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A STUDY OF THE METHODS OF EVANGELISM
OF D. L. MOODY
WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR PERMANENT VALUE

by

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A THESIS

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Arthur Percy Fitt

Author of "Moody Still Lives"

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DWIGHT L. MOODY

1837 - 1937

America's Greatest Soul-Winner

"Biography presents ideas directly, concretely, dramatically; it gives an opportunity to study the development of character, and the reasons for success or failure; it serves as a nucleus for the larger history of the time in which a man lived."

Henry K. Rowe

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A STUDY OF THE METHODS OF EVANGELISM
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject Introduced

The student of the history of the Christian church knows that great awakenings have come at successive intervals throughout the centuries. They have arisen from a sense of need for a higher type of Christian life and practice. They have resulted in a renewed interest in the study of the Holy Scriptures, a deeper devotion in personal life, and a practical obedience to the will of God in social relations.

We call these epochal movements revivals. Generally speaking, the word revival means to reanimate, to give new life, to stimulate activity and, hence, it presupposes a state of inactivity and declension.¹ Considering the term in this sense, we may say that ever since the days when Noah warned his fellow men of their impending doom, if they turned not to the living God, we have had revivalists on the frontiers of life giving forth a

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1. Cf. Beardsley, Frank Grenville: A History of American Revivals, p. 2

message of hope and assurance to the world. As Beardsley writes:

"The Bible is a manual of revivals in so far as it is a record of the successive efforts which were made by patriarchs and kings, by prophets and apostles, for the redemption and religious betterment of a sinning world."¹

Today, however, we use the word as referring to special religious meetings extended over a period of time, when extraordinary effort is put forth to reach the unconverted for the purpose of bringing them to repentance and to a life of faith and service. Revival, in this sense, is comparatively recent.

We usually think of revivals in terms of outstanding personalities. One of the most recent shining lights of the great succession of God's evangelists was D. L. Moody, a man whose name and message still remain in the hearts of many persons both in America and in the British Isles. His figure has been indelibly stamped on the pages of church history.

1937 marks the hundredth anniversary of his birth. The centenary celebrations being held in this country and abroad bring forth renewed interest in the study of those elements in his life which made him great.

From the time of his conversion in 1855 until his death in 1899, D. L. Moody's life was one of gradual

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1. Beardsley, Frank Grenville: A History of American Revivals, p. 2

growth and widening influence. In the years between his spiritual awakening and his earthly departure, he stirred two continents to the realization of their need of Jesus Christ. It should, therefore, be worth while to study into the methods of his work to find the abiding values in them.

A recent biographer writes:

"You may not sympathize with all of his methods, you may even feel that in some cases they defeated their object; but you cannot deny that he worked in his own way with a tremendous, tireless zeal to supply the greatest need of his country and of the world, and for that reason the study of his methods, his results, and of his personal character, must always have a profound interest."¹

B. The Subject Stated and Delimited

Primarily, we shall be interested in D. L. Moody's methods of evangelism with reference to their permanent value. It is not the purpose to write a history of his times nor a biography of the man himself; both of these have received careful attention by many writers. Yet we shall be interested in those factors of his times and life which contributed to and influenced and had a definite bearing upon his methods of evangelism. Anything that will help us to understand and to evaluate his methods will be utilized.

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1. Bradford, Gamaliel: D. L. Moody—A Worker in Souls, p. 16

C. The Method of Procedure

The procedure of this study, in the first place, will be to make a resume of certain phases of the historical background of the last half of the nineteenth century in order that we may have a clearer understanding and a better appreciation of the kind of world in which D. L. Moody carried on his evangelistic work. Following this we shall study the early development of his life to find out what influences and traits of character had a definite bearing upon his later work. In the next place, we shall study him at work. Then we shall test his methods of work with reference to their permanent value. In conclusion we shall endeavor to summarize our findings and, from the facts presented, to draw a number of pertinent conclusions.

"If I were called upon to name the two most typical Americans of the century, men who have risen from obscurity to world-wide renown, the one a brilliant statesman, the other a model preacher, I should not hesitate to name Abraham Lincoln and Dwight L. Moody."

Theodore L. Cuyler

CHAPTER II

THE WORLD OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY EVANGELIST

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A. Introduction

In order the better to understand D. L. Moody's methods of evangelism, it is desirable that we look into the conditions of his times. What were some of the great problems of the day?

Great men help to mold the thought of the times in which they live. On the other hand, the forces and movements of history often so converge as to make great men greater than they would be at any other time. We find evidence for both of these in the life of D. L. Moody. Robert E. Speer has said concerning him: "Certain great tides on which he fell caught him up and bore him on. They did, indeed, but it was not the circumstances and tides that made him."¹

It is not within the purpose and scope of this chapter to detail either the economic, political, social or religious history of the last half of the nineteenth century. Rather, the general background will be dealt with in order that we may better understand and evaluate

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1. Speer, Robert E.: The Founder's Day Address; The Northfield Schools, East Northfield, Massachusetts, February 5, 1931

his work.

B. The Problems and Spirit of the Business World

Certain economic forces were at work within the nation after the Civil War. Processes of reconstruction had begun. Business stimulation was felt on all sides. There was the stimulus that accompanies the movement toward urbanization. Cities were springing up like mushrooms. Whereas,

"in 1800 four per cent of the population of the United States lived in cities of 8000 and over. In 1900 there were about thirty-three per cent. In 1800 there were six cities having a population of 8000 and more. Today (1907) there are nearly six hundred such cities."¹

This movement had its advantages from the evangelist's point of view, since it brought people near together so that they could be reached easily. At the same time the manifold corrupt elements of the congested areas made his work more difficult. But they challenged him to do his utmost in reaching people with his message.

The movement to the large centers was greatly facilitated by the improvement and development of transportation. The two went hand-in-hand.

At the opening of the nineteenth century, the people lived chiefly along the coast or beside the great rivers because of the convenience of travel by boat.

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1. Stelzle, Charles: Christianity's Storm Center, p. 18

Whenever they traveled by land, it was by means of slow, clumsy stagecoaches. In contrast, after the Civil War, in the period of reconstruction, transportation was being changed rapidly from the coach to the train. "The railroad mileage in the United States, which totaled about 35,000 miles in 1865, was doubled within the next seven years."¹ By 1910 there were at least 250,000 miles.²

While the railroad was stretching out its network over the country, the trolley was becoming popular in the city. Both made possible the widespread work of the evangelist. He could get from place to place with a rapidity hitherto unrealized. He could reach more people and more people could reach him.

Perhaps the greatest force for urbanization and transportation was the tremendous boom in industrialism. The forces causing economic stimulation interacted one with the other. Activity in industry attracted men to the great cities. The expansion in labor called for more laborers. Immigration increased and the shifting population necessitated transportation facilities. As industry grew, wealth accumulated.

Thus, despite the fact that there were two outstanding depressions, one in 1873 and the other in 1893, we may say that the general condition of the industrial world

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1. Garrison: op. cit., p. 41

2. Cf. Rhodes, James Ford: History of the United States, Vol. VII, p. 37

of Moody's day was one of expansion and growth. This was particularly true in the North. Factories were springing up over night. Great building booms were in progress.

"The material advance is partially indicated by the list of inventions: 1879, the Selden patent for gasoline engines; 1880, the electric car; 1886, the linotype; 1887, the vestibule Pullman; 1894, the first motion picture show; 1895, the Haines automobile. The telephone, 'the latest American humbug' according to the London Times, came into use in 1877."¹

The period was characterized by a marked tendency toward consolidation of the great industries and a monopolization of the country's wealth. "In 1861 there were said to be only three millionaires in the United States. In 1897 there were 3800."² Power was being vested in the hands of outstanding industrial leaders and financiers who knew how to organize, promote, and invest.

Into such a world D. L. Moody came with his genius for organization and promotion. In an age dominated by material prosperity and business expansion, he organized successful campaigns for the spreading of the Gospel. When people were fired with the spirit of giving, he induced many to give to worthy causes, such as the building of schools for the education of the underprivileged.

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1. Garrison: op. cit., p. 120
2. Ibid.

