sometimes called the "big room" or the "King's chamber." It is a mile and a half long, 450 feet across and 320 feet to the ceiling and no one knows how deep. We encircled this room, walking perhaps four miles. At the end of the trip we approached what is called the "Rock of Ages," a massive formation of rock extending upward many feet and protruding forward. The guide requested all to be seated on the sloping incline of that great spectacle. He then informed us that in a few minutes all the lights would be extinguished and requested that all cigarettes and flashlights be put out and that silence reign, calling attention to the fact that for the first time many of us would be in stark

Soon the lights were turned off and we were in darkness and silence. I felt creepy and very uncomfortable. There we were sitting 850 feet beneath the surface of the earth. If the earth should quake only God would know where we were. After about ten seconds of such stark darkness I felt like saying to the guide, "We have seen it and felt it, please put on the lights." But another ten seconds passed and the uneasiness increased and finally when thirty seconds had elapsed -- it seemed like an hour. Then away down at the end of the cavern -- more than a mile and a half away a little speck of light appeared. At the same time a male quartet from that distance began to sing softly, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me; let me hide myself in Thee." The light grew larger and larger until it illuminated every corner and crevice of that cavern. As the light increased in intensity the singing grew in volume and as that blazing light filled the room, the quartet struck the last verse with tremendous vocal power:

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death;
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Well -- something happened to me. It seemed that a new room in my soul had opened. Something within me was stirred. I felt like shouting and praising God for the one sure, steadfast thing in all the world -- the Rock of Ages.

As I sat there in that darkness I remembered that away back 1,900 years ago, the world was shrouded in spiritual, stark darkness, when one night, a speck of light appeared in Bethlehem's manger and down over the centuries it has grown in intensity and clarity until it has penetrated and cast its glorious rays to the farthest corners of a sin-darkened world.

In these days of uncertainty and change, turmoil and tumult, thank God there is a rock upon which we can place our feet with certainty and security.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure
Save from wrath and make' me pure.

Jesus can forgive your sins -- your outward transgressions. He can also cleanse your soul. His is the double cure.

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12 -- SAVED FROM BACHELORHOOD AND DISCOURAGEMENT BY A SONG

The reader may chuckle at my title. However, I speak from many former years of experience as a bachelor preacher, and believe me, it is a real sort of salvation when God gives a bachelor preacher a good wife. Again, I will not labor the point of whether or not the songs of this portion of my article actually saved E. P. Hart from the things mentioned. However, it does seem that those songs made a positive impact on the subject. The following is taken from "Master Workmen," a book of sketches about Free Methodist Bishops by Richard R. Blews, and if I pinpointed it correctly, the incident occurred in the fall of 1859:

The laymen's camp meeting at St. Charles was starting on its historic career under the leadership of Dr. [John Wesley] Redfield. Stopping over night at his home en route, his father, a staunch Methodist, offered him one hundred dollars if he [Edward P. Hart] would not go among these "Redfieldites" who were reported to be noisy and boisterous and lacking in culture. He replied that he would go and investigate for himself. At first sight he was captured by the spiritual sweep of this mighty meeting. "Here for the first time," as he states in his Reminiscences, "I met Rev. B. T. Roberts. He was about thirty-seven years of age and in the prime of his manhood. With a Roman cast of countenance, high, full forehead surrounded with hair black as a raven's wing, I thought he was one of the finest looking men I had ever seen."

At this meeting another person came in contact with Rev. Edward P. Hart who was destined to cast a great influence over his life [as his wife]. One day, as the spirit of a love feast rose to high tide, Doctor Redfield cried out from the pulpit, "Mattie, sing 'Gideon.'"

A young woman stepping into the aisle, began to sing with a clear voice:

"See Gideon marching out to fight,
See Gideon marching out to fight,
See Gideon marching out to fight,
He had no weapon but a light.
If you belong to Gideon's band,
Here's my heart and here's my hand;
We're fighting for a home."

Before the first verse was finished, a tidal wave of glory swept over the encampment.

This young lady was Mattie Bishop, whom Dr. Redfield first met in his revival at Marengo. A Methodist born and bred, she was attending a Presbyterian college in the town. Although converted several years before and consecrated to sacrificial service in the upholding of the church, she had never prayed in a public congregation. She had believed the suggestion of Satan that she had no gift for prayer and that she would disgrace the cause by a stammering failure if she should attempt to pray in public. During a testimony meeting following the first altar service, she told how eagerly she desired full salvation. Under divine guidance Dr. Redfield called upon her to lead in prayer. With a flash of new light upon her soul, she replied, "I never had religion enough to pray in a public congregation in my life, but I am going to tonight!" Casting herself at the altar, she earnestly prayed until the baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon her. Ever afterwards she was a power in prayer.

It was this once timid girl who moved the camp with her song. In August, 1860, shortly after the close of the camp meeting, Mattie Bishop merged her life with Edward P. Hart to be a heaven-sent helpmeet, a power in song and exhortation, a companion of his labors to the end of the long road.

[Some time during their years of ministry together, Mattie again made a positive impression on her husband. It was on an occasion when things looked quite discouraging, or at least not very promising. From the same book we read the following.]

Although arrangements had been made previously, no one was there to meet Mr. and Mrs. Hart upon their arrival at the little village of Ida. After inquiring at the country store, directions were given to the residence of Mr. Jones over a mile away. Picture the two pilgrims trudging along the country road, rough with ruts and covered with snow -- he carrying the baggage and she the lunch basket. Weary with the journey, they put down their luggage to rest. Little did this look like the beginning of our widespread work in the great state of Michigan. Reflecting on the unpropitious outlook, turning to his wife he said, "Mat, this looks rather dubious, doesn't it?" As if moved by a sudden inspiration, she seized the basket, started up the road and began to sing,

"While there's a track I'll never go back,
But go on at the risk of my all."

When they reached the Jones' home, they found it was the residence of his father and that his son, the Rev. H. L. Jones, who had gone to East Milan ten miles away to arrange for a quarterly meeting, would return and take them the next morning to that place. These persecuted saints in

Michigan were pleased with the new preacher and with the discipline of the new church as publicly explained, and invited him to hold revival meetings with a view to organizing a church.

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13 -- THOMAS COOK, SAVED FROM INBRED SIN BY A SONG

This account is from Thomas Cook's book, "New Testament Holiness":

"My conversion was so clear and satisfactory that I can never doubt its reality. The beginnings of this life of loyalty and love I shall never forget . . . With such experiences, is there any wonder that I imagined the work of moral renovation was perfected, that sin was not only forgiven but fully expelled from my soul? But soon I discovered my mistake. My highly wrought emotions subsided, and petty annoyances of life chafed, the temptations of the devil assailed; and then I found out as pride, envy, unbelief, self-will, and other forms of heart sin stirred within me, that much needed to be done before I could be 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light'

My experience was full of fits and starts, changeable, and uneven. I was conscious also of a mighty want; there was a vacuum in my nature which grace had not filled, a strange sense of need which I cannot describe, but which all who love the Lord Jesus with less than perfect love will understand...

"For three years this half and half sort of life continued, when I was so dissatisfied that I felt unless I had something better I could not go on longer. . . I began at once to seek it, determined to give God no rest until I was sanctified wholly...

"Some months passed during which time I was almost in a state of despair; but my extremity was God's opportunity. At this very juncture, when I felt I must die unless I received the grace, an evangelist came to our town and proclaimed 'full salvation' to be a present duty and privilege. There was no disputing his teaching; if by faith, it must be a present experience. Faith cannot be otherwise than an instantaneous operation. It was like a revelation from heaven to me.

"The passage, 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' was instantly applied to my heart with such power as I had never felt before. What a fullness of meaning I saw in the words. Was I walking in the light? Truthfully I could answer, 'Yes, Lord; so far as I know I am doing Thy will, and will do it, by Thy grace helping me.' I saw then that the passage was not so much a promise as a plain declaration. If I walked in the light, the full cleansing from sin was my heritage, and all I had to do was to immediately claim. Without a moment's hesitation I did so, and cried out at the top of my voice, 'I claim the Blessing now.' My friends then began to sing:

"Tis done! Thou dost this moment save,
With full salvation bless;
Redemption through thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace.'

"While they sang, the refining fire came down and went through my heart, searching, melting, burning, filling all its chambers with light, and hallowing my whole being to God."

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14 -- LYLE POTTER SAVED FROM CARNALITY BY A SONG

This story comes from "Scriptural Death-Route Holiness," by L. S. Boardman:

Bud Robinson said, "When we're seeking to be sanctified, the Lord turns on the fire and He just lets it boil. And as it boils, all the unclean things come to the top and the Lord skims them off." And Bud Robinson said that when he sought to be sanctified, the Lord turned on the fire, and He skimmed off the impurities. And in his inimitable way, he said, "I thought I was goin' to skimmins."

I'm telling you, friends, I thought for the next three days I was going to skimmings. I was amazed at how much self there was in my heart. I was amazed at the ambitions that I had that were outside the perfect will of God. I was amazed at how much Lyle Potter existed, and how little there was of the Holy Spirit. I said, "Oh, God, I want this to be the end of myself until YOU can literally take over."