C. Significant Developments in the
Political and Social World

One historian writes concerning the background
of the period:

"What a change between 1850 and 1877! A political
and social revolution had been accomplished. ... The
United States of 1877 was a better country than the
United States of 1850. For slavery was abolished,
the doctrine of secession was dead."¹

But the same writer goes on to say: "Other legacies of
the War and Reconstruction were an increase of government-
al corruption and a pronounced tendency towards bad admin-
istration."² This was particularly true in the political
situation in the large cities. Mr. Theodore Roosevelt,
speaking before the Congregational Club of New York City,
said: "The average grade of our city politicians is a
serious menace to good government."³

Abuse of the people's trust on the part of poli-
ticians was all too prevalent during the period of recon-
struction. But where there was an abuse, in many places
there was also a clamor for good government and for moral
reform. On the whole, however, the church did not play
nearly so large a part as it should have done in bringing
about a better political world. Garrison succinctly
states:

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1. Rhodes: op. cit., p. 291
2. Ibid.
3. Quoted by Dorchester, Daniel: Problems of American
Civilization, p. 137

"A part, but not a large part, of the churches' interest in the attainment of a better social order through political action found expression in giving the Prohibition Party (organized 1869) such support as it had and in carrying on many fights against liquor locally and in the various states. These efforts met a certain degree of success, but those forces within the church which make for social righteousness were not effectively organized and the entanglement of a large proportion of the leading 'good people' with big business and partisan politics acted as a brake on the wheels of reform."¹

When we turn to the larger social situation, we find both discouraging and encouraging developments. The growing cities constituted a grave peril. To them were coming the restless, roving adventurers; the needy, who hoped to get work; the greedy, who desired to get rich; the lazy, who thought they could have an easy life; the outcast, who shunned the intimacy of the village street.

One writer gives this dismal picture of urban life:

"The large cities become the strongholds of devildom, where prostitution, gambling and a long list of nameless wrongs are rampant. Crime multiplies, thrives, claims and often receives immunity. Lechery riots and putrifies; groggeries and other dens keep open on Sunday in the face of worthless officials; filthy performances are allowed to draw crowded houses; and elaborately furnished gambling hells flourish unnoticed."²

It was a period when materialism and mammonism worked against spiritual religion. A distinguished pastor said:

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1. Garrison: op. cit., p. 122
2. Dorchester: op. cit., p. 135

"Forty years ago my people lived plainly, were ready for earnest Christian work, and attended our devotional meetings; now they have grown rich, our work flags, and our weekly services are almost deserted .."1

But there was an encouraging development of social life. All was not dark. In the country were honest, simple, steady folk. The Daily Herald Tribune lauded the great mass of Americans with these words:

"... their clean, chaste, honest domestic life; their prompt inexorable verdict against the swindler or criminal, no matter how high his office; the place they have held among the other nations as defenders of liberty, knowledge, and the right of each man to all the chances for developing manhood .."2

—these and other virtues must be included in any account of the social background.

Many splendid mechanical and material inventions helped to make the world better and happier. The cities, particularly, afforded better opportunities for education, culture, and recreation. In the cities were the best physicians, the well-equipped hospitals, the excellent schools and the largest churches.

"Cherishing for the city the fondness of Samuel Johnson or Charles Lamb, we may well thank God for its rich blessing."3 On the other hand we may accept the accuracy of Carlyle's exclamation, "What a fermenting vat lies simmering and hidden in the city!"4

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1. Cuyler, Theodore L.: Recollections of a Long Life, p.272
2. The Daily Herald Tribune, New York, February 1, 1876
3. McPherson, Simon J.: Problems of American Civilization, p. 155
4. Ibid.

D. L. Moody recognized both the sins and the virtues of urban life. "Cities," he said, "are the centers of influence. If we can stir them we shall stir the whole country."¹ He, perhaps more than any other man of his generation, carried on aggressive work against vice. His work had a definite impact on the social life of the great cities he visited. The New York Times after his Hippodrome meetings reports:

"Whatever philosophical sceptics may say, the work accomplished by Mr. Moody in this city for private and public morals will live. The drunken have become sober, the vicious virtuous, the worldly and self-seeking unselfish, the ignoble noble, the impure pure, the youth have started with generous aims, the old have been stirred from grossness. A new hope has lifted up hundreds of human beings, a new consolation has come to the sorrowful, and a better principle has entered the sordid life of the day through the labors of these plain men."²

Thus we see that the nineteenth century evangelist faced a very difficult and challenging situation in the political and social world.

D. Landmarks in the Religious World

The church in America up to the time of the Civil War had been thoroughly conservative. But after the War there were certain new influences and forces at work. The name of Horace Bushnell suggests one of them. His

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1. Quoted by Moody, Paul Dwight, and Fitt, Arthur Percy: The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody, p. 79
2. Quoted by Beardsley: A History of American Revivals, p. 270

moral influence theory of the atonement and his little book, Christian Nurture, in which he expressed the idea "that the child is to grow up a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise", were far-reaching in their effect. Both were antitheses to the conservative's stress upon the substitutionary atonement and upon the conscious realization of having been "born again." Bushnell rendered the church a service, however, in that he turned their attention toward a more thorough training of youth.

The name of Charles Darwin suggests another influence. His principle of evolution caused much stir in this country as well as abroad because it seemed to conflict with the Biblical account of creation. The great majority of the Christians of the time believed the Scriptures literally. Thus any doctrine that disturbed their belief was bound to arouse opposition.

Toward the latter quarter of the century the church was influenced by a controversy over the so-called "higher criticism." This controversy turned upon an intense discussion of the question of the inspiration of the Bible and the errancy or inerrancy of the Scriptures. It resulted in a number of heresy trials in which three of the outstanding heretics were Charles A. Briggs and A. C. McGiffert, professors at the Union Theological Seminary, and Henry Preserved Smith, of Lane Theological Seminary.

The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by the phenomenal growth of lay movements and the

trend toward denominational fellowship and coöperation. The organization of the laity for aggressive service was an outgrowth of the revival of 1857. Having witnessed the results of their labors in this revival, laymen came to realize the important part they had in the work of Christ. Their enthusiasm found expression in the Young Men's Christian Association, the Sunday school, missionary organizations, and kindred movements. One of the most important groups within the church for promoting unity was the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, founded by the Rev. Francis E. Clark in 1881. Other expressions of the trend of the day were found in the work of the W. C. T. U., organized in 1874, and in the Anti-Saloon League, organized in 1895. Thus, although

"by the end of the nineteenth century there had been but little progress toward the organic unity of the churches, there had been an immense increase in the spirit of cooperation."¹

It was a time of remarkable growth in the membership of the churches.

"From 1850 to 1870, church membership increased 84 per cent, from 6,000,000 to 11,000,000. ... The decade from 1870 to 1880 was the one which saw the greatest percentage of growth in church membership and is generally reputed to be that of the greatest 'spirituality.'"²

It is reasonable to say that the work of D. L. Moody had much to do with this condition. The records of the Fifth

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1. Garrison: The March of Faith, p. 113
2. Ibid., pp. 45, 77

Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City, interestingly enough, reveal that to be the case.

"The records of the church show that the most fruitful year in all her history was in 1875 and 1876. During that ecclesiastical year, no less than two hundred and seventy-one persons were received into the church on confession. This was the natural harvest of the blessed years of toil in Dr. John Hall's faithful pastorate. ... But is it not significant that at that very time Brooklyn and New York were profoundly stirred by the meetings conducted by Dwight L. Moody? ... This display of God's power in our city had its natural effect upon our church and its life, calling men and women to earnest thought and impelling the undecided to an open confession."¹

Mr. Carl Heath Kopf, present-day pastor of Mount Vernon Church, in Boston, which D. L. Moody first joined on confession of faith in 1856, recently made this statement:

"More members were received into Mount Vernon Church on the first Sunday of May, 1877, than any other Sunday before or since. Moody's Boston meetings had just ended."²

It was a period marked by a changing theological emphasis from the justice to the love of God, by a fervor in the building of large and beautiful church edifices, and by a growing spirit of formalism.

E. Summary

In this short resume of the historical back-

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1. Jessup, Henry W.: History of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church from 1808 to 1908
2. Kopf, Carl Heath: "From Barnum or God?"; Advance, February, 1937 (Vol. 129, No. 16), p. 55

ground of D. L. Moody's day, we have noted that he carried on his great evangelistic work at a time when transportation by train and trolley made possible his large meetings and before the motor car had appeared to become a scattering as well as a concentrating force. The moving picture was not yet developed, nor the radio invented. It was a period when there was a decided movement toward urbanization. There was great material advance and business expansion with a pronounced tendency toward consolidation of the great industries and monopolization of the country's wealth. The outstanding advance in the political and social world was the abolition of slavery. After the Civil War, however, there was an increase of political corruption and moral degradation, particularly in the large cities. Organized and commercialized recreation arose, as well as a wholesome emphasis on the need for better recreational centers. The newspaper and magazine were given a more prominent place in the common life and were becoming a powerful influence in molding public thought.

The church voiced a cry against the evils of the time, but it was not effectively organized or fully prepared to carry on aggressive measures. In the church we found liberalizing tendencies, powerful lay emphases, a remarkable gain in membership, a growing spirit of cooperation, and a changed emphasis in theology from justice to love.

The world was particularly prepared for the coming of such a man as D. L. Moody with his genius for organization and promotion, his magnetic personality, his freedom from denominational spirit, his aggressive evangelism, and his consecrated message of the love of God.

"Some day you will read in the papers that D. L. Moody is dead. Don't you believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now. I shall have gone up higher, that is all; gone out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal, a body that death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint, a body like unto His own glorious body. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1855. That which is born of the flesh may die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever."

D. L. Moody

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF MOODY THE EVANGELIST

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THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF MOODY THE EVANGELIST

A. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to find out what influences in the early development of D. L. Moody's life had a relation to his methods of evangelism. In the preceding chapter we tried to show how certain great tides of his time caught him up and carried him along in his methods of action. These circumstances did not make him, but they helped to mold him. Likewise, as we shall try to show in this chapter, we can trace in a remarkable way influences in his early life and see how they had a bearing upon his evangelistic work.

B. Early Influences

Dwight Lyman Moody was born February 5, 1837, in the small town of Northfield, Massachusetts. He was the sixth of nine children. From the very beginning, he was introduced to the hardships of life. His father died, when he was four, leaving practically nothing for his family's support. Some of the neighbors thought Mrs. Moody should break up her home and place the children in families to be cared for but, in typical New England fashion,

she refused. Struggle she would, and struggle she did, but to her everlasting credit she reared her own family. From her D. L. Moody not only inherited a strong body that seldom suffered the pangs of disease, but also a strong will that would not compromise with the world. Without these he could not have carried on his heavy work of later years. From his early home experiences he learned that life is not easy and that it must be faced with courage. In his mother he saw exemplified the kind of courage that overcomes difficulties. Also, in her sacrifice for her family, he must have learned in no small way a lesson in love.

It may be thought that D. L. Moody was always inclined toward a religious life. Did he have dominant religious tendencies in his youth? We must answer in the negative. Nevertheless, he was exposed to religious influences.

"His mother was a religious woman—that quiet, home religion that characterizes New England. About the only books in the home were a Bible and a book of devotions. Every morning Mrs. Moody read to her children from these. On Sunday all the children were sent to the Unitarian church, over a mile away, and they stayed through Sabbath-school."¹

Thus, in his developing life, young Moody was shown the value of a simple faith and was given a glimpse into the Book that inspires such faith. Later on, he was to stir two continents with a simple Gospel message from the Book

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1. Moody and Fitt: The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody, p. 15

which he believed "from cover to cover." We can say that, in some measure at least, his belief in the simple message and life, and his love for the written Word of God were the fruit of his early home training.

The evidence of his love for the excitement of a crowd and the joy of a joke is seen in a boyhood incident. One winter in Northfield things seemed to be moving very slowly. This did not satisfy him, so he decided to do something about it. Finding a suitable piece of paper, he wrote out an announcement for a temperance meeting to be held in the schoolhouse on a given date with a well-known out-of-town orator as the speaker. The night of the meeting arrived and quite a crowd gathered in the schoolhouse, which had been prepared for the occasion, and the arrival of the lecturer was awaited, but in vain. As the disappointed people were filing out of the building, young Moody seemed to be more vociferous than the others in condemning the one who would play such a mean trick.¹

Wherever a crowd was, he wanted to be, and when there was no crowd he usually tried to get one. This was characteristic of him all through his life. His desire was to get people to doing something. In his later evangelistic work, as we shall see, he used many methods to bring people together to hear the Gospel and to send them out to live it.

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1. Cf. Moody, William R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p.15

Thus, although we have touched briefly only a few of the outstanding events and influences of his earlier days, we can see how they helped to prepare him for the experiences that were to come. In a large sense, God, through divers ways, was preparing the child for the work He wanted the man to do.

"His love of harmless fun, his keen appreciation of a joke, even upon himself, his sensitive, compassionate nature, and his leadership of boy comrades, were features which remained with him throughout the years that followed."¹

C. Broadening Horizons

There seems to come in the life of a person the time when he must either strike out to broaden the horizons of his life, or else remain in the mediocre realm of common endeavor. Such a time came to D. L. Moody. One day in 1854, while he was cutting and hauling logs with his brother, Edwin, with characteristically New England abruptness he said: "I'm tired of this. I'm not going to stay around here any longer. I'm going off to get some other work."² He went first to Clinton, a small town in Massachusetts, and then to Boston. For several days he roamed the streets of Boston looking for work and, finally, his efforts were rewarded with a job in his uncle Samuel Holton's shoe store. There he learned some of the arts of

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1. Moody and Fitt: op. cit., p. 16

2. Ibid., p. 17

salesmanship which later on he was to use in another way in evangelistic work. Like a true salesman, he did not wait for customers to come in; rather he went out and brought them in.

He always took an aggressive attitude in whatever work he attempted. He did not wait for closed doors to open; he went out and opened them. In evangelistic work his motto was, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught."¹

D. His Conversion

It was while he was in Boston, in 1855, that the first of four outstanding spiritual experiences took place in his life. When he obtained work in his uncle's shoe store, among other things, he had promised to attend church and Sunday school regularly. Accordingly, he joined the Mount Vernon Congregational Church and Sunday school. In the Sunday school he was assigned to a class whose teacher was Mr. Kimball. The teacher took a special interest in him and one day decided to resort to the unusual in winning his heart to Christ. Here is Mr. Kimball's own account of how he did it:

"I determined to speak to him about Christ and about his soul, and started down to Holton's shoe store. When I was nearly there I began to wonder whether I

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1. Pierson, Arthur T.: Evangelistic Work—In Principle and Practice, p. 248

ought to go in just then during business hours. I thought possibly my call might embarrass the boy, and that when I went away the other clerks would ask who I was, and taunt him with my efforts in trying to make him a good boy. In the meantime I had passed the store, and discovering this I determined to make a dash for it and have it over.

"I found Moody in the back part of the building wrapping shoes. I went up to him at once, and putting my hand on his shoulder I made what I afterwards felt was a very weak plea for Christ. I don't know just what words I used, nor could Mr. Moody tell. I simply told him of Christ's love for him and the love Christ wanted in return. That was all there was. It seemed the young man was just ready for the light that then broke upon him, and there, in the back of the store in Boston, he gave himself and his life to Christ."¹

From his humble Sunday school teacher Mr. Moody received his first lesson in soul-winning. Undoubtedly, the simple, direct appeal of that man of God made a tremendous impression on his youthful mind. In later years, in his own method of soul-winning, it was a simple, direct appeal which he used to present Christ to the hearts of men. Today, as we look back and study his developing life, we see how he was being taught in the school of life the lessons he needed to prepare him to become a great soul-winner.

E. Early Efforts in Religious Work

After two years in Boston, he moved to Chicago. There, while becoming prosperous in the shoe business,

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1. Quoted by Fitt, Arthur Percy: Moody Still Lives, pp. 19-20; cf. also Moody, W. R.: op. cit., p. 41

the second great spiritual experience in his life took place. In these early days in Chicago his great business ability began to show itself. As a salesman, he knew how to persuade men to buy. He wrote home to his brother George: "I can make more money here in a week that I could in Boston in a month."¹

But his success did not stop with material things. He also had a zeal in religious work. At first he rented four pews in the Plymouth Congregational Church of which he had become a member. He was unusually successful, Sunday after Sunday, in filling these pews with young men who had no church connection. Although we have no record that he led any of them to Christ, we do know that he brought them to the place where they could hear the Gospel. Another activity in which he was engaged in this period was in connection with the Young Men's Mission Band of the First Methodist Episcopal Church. With the Band he would go about visiting hotels and boarding houses distributing tracts and inviting people to come to church.