It was on the third afternoon: I was over in the little chapel, at the junior altar, on one of the little junior benches, praying. It was a little bench. I was kneeling beside it. A junior bench is just about my size anyway. In back of me, there at the junior altar, Reuben Bridgwater, the evangelist who was with us in the meeting, was kneeling and praying. While I prayed I was telling God I wanted Him to cleanse my heart. I was confessing to Him, but there was that uncertainty and that question. And I said, "I want to get to the end of myself." As I prayed and prayed, Reuben Bridgwater behind me, began to sing. And in his rich tenor voice -- I can hear it now -- "Oh, make me clean, Oh, make me clean. Mine eyes Thy holiness have seen. Oh, send that burning cleansing flame; and make me clean, in Jesus' name."

You know my friend, while he sang, I said, "Oh God, that's the thing I want. That's the thing I'm reaching out after. That's the longing of my soul. I'm going to have it or die." And as he sang, somehow I saw a promise. You know there are a lot of good promises in the Book. And the Lord said, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." I said, "Lord, I have been walking in the light for three days." I said, "Lord, I did exactly what Elisha did. I don't know anything else to do." The Lord said, "Son, there is a promise for you. You have done all you can do, and you've got to the end of yourself. Why don't you take hold of a promise and swing clear, and trust Me to sanctify you wholly?" "Oh," I said, "God, I'm afraid to. What if it doesn't happen? What if I go on with these doubts?" He said, "Son, there's only one step you've got to take, now that you are at the end of yourself. Get your eyes off your consecration, look to Me in faith believing, take My Word in faith believing and I will sanctify you, and let you know that the work is done."

"Oh," I said, "Lord, I'm afraid to do it." He said, "You'd better do it, son it's the only way." And then, Reuben Bridgwater got down to the chorus. And he began to sing, "He makes me clean. He makes me clean. Mine eyes His holiness have seen." I said, "Lord, I'm going to grab your

promise and swing clear." And do you know what I did? I took hold of a promise of God. I let go of everything in the world, and said, "Lord, I believe you now to cleanse my heart."

Oh! Glory to God! Something happened to me. I'll tell you what happened: I got to the end of Lyle Potter. You say, "Did you feel an electric shock?" I didn't feel a thing. "Oh," you say, "I thought there was a lot of feeling about this thing." Listen, friends, I didn't feel a thing. But I'll tell you one thing, I knew I had prayed to the end. If there was another prayer to pray, I wouldn't know how to form the words... I got to the end of Lyle Potter and God had been trying to get me there for sixteen years. I held on to my reputation, and I held on to my position, and I just didn't dare to let go. God wanted to get me to the end. And there in that little junior chapel, on the third afternoon, I got to the end. I stood up. I reached out my hand, and I said, "Reuben, I believe He has come." No manifestation. No exterior feeling. I knew in my heart I had finally prayed to the end.

You say, "Did you shout?" No, my wife still does the shouting. You say, "Did you jump over one of those benches?" I don't want to brag, but I could have jumped three of them as easy as not, but I didn't jump a thing. I was just as calm that day as ever in my life. I had the assurance in my heart that what I had put off doing for sixteen years, I had finally done -- prayed through, and touched the hem of His garment. There came a Spirit into my life that day that I had never had before. And let me tell you, it is an assurance that has never left me. From that day to this I've gone through deep valleys. I've walked through the darkness when it was so black that I couldn't see where I was going. I've been down when it seemed that I didn't have a bit of religion at all. But I knew that I had made a consecration. I knew I had committed something into His hands that He was faithfully keeping for me. I have never doubted from that moment to this that God accepted my consecration and my heart was clean.

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15 -- SAVED FROM COWARDICE BY A SONG

This little story comes from "The Voice of God" by Paul Frederick Elliott:

A friend of mine who was there [in China] during the Boxer movement told me how three precious girls gained victory in the hours of battle, faced the enemies of Jesus without a murmur, faced the Boxer's knife with such victory that those heathen men turned away and wept. While the streets ran with their blood, the hills echoed with the songs of victory. Two had gone down under the Boxers' knives, and the third one was left. She was offered freedom if she would desert her Christ and her faith. She waved it aside with scorn, and began to sing:

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me."

She endured hardness as a good soldier, and gave her life for Jesus and the salvation of the heathen.

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16 -- SAVED FROM EXPOSURE TO THE ELEMENTS BY A SONG

In his book, "Sketches of Western Methodism," James Bradley Finley gives the following story about early M. E. itinerant, James Axley. The reader is advised to bear in mind that J. B. Finley was himself an early M. E. itinerant, and "Western Methodism" in his day extended scarcely west of Kentucky, if at all:

James Axley could so present even a commonplace topic as to throw interest around it, and by his musical powers he conquered some who could be reached by no other means. I was informed that individuals who were at first his enemies and persecutors because of his profession as a Methodist preacher, on hearing him sing, became his warm friends; and I do not doubt it. Indeed, he told me of himself an instance in which he was relieved from great embarrassment by singing, without saying any thing as to the merit of the performance. It occurred while he was laboring on the Opelousas mission, in Louisiana, perhaps about the year 1807 or 1808.

In order to supply some destitute neighborhoods with the Gospel by enlarging his mission, he went on a tour of exploration where he was a stranger to all. Some of his adventures during that expedition would, by the ministers of this generation, be regarded as specimens of moral heroism. But omitting other incidents, I shall refer only to the point in hand. One evening, after riding all day without any dinner, he called at a house where the family consisted of a widow lady, a grown daughter, a number of children, and some servants, none of whom were religious. The lady and her family regretted his coming, would not grant his request to remain over night, and clearly indicated, by looks and actions, that he was an unwelcome guest.

The reader may ask why he did not leave immediately. The reason was, he knew, if defeated in obtaining lodging there, nothing remained for him but a berth in the dark wood, without food or shelter, at an inclement season of the year. As he lingered a little to warm himself and consider how he should manage to pass that dreary night, the thought of his forlorn condition as a homeless stranger, without money or friends, came like a dark cloud over his mind. His deep, sad cogitations proceeded in silence. Then, as was natural in his extremity, he turned his thoughts toward his heavenly Father's house above, where he hoped some day to find a home free from the ills of mortal life. Being a little cheered with the prospect, without leave, introduction, or ceremony, he began to sing one of the songs of Zion in a strange land.

As he proceeded his depressed feelings became elevated; the vision of faith ranged above and beyond the desolate wilderness he had just been contemplating as the place of his night's sojourn; the family were soon all melted into tears; he took fresh courage, and sang on with the least possible pause, till he had finished, perhaps, the third song, when the lady called a servant, and ordered him to put the gentleman's horse in the stable; and the, daughter added, 'Be sure to feed him well.' Thus a few strains of sacred melody, such as Axley could wield, removed all opposition and relieved the case.

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17 -- JOHN STEWART SAVED FROM HARM BY A SONG

James Stewart was an African-American who was converted when attracted to a Methodist meeting by its sounds when he was going to end his own life. His own marvelous conversion is quite a story in itself, and afterwards he became, through his own zeal to win souls, the first M. E. Missionary when he traveled north to evangelize the American Indians. The story below comes from "Life Among The Indians" by James Bradley Finley:

Here was a remnant of poor Delawares, under the control of Captain Pipe, son of the chief of the same name, who assisted in burning Crawford, on the Tyamochte. At this place Stewart stopped; and, as the Indians were preparing for a great dance, they paid but little attention to the stranger. They proceeded with their mirth, which was all new to Stewart; and such were their vociferations and actions that they alarmed him, and he felt fear for a short time. After all was over, they became quiet, and Stewart took out his hymn-book, and began to sing. He was one of the most melodious singers I ever heard. The company were charmed and awed into perfect silence. When he ceased, Johnny-Cake said, in broken English, "Sing more." He then asked if there was any person that could interpret for him; when old Lyons came forward. Stewart gave them an exhortation and then retired to rest for the night.

[You can learn more about John Stewart by opening and reading hdm0620.txt -- John Stewart, by DVM.]

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18 -- C. B. FUGETT SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

This wonderful conversion story comes from "The Sunny Side of Life" by C. B. Fugett

One dark, rainy night I was staggering the streets of a little town -- cold, hungry and penniless. As I was passing a little Methodist Church, I heard them singing:

"They told of salvation so free,
And of Savior that died on the tree!"

I staggered into that little church that night and threw an old torn overcoat and a flopped-down hat on the floor, and sat down on the back seat.

There were a few young people singing from the "Amen Corner," and they had a shine on their faces that I had never seen on a face before. With their hands lifted toward Heaven, tears rolling down their cheeks, they sang that old hymn: "It Is Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory!"

My friends, it was the freedom and the glory on those singers that attracted my attention. And the same thing that attracted my attention still attracts the attention of a lost world today. The Holiness people sing different and testify different; they pray different and preach different, and they are different from any people in the world, and there is no substitute for the glory of God.