"Sunday afternoons he devoted to a little mission Sabbath-school on the corner of Chicago Avenue and Wells Street. He offered to take a class. The superintendent said he had twelve teachers already and only sixteen scholars, but if he could work up a class of his own, he would be welcome. Next Sunday Moody appeared with eighteen ragged and dirty "hoodlums," gathered off the streets, but each none the less needing to be saved. Turning these children

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1. Moody, W. R.: op. cit., p. 50

over to some of the other teachers, Moody sought out more scholars, until he filled the school to overflowing. He had no idea that he could teach himself, but devoted to God his one talent of being able to "drum up" recruits, both young men and children, for the services of the house of God."¹

With this activity, however, Moody was not satisfied. In 1858 he started his own Sunday school in the North Market Hall. This hall was given to him by the city for use in his Christian work. On Saturday nights it was usually crowded by dancers, smokers, and drinkers. Early every Sunday morning Mr. Moody and his helpers would clean the place and get it ready for the school. His efforts were rewarded by a tremendous response in numbers. He himself said concerning the school:

"I thought numbers were everything, and so I worked for numbers. When the attendance ran below one thousand it troubled me, and when it ran to twelve or fifteen hundred I was elated. Still none were converted, there was no harvest."²

Then one day something happened that changed the course of his life. A young man who had been teaching a class of girls in the school came to his place of employment to say that he could teach no longer. Consumption had gotten the best of him, and he was doomed to an early death. He made the confession to Mr. Moody that he had never brought any of his pupils to Christ in spite of the fact that he had been teaching the class for some time.

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1. Moody and Fitt: The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody, p. 25
2. Quoted by Fitt: op. cit., p. 21

This troubled him greatly and weighed upon his mind as he faced death. The dominant thought in his mind can best be expressed by the words of the well-known poem:

"Must I go and empty handed,
Must I meet my Saviour so?
Not one soul with which to greet Him,
Must I empty handed go?"¹

Mr. Moody offered to drive him around to the homes of the girls if he cared to tell them his story. In a few days he had won each of them to the Master. Besides, he had taught young Moody the unforgettable lesson of the great need for soul-winning.

Perhaps this incident, more than any other, brought before his mind with great forcefulness the fact that something more must be done than to bring people to church and Sunday school. Their souls must be dealt with personally and individually. No doubt this experience had much to do with his determination never to let a day go by without speaking to someone about Jesus Christ. Writing about this experience later, he said:

"I was disqualified for business: it had become distasteful to me. I had got a taste of another world, and cared no more for making money. For some days after the greatest struggle of my life took place. Should I give up business and give myself wholly to Christian work, or should I not? God helped me to decide aright, and I have never regretted my choice."²

A recent biographer writes:

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1. C. C. Luther

2. Quoted by Fitt: op. cit., p. 23

"After Mr. Moody laid down his business career he was never tempted to take it up again, but he found its equivalent in Christian activity that was an outlet for his tremendous push and energy. His Sunday school work called for the greatest alertness and ingenuity in handling the tough crowds he gathered in. He learned the value in dealing with them of novelty, publicity, devices that would challenge their attention. His organizing ability was also exercised to the limit in promoting the activities that centered in the "Y." In the parlance of today, he transferred his ability as a shoe-salesman to selling the Gospel."¹

F. Deepening Interest in the Bible

His third great spiritual experience came in a most unusual way. It brought to him the realization of the inexhaustible depths of the Holy Scriptures.

In 1860 he had given up business. He married Emma Charlotte Revell in 1862. Five years after the marriage, the young couple took a trip to England primarily for the purpose of giving Mrs. Moody the rest and change she needed to regain her health. While he was in England, Mr. Moody tried to meet the outstanding Christian leaders of the day such as Charles Haddon Spurgeon, George Williams, and George Müller. In the course of his visit, he made a trip to Ireland where he met the young preacher, Harry Moorehouse. At the time the young man expressed his desire to come to America and preach for him, but nothing definite was arranged as Mr. Moody was quite unimpressed.

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1. Fitt: op. cit., pp.46f.

Some time after returning to America, however, Moody received a letter from Moorehouse informing him that he had arrived in this country and that he still would like to preach in Chicago. The way opened up, and for seven nights he thrilled the large audiences which came to the Illinois Street Church preaching on the text John 3:16. The first two nights Mr. Moody had to be away, but as soon as he returned he asked his wife:

"How do the people like him?"

"They like him very much."

"Did you hear him?"

"Yes."

"Did you like him?"

"Yes, very much. And I think you will like him, although he preaches a little different from what you do."

"How is that?"

"Well, he tells sinners God loves them."

"Well," said I, "he is wrong."

"I think you will agree with him," she replied, "when you hear him because he backs up everything he says with the Word of God."¹

Mr. Moody heard him, liked him, and learned a lesson from him. Some time afterwards he said: "I used to preach that God was behind the sinner with a double-edged sword, ready to hew him down. I preach now that God is behind the sinner with love, and he is running away from the God of love."²

This incident from his life reveals to us one of his dominant characteristics. He was always willing

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1. Quoted by Fitt: op. cit., p. 25

2. Ibid., p. 26

to change his method of doing a thing, when he found a better one. Moorehouse made a definite contribution to his methods of evangelism. After hearing him, Moody realized in a new way the wonderful attractiveness of the Gospel of love and the exhaustless depths of the written Word of God. He changed the predominant emphasis in his preaching from judgment to love. He became an enthusiastic student of the Bible and inaugurated "Bible readings" in America.

G. Greater Endowment of Power

The fourth and last great experience with which we shall deal is difficult to explain and to understand, but it is a vital step in D. L. Moody's preparation for effective evangelistic work.

The Illinois Street Church, which he had organized in 1863, was noted for the spirit of revival that prevailed in it. Behind the spirit of revival and the steady activity of the church was D. L. Moody working with untiring effort and enthusiasm. It was the custom of two particular women to attend the church and to sit on the front seat. Despite the fact that he was having great success, they sensed that a certain power was lacking in his preaching and work. Subsequent events proved that they were right. One day they told him they were praying that he might receive the fulness of the power of the Holy

Spirit. He confessed afterward: "I need the power! I thought I had power."¹ As a result of their words and prayers, however, a great hunger came into his soul.

After the Chicago fire of 1871, when his church was leveled to the ground, he came to the East to raise funds for a new one. All the while the hunger for spiritual power remained with him. It was in the early part of 1872, while in New York, that he received in his soul the satisfaction he was seeking. One day he was in Brooklyn giving a Bible reading on "The Holy Spirit: His Person, Offices and Work." An evangelist from England, Mr. Douglas Russell, a man whom Mr. Moody had met and worked with previously, visited the meeting and, when given the opportunity to speak, made a few remarks on the fourth chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians. One of his remarks was to the effect that, although all believers have the Spirit of sonship, not all have the power of the Holy Spirit for service. The thought deeply impressed itself upon the mind of Moody. The next day he felt a deep experience in his soul. He was a changed man thereafter. His ministry became more effective. His methods of work were vitalized. He had been set apart for service.²

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1. Quoted by Fitt: op. cit., p. 28
2. Ibid., p. 29: Mr. Moody's own story concerning this experience is as follows: "My heart was not in the work of begging. . . I could not appeal. I was crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit. Well, one day in the city of New York—ah, what a day! —I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it, it is

H. Summary

In this chapter we have traced the outstanding influences in the early development of D. L. Moody from the time of his birth in 1837 until the time when he was filled with the Holy Spirit in 1872. We noticed that from the beginning he was introduced to the struggles of life, and that in his mother he saw a living example of courage, faith, and love in overcoming them. He inherited a strong body and will, two great assets in his later work. In his home he came under the influence of the Bible and a quiet, simple, religious atmosphere. In a boyhood incident, we saw his active nature, his love of a crowd, his desire to get people to doing things, and his qualities of leadership. His business experience in selling shoes taught him some lessons he needed in saving sinners.

During his developing life the four high spots in his spiritual experience were his conversion, in which he learned his first lesson in soul-winning from the simple, direct appeal of his Sunday school teacher; his lesson from the dying Sunday school teacher, which impressed

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almost too sacred an experience to name. ... I can only say God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different, I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you would give me all the world."

upon his mind the great need for soul-winning and which led him to give up a prospering business and take up full-time Christian service; his experience with Harry Moorehouse, which stimulated his interest in the Bible and influenced him in changing the dominant emphasis of his message from judgment to love; and his infilling with the Holy Spirit, which gave him new power in preaching the Gospel and in winning souls to Jesus Christ.