Oh, there is no way to tell the impression that service made upon me! The preacher preached, and I never heard a word he said. He dismissed without an altar call. I left the church and got drunk. The next morning when I woke up, the little singers came up before me again. I could see the shine on their faces and hands lifted toward Heaven. I am so glad God called after me!

On January 21, at 10:30 in the morning, God spoke to me and said, "Will you go back to that little church tonight?" And I said, "I will if I am not dead!" From the way I was feeling, I thought I would be dead before night. When I made God that promise I got weak in the knees. I left an old tobacco barn, with men I had been in deep sin with, went down on the hillside, fell on my knees, and began to pray! The rain was coming down from heaven, but there is nothing that can stop any man from seeking God if he really wants God. I didn't know how to get saved. I had never seen a soul converted in my life!

I returned to that little Methodist Church the next night. Herbert Boulder came in and sat by my side. Brother E. J. Arthur preached. By the way, he was a Holiness preacher. At the close of his service he said, "I am now going to open the altar!" I will confess I didn't know what he was going to "open."

At the close of the sermon, this young man looked at me. He had the kindest look upon his face that I had ever seen, and in a sweet, tender tone, he said to me, "Jesus loves you!" That was the sweetest message I ever heard! He was the first man that ever told me that Jesus loved me! I have often wished that I could reproduce the kind look on his face and the tender tone in his voice. He said to me, "Don't you want to give your heart to Jesus tonight?" and we both started for the altar.

I cried and prayed for nearly two hours. The Lord said to me, "Will you give up your cigarettes?" I said, "I will!" From that night to this minute I have never touched another. He said, "Will you give up your liquor?" I said, "If You will lift this burden from my heart that is crushing me to death, I will never drink any more!" I said, "I am through with my cards and my drink." There on my knees, apparently all the sins of my past came before me like a mountain turned black. I quit, got up and sat down on the altar. The preacher said, "What is wrong?" I said to him, "I can't make it!" He said, "You almost got saved a few minutes ago. Get down here and try it again."

How I thank God for that last little boost that dear preacher gave me. Through that little boost I have led nearly 197,000 souls to Jesus Christ, of whom there are over one hundred out preaching the Gospel today.

I dropped back on my knees. Sister Edith Printer began to sing:

"The cleansing stream I see! I see!
I plunge, and lo, it cleanseth me!"

And about that time I "plunged!" I was on my feet praising God! I looked at the preacher; I thought he was the prettiest man I had ever seen! I looked at the little choir of singers; they looked

like angels! I looked at my old shoes; they looked better! I looked at my hands; I thought they had changed!

Now, my friend, the preacher hadn't changed, neither had the singers, neither had my shoes or hands, but that moment I was born into the Kingdom of God, and:

"I remember when my burdens rolled away,
I have carried them for years night and day;
When I sought the blessed Lord,
And I took Him at His word,
Then at once all my burdens rolled away!"

I can say with the poet:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!"

The most beautiful picture that hangs on the walls of my memory is that little Methodist altar where I first met Jesus.

That night at midnight I stood on the street corner and conducted my first street-meeting. Remember, the night before I was drunk, the following night I was on the street corner, testifying. I hadn't yet joined the church nor been baptized but, thank God, I had been born again! My brothers thought I was drunk, put me in the old buggy, and we started home. They would curse a while and then I would shout a while. I said, "Boys, I have got it!" They said, "You got it in the neck!" I said, "No, I have got it in my heart!" I almost rubbed a hole in my shirt over my heart. I would just yell, "Hurrah for Jesus!" just as loud as I could.

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19 -- AMOS L. HAYWOOD SAVED FROM DISCOURAGEMENT BY A SONG

The incidents below were taken from "My Life Story" by Amos L. Haywood, and they tell of how he was encouraged as a preacher during times of discouragement:

One other time when about to leave on my long trip I was tempted sorely, wondering if it was worth the effort if the people appreciated our efforts, if we had or could see anything worthwhile accomplished.

When about to start, my little girl, Goldie, asked if she could ride a little way, and walk back as they used to do in the pony age. Goldie was a great little singer even before she could read or talk plain. Goldie climbed into the buggy, I was heavy-hearted, she began to sing:

"Some poor fainting struggling seaman
You may rescue you may save."

It came to me as a message from God through my little girl. I have heard great sermons from great preachers but never a sermon, I think, that went straight to my heart as that one did. It was just what I needed. I said good-bye and Goldie ran back home but the sermon did not go back, it followed me and does to this day. I went on across the plains that day weeping and saying, "Yes, that is it, that is it, Lord. If I can but rescue some poor fainting struggling seaman, I WILL GO, GO, and we are still on the go for poor lost souls."

[Concerning another occasion, he wrote the following.]

Early Sunday morning I drove to Atlanta over bad roads to get a load of our former converts and bring them over to Lewiston for the Sunday services. Among them were the Justice girls who were always good singers. After we were on the way they took out some song books and began to sing some consecration hymns. The Lord blessed me so I could hardly drive. I said, "Lord they can have their nice churches and lovely parsonages, but give me the privilege of working in the poor, new fields among a simple, folk who are hungry for the gospel and appreciate our efforts. I feel the very same today.

"Let me lead some poor sinner
To the throne of heavenly grace;
There to feel their sins forgiven,
There to see their Saviour's face;

"Into homes so poor and lowly, Lord,
I go if thou dost send,
Bearing news of joy and comfort,
Be to them a loving friend."

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20 -- A CARD-PLAYER SAVED FROM SKEPTICISM BY A SONG

This story I consider to be perhaps the most moving one in this compilation. It is taken from "Gospel Dynamite" by old-fashioned Nazarene evangelist, Oscar Hudson. I read this book when I was about 18 years old -- about 47 years ago. If you have not yet read "Gospel Dynamite" I highly recommend that you do so. It is in our HDM Library as hdm0628. But first, this account from that book:

Three gamblers sat about a table in the underworld and followed the fortunes of the game until after the midnight hour. In their conversation, religion was mentioned. One of them remarked that he did not believe in religion. He said, "I have never met a person yet whose life showed he had religion. If there was anything to it, I would find some one who possessed it."

"I can show you one little woman who has it," remarked his companion.

"I would cross the continent to see her," he answered.

"Stack your cards and cash your chips; go with me and I will demonstrate to you that there is such a thing as religion."

They caught an elevated train and ran across the city, debarked and walked several blocks, halting before a little, unimposing cottage. When he had rapped a gentle voice from within said, "Whose there?"

In a rough, harsh, commanding tone, he said, "It's John. Get up quick and prepare us some supper! I have brought two of my friends home with me and we are hungry. Be in a hurry and prepare us something to eat!"

"All right," she answered, and in a remarkably short time a neatly attired, smiling faced woman had turned on the lights, and unlocked the door. He shoved his rough companions in and without even introducing them repeated sternly his command. "Get supper and be quick about it!"

She walked to the couch where lay the week's laundry. Bringing it from the line late, and not having time to pack it away, she had laid it on the couch. She pulled it to one side that her husband's friends might have a place to rest, pulled the cover over a sleeping babe and disappeared through a back door. They dragged a table from the corner and were soon lost in the game. They had about forgotten the test they had come to watch, when their attention was arrested by a soprano voice as in adoration to her Lord and Master she began to sing:

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me."

The skeptic dropped his cards and was about to speak, but before he could find his voice, those earnest tones rose again:

"A consecrated cross I'll bear
Till death shall set me free:
And then go home, my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

By this time the skeptic was on his knees saying, "Gentlemen, if there is something in religion that will make a woman sing that way under conditions of this kind, by the grace of God, I'll never get off of my knees until I possess it in my soul."

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21 -- ONE BOY, THEN MANY, SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

This account of old-time revival striking a city after one boy was saved is taken from "God's Guiding Hand" by Albert Jacobs:

After this I was called by some of them "The old conviction man." The Methodist Episcopal church of Pullman having Rev. Albertus Perry for pastor at that time, opened its doors for this band of brave young people. We held a meeting once a week, and God continued to pour out His spirit upon us. Rev. G. A. McLaughlin, editor of the Christian Witness, preached for us one night, and during the altar call a young woman fell into a trance-like condition, in which she was pleading with parents, who were opposing and threatening to whip her. She argued for holiness in a wonderful manner, and declared that she would be true to Jesus no matter how much she was beaten, and Jesus was in her heart and they could not whip it out. God will work, and none can hinder. Spring coming on, the church wanted all the nights; so the young people decided on giving what money they could to help me in getting a tent, and the first tent meeting was held in Brother Dick's front yard for two weeks. Satan continued to rage and caused all the opposition possible to impede the progress of the meeting, but we had the victory with the Joy-bells ringing in our souls. We sang, "We will roll the old chariot along, and if the devil is in the road we will roll it over him."