Principally educated in the school of life, he was yet to rise to heights of prominence and influence unequalled by the better educated and trained leaders of his day!

"Mr. Moody stood before the world for all that was wise and effective in evangelism. He was the embodiment of an evangelism that was Scriptural in its basis, spiritual in its aim, personal in its method, social in its expression, coöperative in its action, effective in its appeal, and fraternal in its spirit."

John McDowell

CHAPTER IV

D. L. MOODY AT WORK

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A. Introduction

In the two preceding chapters we have presented a resume of some of the outstanding movements and problems of D. L. Moody's day and have brought together the salient features in his early development which had a relation to his subsequent mission. We shall now see him actively engaged in his mission.

The purpose of this chapter is to make a thoroughgoing study of Mr. Moody at work. What were his methods of evangelism? We shall see him in action during typical campaigns. How did he prepare for them, conduct them, and close them? What methods of preaching did he use? We shall investigate his purpose and method of conducting Bible conferences and his schools.

He was a great leader. He not only knew how to plan evangelistic campaigns, but he was the inspirer in carrying them on. He was endowed with an unusual amount of tact and common sense. He had the rare ability of getting outstanding Christian ministers and laymen to work with him and for him. Once, after a brief conversation with Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell about the missionary's exper-

iences in Labrador, Mr. Moody asked:

"Could you come and tell them at the afternoon service in the Tremont Temple in three minutes? And Grenfell smiled, but answered: "I can try." "Then I'll be grateful if you'll do so. Side door at three-thirty. Good-by. Ever so many thanks for dropping in." And Grenfell adds: "There was no unctuousness, no snobbery, no cant; and yet again he had moved my heart to want to do things more than ever."¹

And as he was persuasive in getting men to work with him, so was he wise in using them. With his almost inexhaustible vitality, he realized that others were not so ruggedly built nor so capable of enduring the heavy strain of continuous labor. Dr. Stebbins, one of his helpers, said:

"He was ever thoughtful of those helping him, as it is my pleasure to testify, for he would say to me at the close of a heavy day's work just before beginning his last sermon for the day: 'You slip out and go home, for I want you to be fresh for tomorrow.'"²

Somebody said to him once: "Mr. Moody, what is the way to reach the masses with the Gospel?" "Go for them!" he replied. One of his favorite aphorisms was, "Don't wait for something to turn up. Turn up something." These sayings express the life principle of the man. He learned by doing. We shall see what methods he used in reaching men.

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1. Bradford: D. L. Moody--A Worker in Souls, p. 229
2. Ibid., p. 230

B. Campaign Technique

Mr. Moody never expected to get the desired results in his campaigns without careful and wise planning. In principle the technique for all of his campaigns was the same. He had fundamental methods that he used for all of them. There were at least two motives behind his methods: first, to instruct believers and to incite them to action; and second, to reach the unsaved.

He did not employ spectacular nor sensational methods. The Bible was at the heart of all he did and said. He tried to bring the simple Gospel message to the people of his day in a manner that would attract them to Christ and send them out to work for Him.

In examining his campaign technique we shall not deal with any particular campaign, but shall try to present in a logical, clear, and brief way the general and fundamental methods that he used.

1. Preparing for a Campaign

There was always preliminary work to be done before a campaign. The most important feature was prayer. Prayer was the foundation of success in every campaign. At one time someone made inquiries relative to Mr. Moody's successful results, to which he replied:

"For weeks past people in this city have been praying... in groups, and congregations, and alone, and here is the answer of the Holy Spirit."¹

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1. Fitt: Moody Still Lives, p. 73 (quotation)

The great success of the evangelist could not have been accomplished without the mighty power of prayer.

Special services were often held in a city prior to the arrival of Mr. Moody. Many times speakers and singers were sent in advance to awaken spiritual life, to canvass the city, and to help organize the workers. Such men as Major D. W. Whittle, Dr. George F. Pentecost, George Stebbins, and James McGranahan rendered invaluable service in the pre-campaign and follow-up work of Mr. Moody.

Moody left the actual work of preparing for a campaign to groups chosen for that purpose. Clergymen and prominent laymen usually served as chairmen of the various prayer, finance, buildings, and promotion committees.

Mr. Moody early learned the value of letting people know what he was doing. He employed publicity as an efficient strategy. Besides the advertising done by individuals, use was made of the daily press, trolley cars, posters, placards, and tickets.

Great care was always taken in the choice of the place in which the meetings were to be held. Often large theaters and assembly halls were rented in advance or, when necessary, buildings were erected. Mr. Moody stressed the importance of such little yet vital things as proper light, heat, and ventilation.

2. Conducting a Campaign

Mr. Moody had the happy faculty of dispatching business with great sagacity. He had an uncanny wisdom in the selection of his assistants. During a campaign he looked after the smallest details such as the seating of the congregation, the ventilation, the arrangement of the singers, the supervision of all the ushers. All these passed under his observation and direction.

We have said that there were at least two motives behind his methods: to arouse and instruct believers, and to reach the unsaved. We see these motives clearly shown in the methods he used.

a. Methods for Christians

The first task in a campaign was to build up the Christians. In every city there were believers who lacked zeal in their service and joy in their faith. There were believers who did not coöperate in the work of the church. They had to be instructed and encouraged in their spiritual life. He held meetings very early in a campaign designed especially for them, in which he stressed the four points, that (1) every Christian should love to work, (2) every Christian should love to work in unity with other Christians, (3) every Christian can work, and (4) God supplies the power for work through the gift of the Spirit for service.¹ Speaking on that subject to Christians in

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1. Moody, D. L.: Glad Tidings, (Sermons preached in the Hippodrome, New York, 1876,) p. 437

the Hippodrome, he said:

"Some people think because they have had the Holy Ghost resting upon them at one time in power, it is going to remain. But, I tell you many a man that got converted and received the Holy Ghost, and was used ten years ago for the service of the Lord, has not got the power that he once had."¹

Mr. Moody felt that a man must receive the power of God day by day.

He held meetings especially designed for personal workers. A large group of workers was enlisted and trained in and for this work. Speaking to them he said:

"I admit you can't lay down rules in dealing with inquirers. There are no two persons exactly alike. ... What would be medicine to one might be rank poison to another."²

Yet to his personal workers he did stress these ten points:³

1. It is a mistake to tell an inquirer your own experience. "He doesn't want your experience; he wants one of his own."

2. Always use your Bible in personal dealing.

3. It is a good thing to get a man on his knees, but don't get him there before he is ready.

4. Ask him to pray for himself.

5. Urge an immediate decision, but never tell a man he is converted. Let the Holy Spirit reveal that to him.

6. Always be prepared to do personal work.

7. Do the work boldly.

8. Don't take those in a position in life above

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1. Moody, D. L.: Glad Tidings, p. 469

2. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 489

3. Cf. ibid., p. 481

you, but, as a rule, those on the same footing.

9. Don't deal with a person of opposite sex if it can be otherwise arranged.

10. Bend all your endeavors to answer for poor, struggling souls that question of such importance to them, "What must I do to be saved?"

His suggestions for the personal life of personal workers may be summarized thus:¹

1. Have for constant use a portable reference Bible, a Concordance, and a Topical Text-book.

2. Always carry a Bible or Testament in your pocket.

3. Make marginal notes. Mark texts that contain promises, exhortations, warnings to sinners and to Christians, and invitations to the unconverted.

4. Set apart at least fifteen minutes a day for study and meditation.

5. "Prepare your heart to know the way of the Lord, and to do it." (Ezra 7:10)

6. Always ask God to open the eyes of your understanding that you may see the truth and expect that He will answer your prayer.

7. Cast every burden of doubt upon the Lord.

8. Believe in the Bible as God's revelation to you, and act accordingly. Reverence all Scripture.

9. Learn at least one verse of the Scripture each day.

10. Master the Bible.

11. Be exact in quoting Scripture.

12. Adopt some systematic plan of Bible study.

He held meetings especially planned for young

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1. Cf. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, pp. 491f.

converts. Some of the suggestions he made to them are:

1. God is able to make you stand.
2. Don't depend upon your own strength. "Your strength lies in God, and not in yourself."¹
3. If you fall into sin, do not be discouraged. Take it to God and confess it, tell Him all about it. He will forgive.²
4. Avoid self-confidence.
5. Use all the grace that God gives you; He has plenty, the more you use, the more you'll get.
6. Pray often. "Don't do anything you can't feel like praying over."³
7. If anything goes wrong during the day or evening, do not sleep until that account has been settled.
8. Go to work in God's service. "Now every single convert ought to be good for at least a dozen more, and be able to win at least twelve other souls to Christ."⁴
9. Select your friends from experienced Christians.
10. Get in love with the Bible. "I have one rule about books. I do not read any book, unless it will help me to understand the Book."⁵
11. Get into a good Bible class.
12. Unite with some church where the Gospel is preached.

Noon prayer meetings were a feature of his campaigns. Everyone was invited to these meetings, but they were planned for Christians. The meeting usually lasted

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1. Cf. Glad Tidings, p. 446
2. Ibid., p. 447
3. Ibid., p. 456
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 452

an hour. Singing, requests for prayer, a short address by Mr. Moody, prayer, and testimonies constituted the program of these meetings.

The afternoon meetings usually were given to Bible readings. Mr. Moody had learned this method from Harry Moorehouse. The program consisted of reading the Bible with a particular theme in mind, and commenting on the verses as they were read. Sometimes a person in the audience would read a verse and Mr. Moody would comment on it. He had a keen insight and a ready wit which kept the meetings from becoming dull. His aim was to get people interested in reading the Bible to find out what it had to say on vital matters.

Mr. Moody sometimes varied his meetings for Christians by having an all-day meeting which would begin about eleven in the morning and last six hours. The meeting consisted of an hour for confession and prayer, an hour for praise, a testimony period, a Bible lecture by Mr. Moody, and a communion service. These all-day meetings combined the fundamental techniques for the upbuilding of the spiritual life: prayer, confession, testimony, Bible study, and worship.¹

We have been considering in detail the frame-

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1. Mr. Moody said: "We come to the house of God to worship, when we meet around the Lord's table." Simons, M. Laird: Evenings with Moody and Sankey, pp. 233ff.

work of the structure Mr. Moody tried to erect in every campaign. Yet the details of this framework should never blind us to the fact that in the background of every campaign there was a single educational ideal. Mr. Moody wanted to do permanent work and he realized that this took time. He planned to stay long enough in a place to insure permanence. He planned an educational program for Christian workers, and placed the Bible at the heart of his educational methods.

While he instructed the Christians in various ways to build up their spiritual life, at the same time he planned many ways to put them to work. He believed in giving Christians something to do. He put them to singing in the choir, and placed them as ushers in the churches; he used them in the inquiry room; sometimes he sent them out in house-to-house visitation; he employed them in passing out tickets and bills advertising the meetings and in many other ways. He urged every Christian to engage in some kind of definite Christian service.

Thus, underneath the many different types of meetings which he conducted for Christian people in every campaign, there were two fundamental motives: to build them up in the faith, and to send them out to prove that faith.

b. Methods for Non-Christians

We have already pointed out that meetings were

planned with Christians in mind. Methods were also used to bring together non-Christians. One meeting was set apart for the intemperate. A large number of people who had been regularly attending the general meetings were asked to stay away from this one. One writer in describing a gathering of the intemperate men and women in Philadelphia writes: "Every class of society was represented in this throng, united so closely by painful bonds."¹

The evening meeting was evangelistic in nature. The order of service in a typical service was as follows. At seven thirty the choir usually sang Gospel hymns in order to familiarize the people with them. With Ira D. Sankey as his coworker and soloist, Mr. Moody had introduced the Gospel hymns as a feature of his meetings.¹ At eight o'clock Mr. Moody came to the platform and Mr. Sankey usually sang. A prayer by one of the ministers followed, after which there was a number by the choir, a soloist, or a quartet. The address came next, after which another solo was heard while the unsaved were being urged to adjourn to the inquiry room. The whole meeting moved toward the climax when, after giving his message, Mr. Moody

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1. Cf. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 269. "The value of music for religious services generally and especially for revivals had always been appreciated, but the prominence of solo singing was novel and still more was the intimate cooperation of preacher and singer. Nothing like it had been known before Moody and Sankey .." Bradford: D. L. Moody—A Worker in Souls, p. 156

would extend the invitation to all the unsaved to accept Christ. The motivation behind his zeal for souls was his belief that he was dealing with emergencies. His time was short. Men were dying in sin. He wanted to do all he could to bring them to Jesus Christ. Therefore, he put forth every power he possessed to win them.

The inquiry room was the place where Mr. Moody with a corps of consecrated, common-sense, and capable Christians dealt with seekers one by one. It was set apart from the main auditorium so that there would be no chance for undue pressure in dealing with individuals. Mr. Moody did not allow enthusiasm and emotion to run rampant in his meetings. He worked for solid results. Although he attracted the people in multitudes in his great campaigns, his permanent work was clinched by dealing with individuals in the inquiry room.

"Seekers were dealt with personally, informal talks were given, difficulties were solved and dangers pointed out. In fact such instructions were given as would lead penitents to immediate acceptance of Jesus Christ."¹

The name and address and church preference, if any, of each inquirer was taken, recorded on a card, and passed on to the appropriate ministers. Definite attention was given to each individual and an effort was made to have him join some church. This work was done carefully. There was no undue haste in trying to bring them to Christ

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1. Beardsley: A History of American Revivals, p. 289

and to the church. Mr. Moody would say, "Think what it means to win a soul to Christ, and don't begrudge time and patience with God's Word." He continually emphasized the value of the personal approach in dealing with inquirers.

"Personal dealing is of the most vital importance. No one can tell how many souls have been lost through lack of following up the preaching of the Gospel by personal work ... People are not usually converted under the preaching of the minister. It is in the inquiry meeting that they are most likely to be brought to Christ."¹

We may say, then, that in conducting a campaign Mr. Moody had two main purposes in mind which motivated every method employed: to build up the spiritual life of the Christian through educational methods, and by means of practical work, and to win the sinner to the Savior and get him permanently established and active in some Christian organization.

3. Follow-Up Work

To make his work more permanent, Mr. Moody, in conjunction with the ministers of the community where a campaign was being conducted, often used outstanding evangelists and singers to follow up his work in order to clinch the decisions made by converts, and to instruct them further in the faith.

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1. Quoted by Bradford: op. cit., p. 268

C. Method of Preaching

John McDowell once said that Mr. Moody "preached the gospel to more people than any other man, minister, or layman in the entire course of human history."¹ If this statement is true, we shall want to know what methods of preaching he used to attract the throngs of people who heard him. How did he prepare his sermons? What was his message? How did he deliver it?

1. His Method in Preparing a Sermon.

His method in preparing a sermon was simple and practical. Having decided to talk on a subject, he would take a large envelope and write the title and text on the outside. This envelope was used as a storehouse into which he put illustrations, comments, clippings from newspapers, and any thoughts or suggestions on the subject which came to him. Often he would gather his materials and thoughts on a theme for a year or more before using them.

"Hundreds of his sermon envelopes are in his study—many of them showing signs of frequent use, many representing sermons in embryo."²

When he had decided to speak on a subject, he would look through the envelope, gather the materials he wanted, develop his thoughts in logical outline, and weave

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1. Quoted by William E. Gilroy: "He Preached to Multitudes"; Advance, February 1, 1937 (p. 65)
2. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 442

in choice illustrations and anecdotes. On paper of convenient size he wrote his notes with large letters and fastened them into his Bible with an elastic band.

This method had many advantages. It helped him to systematize his thoughts and gave him freedom in presentation. He was never bound to a written manuscript. It helped him avoid monotony in the frequent use of a sermon, since he was always adding new material. One writer says:

"He must have repeated some of his sermons hundreds of times, but they always sounded fresh to the hearer. Undoubtedly the secret lay partly in the nature of his subject, partly in the freshness of his delivery: but credit must also be given to his method of sermon-making, which permitted a flexibility of outline that meant continual change in the substance of his address, and to the order in which his points and anecdotes were marshalled."¹

2. His Message

He had a direct, simple message that could be sung. His preaching was plain and Scriptural. He believed the Bible "from cover to cover" and from it he received his message. He used Scriptural language to a great extent, but he made it live. He used the concrete rather than the abstract. He made large and effective use of illustrations and anecdotes. His message was positive and to the point. He was a proclaimer of the truth rather than a defender of the faith. His two outstanding themes

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1. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 443

were the atonement of Christ and the regeneration of man. "He believed in hell and damnation, but he preached heaven and salvation."¹ He did not tell his audiences what they already were thinking, but what they ought to think.