People were converted in spite of all obstacles and resisting forces. At the close of the Roseland meeting we moved our tent to 107th Street, at the north end of Pullman, having received permission from the Pullman Company to pitch our tent in the center of a vacant lot of about twenty acres. In the neighborhood the majority of the people were living every day alike, forgetting the Sabbath of our Lord. They thought a show had come to town and we could not convince the children until after the first night of meeting that it was not a circus or a show. Consequently we had our hands full in keeping them in subjection. While putting up the tent we announced the opening meeting by distributing cards, and still they would not believe. The first night of the meeting the tent was filled with children and the parents remained on the outside. One woman inquired of Mrs. Jacobs if she could get in without a ticket being under the impression that the cards given out were tickets of admission. After receiving the knowledge that they were Gospel cards and seeing all children in the tent that night, she came to the conclusion she perhaps had better stay on the outside. A few nights of sermons, however, convinced them that Jesus was passing that way and a pure life was demanded of them. The Holy Spirit settled old fashioned conviction on the people.

Some men were heard to say, "What is this that has come over me." Others could not do much work in their place of business. A young boy, who heard a song in the children's meeting, began to sing it while working:

"My sins rose as high as a mountain,
They all disappeared in the fountain,
He wrote my name down for a palace and crown
O, bless His dear name, I am free."

Conviction seized him. He started to pray, but did not get deliverance until he cried out for mercy at the altar. The tent was soon jammed to its utmost capacity, and people stood from two to six feet deep all around it. Many of them had never heard of a Gospel that would save the people from sin. God helped me to preach the truth straight. Old debts were paid. Whiskey jugs were broken and emptied out into the street; blind pig keepers were converted and quit their business;

reconciliations were made between husbands and wives; men and women addicted to the use of whiskey and tobacco were saved from their sins and appetites.

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22 -- JESSE LEE SAVED FROM WARFARE BY A SONG

Jesse Lee was of such prominence and success in early American Methodism that he was nearly elected as a Bishop, and he was largely through his labors that Methodism was planted in New England. Like his mighty fellow-laborer Freeborn Garrettson, Jesse Lee had scruples against taking up arms against the British. Indeed, he seems to have been a conscientious objector against killing in any warfare period. In addition to his other great achievements, Lee also became the first M. E. Historian, but the following account from his life is taken from "A History of the Rise of Methodism in America" by John Lednum, of the Philadelphia, Conference:

The Rev. Jesse Lee was a native of Prince George's county, near Petersburg, Va.; born in 1758. He experienced a change of heart in his fifteenth year; and, in 1774, when Mr. Robert Williams began to form Methodist societies in his neighborhood, he, with others, united with them. In 1778, when in his nineteenth year, he began to speak in public; and, in 1779, took his first text to preach upon.

In 1780 he was drafted to go into the army; and though he could not in conscience take human life, yet he concluded to go, and trust the result with the Lord. When he joined the army, a gun was brought to him, which he refused to take. For which he was put under guard. Many came and talked with him, and sympathized with his condition with tears. Before he lay down he had prayer with the guard; and rising early next morning he began to sing, in which exercise he was soon joined by some hundreds of the soldiers, who made the plantations ring with the songs of Zion, after which he prayed very fervently with tears, which caused many of the soldiers to weep freely. Permission being given by the colonel, he preached in the camp on the Sabbath day; and both speaker and hearers were bathed in tears.

After the discourse was ended, some of the gentlemen went about making a collection, from which he begged them to desist, as he was unwilling to receive any compensation. The colonel released him from the guard, and appointed him to drive their baggage wagon. He was in the army three months, during which time he was instrumental in doing much good by his religious conversation; and his prayers were made a blessing to the well, and especially to the soldiers who were sick, -- when many of them died he attended them to the grave, and prayed over their remains.

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23 -- QUEEN VICTORIA SAVED FROM COLD FORMALITY BY A SONG

In "Gems of Truth" by W. G. Ketcheson, we find this brief account:

When Queen Victoria listened to the great Choral Society as they sang Handel's "Messiah" at St. Paul's Cathedral, she was asked by Dean Farrar, the chaplain, to follow the custom of all sovereigns preceding her and remain seated during the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus, for all others of the assembly stood at that time.

She remained seated while they sang other portions of the great oratorio; but when the great choir began to sing the chorus, and the hallelujahs were lifted loud and long, her majesty was so stirred that she arose, with all others, bowing her head. The chaplain asked her later, why she did not remain seated. She said "I could not. I wish I could be alive when Jesus comes."

"Why, your Majesty?" inquired the chaplain.

"Because," she said, "I would like to take the crown from my brow, and with all other rulers place it at the feet of Jesus Christ, who is worthy, and crown Him Lord of lords."

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24 -- A ROMAN CATHOLIC SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

This dramatic account is from "Revival Tornadoes, The Life and Labors of Joseph H. Weber Evangelist, The Converted Roman Catholic," by Martin Wells Knapp:

The Spirit continued to enlighten him and to strive with him. One morning he arose more restless and uneasy than usual. All of his old amusements had lost their charms. His soul was hungry for something that would satisfy. He had sought in Rome's way -- in his own way, but still had found it not.

Unprepared for life, for death, for judgment and for eternity! what could he do? "His old associations crowded upon his mind, but were repelled. In this anxiety and temptation he wandered from place to place, but nowhere could he dissipate his heart's forebodings. He wandered across the 'Rhine,' into a variety theater, seeking rest, but finding none. In these places he did not yield to temptation. He had not the least idea that they were unfit for a seeker of religions peace. He was educated to believe that these places were no worse than those of legitimate amusements, and that the Christian could enjoy the musical treat without any danger of sinning, or of injury to himself.

He was uneasy, but had no idea of its cause or nature. He did not attribute it to the Spirit of God, but that Spirit was leading him in a way he knew not. After hours spent in this fruitless effort to find peace, he was attracted by a crowd of people listening to a Baptist missionary preaching on the site of the Exposition building under the archway crossing to the Art Gallery in Washington Park. The name of this minister was Rev. Joseph Emery. It was mere curiosity that led him to hear this man talk, for he was not aware that he was preaching the Gospel, or he probably would not have gone to hear the heretic. His preaching had no apparent effect upon him, but when the crowd began to sing lustily,

'Almost persuaded now to believe

Almost persuaded Christ to receive,'

he became more attentive. His soul responded to the song, and when the last lines of the last stanza were being sung,--

"Almost cannot avail;
Almost is but to fail
Sad, sad, that bitter wail--
Almost -- but lost!"

his soul was peculiarly touched, and looking toward heaven he said vehemently within himself, 'I WILL NOT BE LOST; I WILL BE SAVED.' In the quickness of thought the burden was rolled away in this decision for heaven. His heart was made light and happy. He felt that he could fly. What a change! and how suddenly it came upon him! He had never been taught in the way of life, and did not realize what the change was, but he knew he was happy."

Thus was Satan defeated, his chains broken, and the soul of Joseph set at liberty.

Christ did more for him "in the quickness of thought," than Roman rites in a life-time. From this day, Aug. 14, 1874, he dates his conversion. Henceforth, he will be known as the "Converted Catholic."

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25 -- GIPSY SMITH SAVED FROM HUNGER BY A SONG

I would first note here that "Gipsy Smith" spelled the first part of his moniker, "G-i-psy," and not "G-y-psy" as the term is now commonly spelled in America. The following story comes from his autobiography under the subtitle of "A Wheel-Barrow Full of Answered Prayer:

When my father and his brothers traveled about the country, all their families accompanied them. By this time my father had prayed my sisters Emily and Lovinia and my brother Ezekiel into the kingdom. They came in the order of their ages. I was the next, and in my heart I, too, was longing for God. My father used to pray continually in my hearing, "Lord, save my Rodney!" ["Gipsy's" real name]

All this time my father was very poor, and one winter at Cambridge we were in the hardest straits. My father was sitting in his van, looking solemn and sad. That day one of my aunts, I knew, had been buying provisions for the Christmas feast on the morrow. This had excited my interest, and, boy-like, I wanted to know what we were going to have for Christmas, and I asked my father. "I do not know, my dear," he said, quietly. There was nothing in the house, and he had no money.

Then the devil came and tempted him. His fiddle was hanging on the wall, and he looked at it desperately and thought to himself, "If I just take down my fiddle and go to a public house and play to the people there, my children, too, will have a good Christmas dinner." But the temptation was very soon overcome. My father fell on his knees and began to pray. He thanked God for all

His goodness to him, and when he arose from his knees he said to his children, "I don't know quite what we shall have for Christmas, but we will sing." He began to sing with a merry heart:

"In some way or other
The Lord will provide:
It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way;
But yet in His own way
The Lord will provide."

Just then, while we were singing, there was a knock at the door of the van.

"Who is there?" cried my father.

It was the old Cambridge town missionary, Mr. Sykes.

"It is I, Brother Smith. God is good, is He not? I have come to tell you how the Lord will provide. In a shop in this town there are three legs of mutton and groceries waiting for you and your brothers."

A wheelbarrow was needed to bring home the store. The brothers never knew who gave them these goods. But the word of God was verified: "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

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26 -- A HUSBAND NAMED "WILL" SAVED BY A SONG

This story is from Winfield Francis Poe's book, "The Home -- The Divine Institution of God:

Separation and divorce are not in God's plan. It is God's plan that the marriage remain in union and that the believing brother or sister win their companion to the Lord. In I Corinthians 7:16 we read: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" The charge given here is not that of separation, but rather that of winning the unbeliever to the Lord. Here are some examples:

Sister Nora Burlison has gone on to Heaven. She was saved over twenty years before her husband, Will, got saved. One day she heard that song, "Jim and Me," being sung. [I have shown below all 5 verses of this song with the chorus below each verse. -- DVM]

* * *

JIM AND ME

Verse 1

The story, Sir, why really now,
I have not much to say
If you had called a year ago
And then again today
No need for anyone to say
As you can plainly see
Just what the Lord has done for us,
Has done for Jim and Me.

Chorus:

The pail that holds the milk today
He used to fill with beer
But he's not spent a cent for drink
It's now almost a year.
Just look into the cupboard, Sir,
There's sugar, flour and tea,
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

* * *

Verse 2

He used to sneak along the street
His head was bended low
As if he was afraid to meet
The friends he used to know;
But now he walks with head upright,
His steps are bold and free;
That's what our God has done for us,
Has done for Jim and me.

Chorus:

The pail that holds the milk today
He used to fill with beer
But he's not spent a cent for drink
It's now almost a year.
Just look into the cupboard, Sir,
There's sugar, flour and tea,
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

* * *

Verse 3

I used to be afraid of him
When coming home at night

And now it gives me joy supreme
And fills me with delight
The baby plays around his chair
And climbs upon his knee
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

Chorus:

The pail that holds the milk today
He used to fill with beer
But he's not spent a cent for drink
It's now almost a year.
Just look into the cupboard, Sir,
There's sugar, flour and tea,
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

* * *

Verse 4

He used to smoke a dirty pipe
And chew the filthy weed,
But by the gracious work of grace
He is entirely free.
And now our dimes and nickels
Tobacco will not see.
That's what our God has done for us,
Has done for Jim and me.

Chorus:

The pail that holds the milk today
He used to fill with beer
But he's not spent a cent for drink
It's now almost a year.
Just look into the cupboard, Sir,
There's sugar, flour and tea,
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

* * *

Verse 5

And mornings when he goes to work
I kneel right down and pray
"Father in heaven, bless dear Jim
And keep him safe today."

And nights before we go to sleep
Jim thanks on bended knee
That's what the Lord has done for me
Has done for Jim and Me.

Chorus:

The pail that holds the milk today
He used to fill with beer
But he's not spent a cent for drink
It's now almost a year.
Just look into the cupboard, Sir,
There's sugar, flour and tea,
That's what the Lord has done for us
Has done for Jim and Me.

* * *

Sister Burlison said, "One day I will sing that song, "Will and Me," by the grace of God. One day Nora's faith was rewarded -- Will did repent and get converted. When the Lord would come with His blessing upon them, Nora would shout and Will would either cry or laugh. The author has heard Nora sing that song, "Will and Me." As she would come to the last verse, Will would walk to the front, perhaps with his eyes moist with tears as Nora would be shouting across the platform. Nora was able to shout because she had won Will to the Lord instead of leaving him. Today they are both shouting together over on the beautiful shore. It paid her to stay true.

* * * * *

27 -- SAVED FROM SUICIDE, SIN, AND SICKNESS BY A SONG

The following story is from "The Holy War" by Seth Cook Rees:

A dear man in Chicago was in the employ of the great Northwestern Railway Company. He met with many reverses. Sickness fastened itself upon him. He went to the hospital. After some weeks returned to his job. Was again taken down and sent to the hospital a second and third time. He was finally told that he must go to a higher altitude. His money was almost gone but being a railroad man, his pass was secured to Denver. Before he could recover strength a telegram announced the serious illness of his family. He returned home without health and without money, and it is well known that when a man's money is gone his friends are scarce. His family was sick, his rent was due. His children were hungry. The only thing he had left in the world was a life insurance policy.

He said: "I will give my family the benefit of this," and started to the lake intending to commit suicide. When within about three blocks of the lake he was passing the church where we were holding a convention. He heard the singing. He stood on the side walk and mused. There was a great struggle going on in his breast. Only three blocks away was the lake, and the morgue. Up

one flight of stairs was gospel singing. He first thought that he would go in, and then remembered that his family were hungry. He said: "No, I will hurry to the lake."

What an awful conflict was going on between the powers of darkness and the Spirit of God. He finally said, "I will go upstairs and listen to this singing before I go down to the dock." I will not soon forget that hour. He threw himself down in a pew in the very rear end of the church, and as he threw his head down on the back of the pew in front of him and listened, he heard a gospel of good cheer. The Spirit of God seized him with awful conviction.

When the altar call was made he came forward, yielded himself to God and was gloriously saved. He returned home with money enough to pay his rent and give his family a square meal. He soon brought his wife to the church and she was saved. Soon after he sought the baptism with the Holy Ghost and was sanctified wholly. He erected a family altar in a Christian home. He heard about divine healing and was anointed according to the fifth of James. Jesus healed his body. He returned to his employment, and a more cheerful, happy home you will seldom find. This is a sample of what a gospel of good cheer will do wherever preached.

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28 -- SAVED FROM BATTLEFIELD DANGERS BY A SONG

It was George Whitefield Ridout who wrote the following in his book "The Cross and Flag -- WW I Experiences":

Fletcher Benson was a good fellow, well built physically, strong in mind, had a tender heart and was whole-souled. He knew God in a sound conversion when quite a lad, and afterwards experienced a clean heart at Zion Hill camp grounds.

When war broke out he was studying for the ministry in college, but when the call for soldiers came he did not shirk his duty to his flag and country, but went and enrolled himself under the banner of Uncle Sam. He fully knew what it would mean to get in the army -- going away from home and religious surroundings, and getting into an atmosphere where there would be great temptations, many hardships, much to endure on all hands and of all sorts, but he was convinced that there was grace sufficient for every need. After awhile training in a home camp he was shipped to France, and it was not long before he found himself as an infantryman in active service on the front line.

At the Battle of the Marne he passed through his first great fiery ordeal the night of that dreadful bombardment he was down in the trenches and when just past midnight the Germans began to pour that rain of shell over on the American forces he was exposed to the fire without a thing to shelter him, but the walls of a hastily built trench. To him it was a terrible experience, but through it all he prayed to God in silent yet fervent prayer that he might pass safely through the awful night and see the morning break. Many that night about him were wounded by the flying shrapnel, and some were killed, but when morning came he was found without a scratch, yet his sympathies went out to the wounded in adjoining trenches and he willingly offered himself as stretcher-bearer to help take the wounded down the hill to the first aid station in the old Chateau.

Many a comrade did he aid that day in getting to the dressing station, and he did all he could to get water for the thirsty, and in every way help the helpless and the suffering.

When the counter attack at the Battle of the Marne took place the next Tuesday night, his company had an exposed bit of the line to hold, but they held it through terrible odds, and Fletcher himself knew from real experience what it meant to engage in real soldiering, but through it all he was sustained by the conviction, in some peculiar way, the battle was the Lord's and it was his duty to be a real soldier -- to be brave and courageous and do his full duty.

I met Fletcher about three weeks after the Battle of the Marne. I remember the meeting up there in that shack where he was put up. It was Sunday morning when I happened in on him. He was reading his Bible and he had a little army hymn book opened before him. He said to me, "Just before you came along I was singing one of those hymns that seemed just to suit my experience. If you don't mind I will sing you a verse of it." And he began to sing:

"O Jesus, I have promised
To serve Thee to the end;
Be Thou forever near me,
My Master and my Friend!
I shall not fear the battle
If Thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If Thou wilt be my Guide."

After singing the verse he said: "You remember the Battle of the Marne, Sunday night of July 14th. Well, all through that terrific barrage this hymn was singing through my soul and especially those words:

"I shall not fear the battle,
If Thou art by my side."

"I felt in a strange, peculiar way that there was One standing at my side and when the shells were bursting all about me I felt that He was shielding me from the shrapnel and comforting me so that all terror left me and I was not afraid."

I said to him, "Sing on, let me hear the rest of the hymn." And he sang:

"O let me feel Thee near me!
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear;

"My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But, Jesus, draw Thou nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.

"O let me hear Thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storm's of passion,
The murmurs of self-will!

"O speak to re-assure me,
To hasten or control!
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou Guardian of my soul!"

I must confess that this was a means of grace to my soul, to meet such a young fellow, far, far away from home, the product of one of our most spiritual colleges, the fruits of a revival meeting in a little Methodist Church down in a small town, and a by-product of Zion Hill camp meeting -- to meet him here in France and in the war zone, and a soldier in Uncle Sam's army, and to find that through all the temptations and tests that had beset him he had kept unflinchingly true to God. It was encouraging and inspiring and I went out from his shack to my morning service to preach more vitally the saving and keeping power of the mighty Christ.