His message had a universal appeal. It was a message for everybody. It was a message of love to the whole world. He believed that all men not reborn were lost in sin and in need of salvation. His message was the Gospel of the love of God who gave His only Son that sinners might live. Speaking in the Tremont Temple in Boston in 1897, he said:

"Tell me that God didn't love this world when he gave the Son! As a matter of fact, he gave him freely. We are told that Abraham saw Christ's day, and was glad. God lifted the curtain of time and let him look, and he saw God's Son going to Calvary with his cross, bearing away the sins and the sicknesses of the world."²

It is interesting to note that Mr. Moody, in his early preaching, proclaimed a gospel of judgment.³

His message had an individual appeal. Each person had to realize his own sin and his need of the Savior. To be saved he had to confess his sin, take Christ as his Savior, trust in Him for guidance, commune with Him in prayer, and tell about Him to others.

His message had a social appeal. As one writer

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1. Gilroy: "He Preached to Multitudes"; p. 65, Advance, February 1, 1937
2. Moody, D. L.: God is Love, p. 10. (No. 1 of The Evangel Booklets)
3. Vide supra pp. 34-35

says:

"Another of D. L. Moody's outstanding characteristics was what is today called "social passion" and regarded by many as a new discovery, the development of a hitherto neglected element in Christianity. Those who emphasize this social aspect of the gospel often refer to Mr. Moody and men of his type as representing the purely individualistic, other-worldly view of Christianity. They conceived their message, it is said, as a message to individual souls calling them to repentance and conversion and to salvation from hell. Well, let there be no misunderstanding. Mr. Moody did preach a gospel of individual salvation from sin and the everlasting consequences of sin. ... But, at the same time that Mr. Moody held and so powerfully proclaimed this individual, other-world gospel and just because he did so, his message was a call to redeemed life here and now, and wherever he went institutions and movements of philanthropy, of social service, of moral reform flowed directly from his influence. Every community where he worked felt the effect in a better and friendlier community life, in more just and humane economic relationships, in more solicitude for the unfortunate and the needy. The Kingdom of God had come nigh."¹

His message was short and to the point, usually taking about twenty minutes. In this respect he was quite modern. He did not believe in being exhaustive in presenting a subject lest he should become exhausting. But what he said was full of practical theology designed to satisfy the spiritual hunger of men and at the same time create a desire for more spiritual food.

His message usually closed with a gripping challenge and urgent appeal for immediate decision. One writer in referring to the appeal says:

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1. Speer: The Founder's Day Address; The Northfield Schools, East Northfield, Massachusetts, February 5, 1931 (pp.20f)

"Of his words, only four are recalled—the sharp insistent 'Will you do it?' which closed a persuasive sermon and which typified the urgency with which he brought people to decision."¹

3. His Style of Preaching

He had a natural conversational style. At one time he said,

"I like to say speak better than preach, because if I can only get people to think I am talking to them rather than preaching at them it is so much easier to hold their attention."²

He never posed as an orator. "The oratorical complex got no hold on him."³ Another writer in referring to the same subject says:

"Outstanding is the recollection of Moody himself with the quiet commanding force of a great general, never allowing for a moment the thousands in his audience to slip from his grasp, yet depending upon the force of his moral and spiritual appeal rather than any tricks of oratory or makeshifts of the promoter."⁴

He spoke the plain language of the people and although his style could lay no claim to beauty, it did have clarity and force.

4. His Power in Preaching

We quote the words of Henry Drummond in describing Moody as a preacher:

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1. Editorial, "The Moody Centenary"; p. 65, Advance, February 1, 1937
2. McDowell, J.: "Dwight L. Moody, Ambassador for Christ"; Church Management, Vol. XII, No. 8, May 1936 (quotation)
3. Editorial, Christian Century, February 3, 1937, p. 136
4. Editorial, "Personal Memories and Impressions"; Advance, p. 65, February 1, 1937

"Were one asked what, on the human side, were the effective ingredients in Mr. Moody's sermons, one would find the answer difficult. Probably the foremost is the tremendous conviction with which they are uttered. Next to that come their point and direction. Every blow is straight from the shoulder, and every stroke tells. Whatever canons they violate, whatever faults the critics may find with their art, with their rhetoric, or even with their theology, as appeals to the people they do their work with extraordinary power. If eloquence is measured by its effects upon an audience, and not by its balanced sentences and cumulative periods, then there is eloquence of the highest order in them. In sheer persuasiveness Mr. Moody has few equals, and, rugged as his preaching may seem to some, there are in it pathos of a quality which few orators have ever reached, and an appealing tenderness which not only redeems but raises it, not unselfdom, almost to sublimity."¹

Mr. Moody never lost his power for attracting throngs. In 1897, two years before he died, he conducted a series of meetings in the largest buildings in Chicago with a seating capacity of six thousand, the opening meeting of which was reported in the Chicago Times-Herald thus:

"It made a scene without precedent. Six thousand more men and women were standing in the streets after the management had ordered the doors closed. This multitude would not accept the announcement that the vast hall was packed from ceiling to pit. It swept around the corners and in the avenues until traffic was blocked. The cable cars could not get past ... A line of policemen tried to argue, but the crowd would not be reasoned with. An hour before the time for opening there had been a stampede. Then men at the entrances were swept from their posts by the tide. The overflow waited patiently during the service, and a small fraction of it was able to get inside after Mr. Moody had finished his sermon."²

Mr. Moody's message to Christian and non-Christian

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1. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 435
2. Quoted by Burton, Margaret: Comrades in Service, p. 96

was a message of the free grace and the undying love of God. His joy and faith were contagious. In teaching the Christians the deeper truths, or in presenting the simple message of salvation to the unsaved, he based his message upon the record given in the Bible. He never doubted its truths for one moment. To the unsaved he made an urgent appeal for immediate decision, based upon the reasonableness of faith in Christ and the folly of rejecting the love of God.

His messages were prepared with two classes of people in mind, the saved and the unsaved. For the former he always had spiritual food from the Bible, and for the latter he always had an invitation to accept the Christ who was at the heart of the Bible.

Most important of all, before teaching and preaching the great doctrines, he had learned them for himself from the Bible and tested them in his own life.

D. Educational Methods

"The reward of service is more service," was one of Mr. Moody's favorite sayings. And it was true in his case. The more he did, the more he found to do.

We have shown how he placed great emphasis on an educational program even in his evangelistic meetings. He wanted to get away from the superficiality of just getting people worked up to an emotional frenzy and then

leaving them to work out their own way. He tried to lay the foundation of the Christian life in such a manner that both Christian and convert would have something definite upon which to build.

It is interesting to note how that during the later years of his life he became intensely interested in a new outlet for his energy through a definite plan for educational evangelism. He realized that the building up of the Christian life requires time and directed effort. He probably recognized that in his campaigns, no matter how carefully planned and executed, results were often wasted because of poor teaching before and after the meetings. He began to realize that it takes more than a month, three months, or six months, to do work of permanent value.

Thus, in a day when young people had few opportunities for Christian education, he was moved to found schools where his educational emphases could be realized. Although he himself had had very little formal education, D. L. Moody realized the value of it in the making of the highest type of Christian character and leadership. A recent writer says:

"The fact that the evangelist developed into the educator, though without ever ceasing to be the evangelist, is one reason why Moody is vividly remembered and why he would not seem like a figure from an alien world if he were to appear on the streets or in the councils of Christian men today."¹

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1. Editorial, Christian Century, February 3, 1937, p. 137

There were at least three influences in Mr. Moody's life that led him to the founding of Northfield, and subsequently his other schools.

"In 1875 Mr. Moody was driving one day in the vicinity of Northfield, when he passed a lonely home. Sitting in the doorway were the mother and the two daughters, occupied in braiding straw hats. The father was paralytic, and could do nothing for the support of the family; thus the burden rested on the women. But though the father was physically helpless, he was an educated man, and his daughters had an ambition that reached beyond their present narrow horizon.

"The lives of privation and isolation these girls were compelled to endure touched Mr. Moody. The sight of them braiding hats in that lonely, out-of-the-way home kindled an old yearning in his soul, gave new force to a purpose to found some sort of school to meet their need, and led shortly to its fulfillment."¹

A second influence came from his brother Samuel.