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29 -- SAVED FROM DANGER ON THE MISSION FIELD BY A SONG

The following is found in "Incidents in Travel and Soul Winning" by Elmer Ellsworth Shelhamer and his Wife Julia A Shelhamer:

While we were holding a revival in Africa for Miss F. Grace Allen, one of our old, dependable missionaries, she told the following. She had traveled a long distance on horseback and had started home when it began to grow dark. She had many miles to go and must cross a stream of water six times. Her life was in danger from superstitious natives who sometimes kill a white person that they may have his liver for medicine.

At best she would be far into the night getting home. Though very brave and accustomed to the country, she suddenly became afraid. Added to this, her horse balked and absolutely refused to go downhill. She tried every means to get him started, but no -- he would not go. When the horse was in a good humor she could never hurry him. His gait was slower than that of a man. Now he had stopped entirely. There she sat in the darkness.

Sister Allen says, "In that situation I began to sing How Firm a Foundation, and instantly I realized that someone was with me. I could see him -- a man -- a tall soldier -- so tall he was as high as my head though I was seated on the horse. All fear left! I realized that he was a heavenly being sent for my protection. I leaned my head over toward him.

"Instantly my horse began to walk, then did something he was not accustomed to doing. He paced rapidly and kept it up all the way until he brought me to our gate."

* * * * *

30 -- SAVED FROM COMPLAINT DURING GREAT SUFFERING BY A SONG

In Beverly Carradine's book "A Bundle of Arrows" the following is found:

A song in the day is an easy affair. Any worldling can render such a performance. But the song in the night! The faithful utterance in times of trouble. The true thing said in time of greatest difficulty. The loyal, submissive, devoted speeches spoken about God when the soul is comfortless, enemies are thick, troubles are multiplied and relief is not in sight--here is something worth talking about, and that few seem able to do! Well may we pray for the world's good and the glorifying of Christ's Redemption that the Singers in the night might be increased an hundred and a thousand fold.

We recently read of a little boy who was run over and badly injured in a street accident. As he lay under the hands of the surgeon, he asked the physician if he might sing while he operated on him. The doctor consented and the little fellow with blanched cheeks and quivering lips, began singing and sang over and over again, with his childish treble, the first verse of that noble hymn called "Palms."

"Blossoms and palms in varied beauty vie,
Decked is the road with fragrant flowers to greet Him;
Jesus has come, a world's sad tears to dry,
E'en now the throng rush forth with joy to meet Him.
Sing and rejoice with one accord,
Sing joyous songs for this sublime ovation,
Hosanna. Praised be the Lord,
Blessed is He who has brought us salvation."

It was at night, and yet a crowd of attendants nurses could not keep from gathering about the martyr singer. We doubt not that all got a nobler view of life at the spectacle, and we do not question that the surgeon did his very best for the little sufferer, who sang so courageously in the midst of his agony.

Would to God that, instead of complaints, Heaven could hear the singing of its afflicted and smitten children coming up out of the night. Not only would it be nobler on our part, but better for the world itself. It was Paul's song in the night, while he was fastened in the stocks, which brought relief from heaven to himself and salvation to the jailer and many others in the prison. And we can but feel that it will be our singing in the night of trouble that will produce earthquakes of conviction, open the doors of outer and inner prisons and awaken and set free the slumberers and captives of sin on every side and in every place.

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31 -- MANY SOULS SAVED BY A SONG IN AN EMPTY AUDITORIUM

In his book "A Voice From Eternity" George Brubaker Kulp presents the following:

Look at this picture. Duncan Mathewson was a Scotch stone-mason. He worked by the day, received good wages, and laid by money that he might go and preach when and where he was led. God directed him to a certain town, and he obeyed and went, having enough money to pay rent for the hall and board himself for three months. Having secured the hall -- no committee to welcome him or to advertise him -- he went on the platform and to an empty house said, "Let us sing," and began singing a soul-stirring hymn.

Having had a good time singing, he then said, "Let us pray," and down on his knees he went and prayed until he had made an end of praying. Then, rising, he announced the hymn and said, "Let us sing," and sang it through. Then looking squarely down where the congregation should have been, he said; "You will find our text, chapter, verse." He then began to preach and, as he warmed up, he talked so loud that the boys came in off the street, and, having satisfied their curiosity, they went out and told the people to come hear a crazy man preach, a man preaching to empty benches! He soon had a congregation, and a revival began that ran three months, because he was a man of God, and in the Divine will, and converts were numerous.

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32 -- A FAMILY SAVED FROM SIN, A CHURCH BUILT, BY A SONG

In the book, "Workers Together With God," published in 1938, A. L. Parrott related the following:

The church of which I am pastor had a very modest beginning some twenty years ago on the east side of the city by the railroad tracks. The first place of worship was a little old deserted saloon building. It was small but that was all right for they had only twenty-three members and forty-five chairs. A Sunday school was organized however, and the business of building the church was started in an enthusiastic manner.

One Sunday morning a little crippled hunch-backed boy was out riding his tricycle and passing the building, he heard the singing. He at once got off his tricycle and parked it under the steps and went inside and sat down. The teacher invited him over to be in the class and asked him his name and took a great interest in him. Before he left she invited him to come back the next Sunday and bring his mother and sister along with him. The little fellow was so happy that he had been to Sunday school and that they had taken so much interest in him, He told his mother and asked her to go along with him the next Sunday. The mother refused to go herself but said it was quite all right for him to go again.

The very next Sunday this little fellow went to Sunday school again and this time they told him that the following Sunday they were going to have a rally and try to double their attendance for you will remember they had only 23 members but 45 chairs, If they did double their attendance every one would have to bring one and they asked him to bring one. He went home and got his mother to promise to go with him.

The next Sunday this little fellow came marching in with his mother, God was there that morning and the Holy Spirit was busy and before that mother got away from the church she had prayed through and gotten saved. She went home never to be the same again, In a few weeks her husband was saved, her daughter and son were saved and they all united with the church. Nearly twenty years have come and gone since that happened but they are still true to God and are still loyal members of the Church of the Nazarene. That is what I mean by building the church through the Church School.

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33 -- ONE SAVED FROM FALSE DOCTRINE, ANOTHER FROM SIN, BY A SONG

This story comes from the "Life and Times of Elijah Hedding" by Davis W. Clark. This story tells of the conversion of the woman who later helped lead Elijah Hedding to the Lord. Through a song, she was saved from false doctrine and sin, and after Hedding's conversion he later became one of the Bishops in the M. E. church:

Elijah Hedding's first permanent religious impressions were made by the conversations of the pious Methodist woman -- "mother in Israel" -- already noticed. She perceived his promising talents and strong moral susceptibilities, and devoted herself to the task of leading him to God. Her mind was deeply impressed with the conviction that he would be called to important services in the Church of God, and she labored the more earnestly to effect his salvation. She conversed with him frequently, earnestly, and often tearfully, on the interests of his soul; and succeeded at last in awakening in his mind a deep concern for his spiritual safety.

All honor to this faithful, noble-hearted Christian woman. She was jealous for the cause of God, and yearned for the salvation of a soul that was lost. But little did she know how high an honor God was putting upon her, in making her the chief instrument in the conversion of one who was to win many souls to Christ, and become one of the great lights of the Church and the world.

Her name was Bushnell. She had previously resided in Canaan, one of the northwestern towns of Connecticut. Educated in the Calvinistic faith, and accustomed to hear Calvinism preached, her mind had become perplexed and bewildered with regard to religious truth. Long perplexed and tried, without obtaining any relief; she had come to the conclusion that she was one of the reprobates. This often occasioned her great distress of mind. At length she heard that a Methodist preacher was to preach in her neighborhood.

This was the first time she had ever heard of such a people, and out of curiosity went to hear the novel preacher. The expectation of deriving any spiritual advantage from his ministry was furthest from her thoughts. He commenced the exercises by announcing and then singing the hymn beginning,

"Come, Sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesus' guest;
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all mankind."

It was a new but glorious doctrine to her. She said to herself; "Can this be true? Has Christ indeed invited all mankind? Then I, even I, who have been so long buffeted by Satan, may come. I will come now." From that moment she sought salvation through the blood of the Lamb, and soon rejoiced as one of the chosen of the Lord. She was a woman highly gifted, and of deep and consistent piety.

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34 -- SAVED FROM A PREACHING FAILURE BY A SONG

In his book "Heart Talks" Beverly Carradine presents the following:

The preacher had labored hard in the pulpit for an hour one warm night. The sermon was a failure. Not only the preacher saw it, but the congregation felt it. The preacher sat down and called on a certain minister to conclude. As the latter arose, a number wondered what on earth he proposed doing, and could do. Every eye was on him as he came slowly forward, and stood quietly looking at the great audience before him. He was a young man, and had a task before him which older heads might well have dreaded. For a full minute he stood silent, with a solemn, almost abstracted look, and then began singing:

"Oh, 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love,
The love of God to me;
It brought my Savior from above,
To die on Calvary."

At once the vision of the dying Savior was brought up to the minds of the people, and that with an immediate melting effect. Here was no call to come to the altar, no covering up with apologies for a pulpit failure; but an appeal to consider the love of God in the form of his dying Son hanging on the cross. How trifling seemed all excuses for holding back from duty and God with that crucified figure before us!

The hymn, so well known, went on, and when the singer reached the last stanza, the weeping was general, and heads bowed all over the building. The preacher then lifted his hand, and said, "All who would like to come and bow down at the altar for pardon and sanctification, can do so" -- and instantly there was a rush from all sides. The people literally fell down, while such soul-sobs and cries went upward as must have made heaven rejoice.

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35 -- SAVED FROM 30 YEARS OF FRUITLESS SEEKING BY A SONG

This story I found in "The Divine Response" by James Blaine Chapman:

Mr. Till, a tall, lanky frontiersman, came frequently to the altar seeking God. As the meeting neared its conclusion, I sought a private conference with him. He told me that he had "been

a seeker after religion for thirty years," but had never been saved. At the very last service of the meeting he came again. As I held on to his hand, I made him this proposition:

"You have been an unsuccessful seeker after God for thirty years. It has come to the place where your case is desperate for you, and where you are a stumbling block to other people. It is evident that you have either never sought God in real earnest or else God is delinquent in not coming to your rescue. Let's find out what the trouble is and have it settled before we leave this place. I am due in another place to open a meeting this coming Wednesday night, but I will have some one to wire them that I will be indefinitely late. Then you will kneel on your side of the altar, and I will kneel on this side, and we will pray and wait before God until either He saves you or one or the other of us dies of starvation and weariness."

The old man gripped my hand and said, "I've got you this time, preacher, I'll never get up from this altar until I'm religious." The prayer meeting was long, but not so long as our challenge had suggested. For at midnight the old man stood up high on his knees and said, "Oh, Lord, this is the best I can do. You will have to take me as I am or turn me down, I cannot do any better or any more."

Someone had started to sing, "Look and live, my brother, live: look to Jesus, now, and live." The old man caught up the words, and said, "Oh, Lord, I look." Then he arose hastily to his feet and said, "And thank God, I live."

Now there may have been other times along that long road when that man could have been caused to "profess," but this was evidently the first time he ever did actually seek until he found. Physical demonstration is not the test, but it can always be said that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

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36 -- THE MIGHTY BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST RECEIVED BY A SONG

In "Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Christian Service" Charles Wesley Winchester tells how he was sanctified wholly:

The next Sunday afternoon, May 9, 1869, I was sitting with Mrs. Winchester in our room. She was reading to me from "The Life of Carvosso." She came to a stanza of a hymn. It was this:

"Thee I can love, and thee alone,
With pure delight and inward bliss;
To know thou tak'st me for thine own:
O, what a happiness is this!"

I said: "Let us sing it." I began to sing without any emotion. But when I reached the end of the second line I could go no further. Suddenly I was deluged with waves of glory. I was in a perfect ecstasy of joy. All heaven seemed to have come down into that little room. It was Bethel. It seemed to be filled with the brightness of a thousand suns. I was a thousand times happier than I

had ever supposed I would be in heaven. I knew that there was a personal God; for He was right there speaking to me. He was as real to me as though I could see Him with my mortal eyes. The great billows of bliss kept rolling over me, higher and higher every time they came in. It seemed as though immense wings overhead were fanning me.

The weight of glory became so heavy that it seemed as though it would crush me. I remember that I rose from my chair and staggered to the piano and leaned against it for support. For about thirty minutes I stood there bracing myself against the boundless ocean of divine love which kept hurling its mountain-like waves over my head. At length I could endure it no longer and I said: "O, God, withhold Thy hand or I shall die of joy." Soon my emotion somewhat subsided. If it had not I really think I should have died. There was nothing but joy in the thought of dying; but I thought I ought to live.

All this time I felt so clean. I felt and knew that my old passionate temper, which had tormented me all my life, was gone. All the pride and selfishness and unholy ambition and self-will were gone, branch and root. All sin was gone. I was as sure as I was that I was alive that God had cleansed my heart from all sin. The words "All gone, all gone, all sin is gone" kept reverberating through the chambers of my inmost soul, and I knew that they were the words of God.

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37 -- SADHU SUNDAR SINGH SAVED FROM PERSECUTION BY A SONG

"Choice Illustrations" by Earl C. Wolf contains this story:

Many years ago the noted Hindu Christian, Sadhu Sundar Singh, was arrested and sentenced to torture. The local prison was full of criminals, so Sundar was taken to a vile-smelling cowhouse. His clothes were taken from him, and dozens of jungle leeches were thrown on his naked body. Singh prayed and a great peace came upon him. He no longer felt the pain and began to sing hymns of praise.

As a crowd gathered around him, he began to witness and speak of Christ. In the crowd was the man who had caused his arrest. He turned to the jailer and asked, "What do you think of this man who is so happy although he is suffering?" "He must be mad," replied the jailer. But he who had instigated the persecution said "If by becoming insane one could get such wonderful peace as this, then I also should like to become crazy. And not only myself, but I should like to see the whole world insane, for this kind of insanity would change the world into Paradise." When torture did not silence Singh, he was released and went through the town preaching Christ.

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38 -- THE NEW BIRTH RECEIVED BY A SONG

This account comes from the "Christian Experiences of the Taggarts" by Margaret Whiting Taggart:

On Friday nights I always went to my sister's home (a distance of five miles) to spend the weekend. This particular time, I invited this lady friend and another lady teacher in the normal school to go with me. My sister had decided she would never ask me to go to church again as long as she lived, for I never gave her a respectable answer; but when I walked into her home that evening, she suddenly thought she would ask me once more. There were revival meetings just starting in the Baptist Church in that little town of Covington, Pennsylvania; and she said to me, "Wouldn't you like to go to that meeting,"

I answered very quickly, "Yes, I will go."

She was very much surprised with my answer, but she did not know how God had been dealing with me, or what an intense desire had been awakened in my heart to find my Saviour. Well, we went to the church; and as we were entering the door, they were singing and the music sounded just like Heaven to me. Only a short time before, I would have run from it all. We took our seats and soon a Gospel singer arose and sang a solo called, "A Clean Heart." That was just what I wanted; and as he began to sing, it seemed as though God Himself were singing every word through my heart as a prayer.

"One thing I of the Lord desire,
For all my path hath miry been,
Be it by water or by fire,
O make me clean, O make me clean.

Chorus:

"So wash me, Thou, without, within,
Or purge with fire, if that must be,
No matter how, if only sin
Die out in me, Die out in me.

"I watch to shun the miry way,
And stanch the springs of guilty thought,
But, watch and struggle as I may,
Pure I am not, Pure I am not.

"Yea, only as this heart is clean
May larger vision yet be mine,
For mirrored in its depths are seen
The things divine, The things divine."

As soon as he began to sing, the Son of Righteousness began to shine on my cold, hard heart; and He melted all the icebergs with tears of deep heart repentance. My eyes were a fountain of tears and I cried so hard and long that a man who sat next to me asked me if I were sick and wanted to be taken home. I shook my head, but never a word could I say until He spoke to my heart. By the time this man was through singing the last verse and chorus, I was a new creation. I

hardly knew myself, for I was so full of peace, rest and joy. I couldn't cry any more so I sat and listened to the sermon and enjoyed it all.

At the close of the service, the evangelist invited all the Christians to come to the front of the church to pray for the success of the meetings; and I was glad to go with them up to the very front seat. Any other time I would have run out of the church. I sat down and then God moved that evangelist to open a testimony meeting. This was very unusual at a time like that, and I always will believe it was done especially for me. Anyway, I was the first one on my feet and I never will forget what I said, for it came directly from God. I did not have to think it up. I said, "I love Jesus and I know He loves me," and sat down.

I never had known that before in all my life. It is surely the greatest knowledge one can have. Oh, what a privilege to meet personally this same Jesus who walked this earth. He forgave all my sins and gave me the witness of the Spirit that I was His child, and my heart was satisfied at last. Hallelujah!

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39 -- SAVED FROM A HINDERED REVIVAL MEETING BY A SONG

In "John W. Goodwin, A Biography" By Asa Everette Sanner, this story is found:

After many weeks, one Sunday morning a good sister, who had been a leading spirit in the church from the very first, began to sing as the morning offering was being taken, "Where He leads me, I will follow." Her singing seemed to ignite spiritual fire, and verse after verse was sung with fervor until one dear old brother arose exclaiming, "The Holy Ghost is come," and knelt in prayer.

The entire group followed. Rev. Mr. Goodwin in the spirit prayed for more than twenty minutes. When he opened his eyes the altar was lined and the front seats filled with people kneeling, weeping and asking forgiveness, There was great rejoicing. This service united the people and produced the desired results. Nothing can heal hurts and wounds among a group of people like a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

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40 -- COWBOYS SAVED BY A SONG

Fred A. Powell, and old-fashioned Nazarene preacher, wrote the following in his autobiographical book, "The Singing Pioneer."

God honored the prayers of His servants in that camp. At times people were known to have driven home in their old horse wagons for a distance of three to four miles. They would start to get ready to retire for the night, but they would be under such awful conviction that they would drive back to the camp ground to pray. Then the service would run all night. Often they would go home in the early morning making as much noise with their singing and shouting as their old lumber wagon was making. The news spread for many miles around. Old cowboys came out of curiosity.

Some would fuss and declare it was all a myth; some would get mad and declare they were going to run their saddle horses into the tent. We had a good choir and as we began to sing, these old cowboys would draw near to listen.

They claimed to enjoy the singing. But often they would be seized upon with deep conviction by the Holy Spirit and they would run under the tent to be saved. I have seen them fall in the straw when they had gotten only half way down the aisle. They would lie there and kick great holes with their old boots and spurs, at times they would be prostrated under the power of God for hours. Then they would come through, jump up and shout all over the place.

There was one cowboy, about a one hundred seventy-five pounder, who really loved to dance. I had opposed the dances and he was angry with me. He declared to the other boys that he was going to give me a beating the first time he caught me out. Well, he laid stretched out under the power of God for a long time. I was on the platform leading the singing when he finally prayed through. He jumped and made for me, ran on to the platform and grabbed Me, pitched me up and down, just like I was a little child. He said, "I have hated you, but now, Oh, how I love you!" Of course that caught fire and there were many shouting that night.

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41 -- WILLIAM SCHRECK SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

This story of William Shreck's conversion is found in "Experience of German Methodist Preachers," collected and arranged by Adam Miller:

I was born on the 19th of July, 1815, in the province of Westphalia, Prussia. I was instructed by a pious preacher in the Heidelberg catechism, and was early awakened to see myself a sinner, and that I must be converted. In this condition I remained for some five years, but could never feel or assume that I had obtained the pardon of my sins.

When I was twenty-one years old I came with my father and brother to America. We landed in Baltimore, and settled in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania.

Here I at first felt like a lost sheep without fold or shepherd. I had read in Germany something of the Methodists in some missionary reports, and that they had done much among the heathen. This made a good impression on my mind. I also learned from the papers that there were Methodists in the United States. Soon after I arrived here I inquired about them, but the Germans where I lived said many things against them. I soon found that it was persecution, and these reports did not diminish my confidence in them.

I sought a home in a Methodist family; and though I could understand English but little, I was rejoiced to engage with them in family worship. They also invited me to go along with them to the church. Here I did not understand much except the name of Jesus, which sounds in English nearly like the German. I often prayed to the Lord that I might learn the English language soon, so that I might be profited by the preaching; and I soon made rapid progress, and in a short time could understand nearly every thing that was said in English.

There was a camp meeting held by the English Methodists near my residence. It commenced on the 17th of September, 1838. Two weeks before this camp meeting the Spirit of God wrought powerfully upon my heart, so that by times I could neither eat nor sleep. In this condition I concluded to write to my old teacher in Germany, and open the condition of my heart to him, but thought I would wait till after camp meeting. On Sunday morning at eleven o'clock I came to the camp-ground, where there were thousands of people assembled, and the scene of a camp meeting excited much astonishment in me.

The sermon which I heard deeply affected me. The preacher spoke, in a plain and distinct manner, and I could understand him better than I could the rest. On Monday morning brother Wesley Browning, who was then stationed in Pittsburgh, preached from Corinthians xi, 29. This sermon was an especial blessing for me, and suited me as well as if some one had told him my condition. The word was accompanied with power to my heart. I was so affected that I retired to weep and pray.

In the evening I left the camp-ground and went six miles off. After it was dark, when I was passing along the Monongahela river I began to sing, and now the sermon of brother Browning came fresh to my mind, and it appeared to me that I could see the corruption of my heart, and the depth of my moral pollution. I sang a hymn, and was seized with a strange trembling. Tears streamed from my eyes; I kneeled down to pray, and then arose and went still further, and kneeled down again; and as I imagined myself in sight of the cross, I exclaimed with the man in the Gospel: "Lord, I believe: help thou my unbelief." No sooner were these words out of my mouth than I felt that power from on high came down upon my heart.

I had now no occasion to write for instruction to my old teacher. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart through the Holy Ghost given unto me. After this I felt inwardly moved to tell others what the Lord had done for me. I opened my mind to brother Browning, whom I regarded as my father in the Gospel. I told him I thought I was called to go to heathen lands to preach the Gospel. Brother Browning told me to follow the indications of Providence and go where the way was opened for me. He also told me that the Methodist Church was about to send missionaries to the Germans of this country, and if it was the Lord's will I could labor among them.

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42 -- GEORGE PECK SAVED FROM SIN BY A SONG

George Peck tells of his conversion in his autobiography, "The Life and Times of George Peck." He was an early M. E. preacher and brother of Jesse Truesdell Peck:

Hearing that another meeting had been appointed for the next Thursday evening, I resolved to seek the Lord publicly at that time. When the day came I thought of nothing but my sins, the salvation I needed, and the purpose I had formed. I mourned, I prayed; I had some hope of mercy, and some fears that I would not find it. Being alone, I began to sing one of our old familiar penitential hymns:--

"Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive;
Let a repenting rebel live."

Having sung a verse or two of this, I changed to one of another character:

"O how happy are they,
Who the Saviour obey;
And have laid up their treasure above;
Tongue can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

To my surprise I found myself entering into the joyous spirit of the hymn. My heart was melted; I felt strangely buoyant, and almost ready to exclaim aloud, "Glory to God!" I said to myself, "What change is this? Is this what I have been seeking? It may be that God has pardoned my sins. I will go and tell my dear mother how I feel."

I went into the house with this design, but my courage failed. I began to doubt, and again I sunk into a state of darkness and sorrow. My mind reverted to my resolution to go to the meeting that evening and openly seek Christ, and I again determined to do it. When evening came I went to the meeting, calling on an intimate associate on my way, to propose to him that we should begin together. To my surprise, I found him ready at once. We did as we agreed to do; but when we bowed in prayer, and fervent supplications went up in our behalf, and a sacred influence seemed to fall upon the whole assembly, and I felt that God was there, I was not conscious of that deep conviction which had weighed me down for days.

At the close of the meeting the people gathered about us to inquire how we felt. My friend was happy, and responded with confidence. I was at a loss what to think. I replied that I felt no burden of guilt, but did not know but that I had lost my convictions. "Ah," said a devoted woman, whom I knew and greatly respected, "the Lord has blessed you; I thought so." And she laughed and wept as she made the remark. "Well," thought I, "she knows. This strange calm is not hardness of heart, but peace." And yet I felt, not exactly disappointed, but that I had been led in a way which was contrary to my expectations.

I looked for what was termed a "powerful conversion." I did not experience it, but from that memorable day I have tried to serve the Lord. I believe that God forgave my sins in the morning, while I was alone, singing the prayerful confession of Watts, and the joys of faith as delineated by Charles Wesley. The day named was Thursday, the 12th of November, 1812. I was then a little over fifteen years of age.

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I close this article with a story which, while it does not relate directly to spiritual salvation, is nonetheless quite dramatic. It is taken from Beverly Carradine's book "Living Illustrations":

Speaking of things of moral beauty, we were deeply impressed a few days since by reading in a paper the description of a recent occurrence in a police court in one of our largest cities. We scarcely ever read anything that affected us more profoundly. We give the paragraph entire as we saw it in the morning journal.

"Thirty men, red-eyed and disheveled, lined up before the judge of the court. It was the regular morning company of drunks and disorderlies. Some were old and hardened, others hung their heads in shame.

Just as the momentary disorder attending the bringing of the prisoners quieted down, a strange thing happened. A strong, clear voice from below began singing:

"Last night I lay a-sleeping,
There came a dream so fair."

Last night! It had been for them all a nightmare or a drunken stupor. The song was such a contrast to the horrible fact that no one could avoid the sudden shock at the thought the song suggested. It went on:

"I stood in old Jerusalem
Beside the Temple there
I heard the children singing,
And ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels
From heaven in answer rang."

The judge had paused. He made a quiet inquiry. A former member of a famous opera company, known all over the country, was awaiting trial for forgery. It was he who was singing in his cell.

Meantime the song went on.

"And once again the scene was changed,
New earth there seemed to be;
I saw the Holy City
Beside the tideless sea.
The light of God was on its streets,
The gates were open wide,
And all who would might enter,
And no one was denied."

Every man in the line showed emotion. One boy at the end of the row, after desperate effort at self-control, leaned against the wall, buried his face in his folded arms and sobbed, "Oh, mother, mother!"

The sobs cutting the weary hearts of the men who heard, and the song still welling its way through the court room, blended in the hush. At length one man protested.

"Judge," said he, "have we got to submit to this? We are here to take our punishment, but this --" He, too, began to sob.

It was impossible to proceed with the business of the Court, yet the judge gave no order to stop the song, The police sergeant, after a surprised effort to keep the men in line, stepped back and waited with the rest.

The song moved to its climax:

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Sing for the night is o'er;
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna for evermore!"

In an ecstasy of melody the last words rang out, and then there was a silence.

The judge looked into the faces of the men before him. There was not one who was not touched by the song; not one in whom some better impulse was not stirred.

He did not call the cases singly -- a kind word of advice, and he dismissed them all. No man was fined or sentenced to the workhouse that morning. The song had done more good than punishment could ever have accomplished."

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THE END