"Mr. Moody had a peculiar love for this brother, who was the youngest in the family. He was not strong physically, and his interests were necessarily limited. Like his older brother, he was fond of young people, and was instrumental in starting a debating society in Northfield. He constantly regretted the limited opportunities the local schools afforded his twin sister for her mental betterment, and often expressed the wish that something more advanced might be available."²

Another probable influence as to purpose and method in his educational institutions came from Henry F. Durant, of Boston. Mr. Durant was the founder of Wellesley College. It was Mr. Moody's privilege to make his acquaintance, to visit the college several times, and later to become a trustee of that school.

"Mr. Durant's aim for Wellesley was to have a college

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1. Moody and Fitt: The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody, Vol. II, p. 9
2. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 319

founded on the Bible, and to give advanced education while always giving Christ and the Bible preëminence. Recognizing the benefits of industrial duties, as well as of intellectual training, he insisted on the students sharing in the domestic work of the institution. Mr. Moody saw this plan in operation, and at once adopted it in starting the Northfield Seminary."¹

1. The Northfield Schools

a. Northfield Seminary for Girls

Through the aid of Christian friends D. L. Moody started the Northfield Seminary for Girls. It was opened in November, 1879. The purpose of the school as stated in an early catalogue was:

"... designed to promote the Christian education of young women. The instruction, discipline, and influences are such as, it is believed, will secure the best results in the development of character and be the most fitting preparation for a life of consecrated service."²

In back of the founding of the school were certain educational principles held by Mr. Moody. In earlier experiences with schools he had come to recognize the fact that coöperation on the part of the student was a requisite of sound philanthropy in education. Again, he had observed that education should include the determining of relative values and should not be simply a mental drilling. He felt that with academic requirements should go a sense of responsibility in doing extra-curricular duties. Most of all, he believed that every student should have a knowl-

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1. Moody, W. R.: op. cit., p. 320

2. Moody, W. R.: The Story of the Northfield Schools, p. 13

edge of the English Bible.¹ He would say: "A man who knows his Bible can never be said to be illiterate; and a man who is ignorant of the Bible can never be said to have a broad culture."²

The Northfield Seminary for Girls was carefully planned, was conceived in prayer, and carried on by faith. Its purpose was to provide Christian education of the highest type for the overlooked classes of young girls. From the very beginning it was a success.

As we look back over the years and consider the underlying motives which led to the founding of the school we see that there are at least two: a desire to put the Bible in its proper place in education, and to inculcate the worth of service in the young students' minds.

b. Mount Hermon School for Boys

It is not necessary to go into the details of the educational methods used at Mount Hermon. The underlying principles for Northfield and Mount Hermon were the same.

The purpose of the school is signalized in its name.

"'Mount Hermon' was named by Mr. Camp (the donor) who became the first president of the Board of Trustees. In selecting the name there is revealed the Christian purpose in the mind of the donor, as well

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1. Cf. Moody, W. R.: The Story of the Northfield Schools, pp. 6-7
2. Ibid., p. 7

as in the founder's thought, that it should be a 'school of the prophets' like that of the ancient group of Elijah's time."¹

Like Northfield, the two distinguishing features of the school were the regard for the worth of service and the importance given to Bible study.

"In the corner stone of each of the buildings proper has been placed a copy of the Scriptures. This is symbolic of the place that God's Word holds in the life of the schools. It is, indeed, foundation, corner stone, and capstone of Mr. Moody's whole system."²

2. The Moody Bible Institute

Mr. Moody's emphasis on Bible study and Bible preaching together with prayer, Gospel songs, and personal work, led to the founding of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

Mr. Moody used to say, "I believe we have got to have 'Gap-men'—men who are trained to stand between the laity and the ministers."³ He saw men who wanted to do God's will but who did not have the necessary training to prepare them to do their best. To meet this need he, together with generous friends, started the Institute in 1889.

The purpose and plan of the school as given by Mr. Moody himself are:

"It is a school where the Bible is studied under competent instructors, both of this and other lands,

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1. Moody, W. R.: The Story of the Northfield Schools, p.19
2. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 322
3. Ibid., p. 339

and training is given in methods of practical Christian work and where students are taught vocal and instrumental music to fit them for Christian service. Every student is required each day while studying to do personal work in missions, tents, homes, and elsewhere, under competent supervision."¹

The school was designed to meet the needs of three classes of students: graduates of colleges or theological schools who desired a more thorough training in the English Bible and methods of aggressive Christian work; those who had experience in Christian work but who wished to give time to further study and preparation; and men and women who did not necessarily intend to give their entire time to the ministry or mission work, but who wanted a larger acquaintance with the Bible and methods of Christian service, so that they could work more intelligently and successfully in bringing others to Christ.²

In summary, we may say that Mr. Moody's aim in establishing schools was not simply to educate, but to educate for Christian service. His emphasis was on the spiritual development of youth. Other things should take their proper place in relation to the spiritual, he believed.

Although he left the administrative part of the schools to others, he made sure that the Bible was the foundational instrument of culture in them.

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1. Camp, Norman H.: "Fifty Years Ago and Now," (pamphlet), p. 10
2. Moody, W. R.: The Life of Dwight L. Moody, p. 345

3. The Bible Institute Colportage Association

Another method of Mr. Moody is seen in his use of the printed page. He saw the need for religious books which could be sold for a reasonable price. Therefore he organized a colportage association in connection with the Bible Institute of Chicago. He did not go into this enterprise without much thought and experience. He had had experience publishing and distributing books and papers ever since his early days in Christian work. Together with Sankey he had published a hymn book which became very popular in this country and in England. He realized the value of the printed page in his evangelistic work. He knew that after the human voice was silenced the printed page could still speak.

The Colportage library was planned to combine these five features: (1) popular readable style, (2) well-known authors, or books of existing reputation, (3) strictly undenominational, (4) first-class workmanship, and (5) low price.¹

4. Bible Conferences

In his evangelistic work, Mr. Moody became conscious of a need for spiritual stimulus among Christian workers through Bible Study, fellowship and prayer. Therefore, in the summer of 1880, soon after he began his evan-

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1. Moody, W. R.: op. cit., p. 432

gelistic campaigns in America, he invited a group of Christian workers to come to Northfield for ten days of prayer together. Referring to this gathering his son says:

"This conference is of special interest as it expresses the spiritual development of the leader himself during the last twenty years of his ministry, and has proved to be one of the most permanent results that he achieved for the Christian Church."¹

Another man writes:

"I think the time will come when it will be recognized that Dwight L. Moody never exerted such an influence for the higher life of the nation and the world as he did when he presided over the general conventions of English, Canadian, and American college men at Northfield in that long series of summer conferences beginning in the eighties .."²

It was at the Northfield Student Conference, in 1888, that the "Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions" was formed. This organization is active up to the present.

From its humble beginning the Northfield Conference grew to great proportions. By 1898 it was international in character. At one meeting prayer was offered in twenty-seven different tongues.

"Think what the movement meant. Picked religious leaders in the colleges were receiving Bible teaching, vision and inspiration, which they carried back to their own institutions, inaugurating systematic Bible study and developing men in more active Christian work and witness for Christ."³

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1. Moody, W. R.: op. cit., p. 360
2. Davenport, F. M.: Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals, p. 206
3. Fitt: Moody Still Lives, p. 92

In these conferences the Bible was enthroned as the Book of God and the sole authority for Christian faith. Christ was exalted as the all-sufficient Savior. A hearty Christian fellowship between individuals and denominational groups was provided. In these conferences, then, we find another outlet for Mr. Moody's educational as well as his evangelistic methods.

E. Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to show how Mr. Moody carried on his work. We have studied his outstanding methods of evangelism. We have seen that he did his work thoroughly. He aimed at solid results. He believed whole-heartedly in the power of the Gospel message to change men. With an amazing understanding of practical approach, he utilized the best methods he knew in bringing the unsaved to the Christian faith, in building up the Christians in the faith, and in sending them out for the faith. He did this particularly by means of evangelistic meetings, schools, conferences, and the printed page.

"A hundred years is but a
little while in the history
of the influence of such a
man."

The Christian Century

CHAPTER V

MOODY'S METHODS IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR PERMANENT VALUE

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MOODY'S METHODS IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR PERMANENT VALUE

A. Introduction

The fact that D. L. Moody carried on his great work about a half a century ago gives us historical perspective in which to view it. We may apply the acid test of time to his work and see how much of it has permanent value.

Mr. Moody conducted his evangelistic campaigns for a period of about thirty-five years with a fruitage that no one can compute. He organized two schools and a Bible Institute for the purpose of Christian education. He started summer Bible Conferences for the purpose of bringing together groups to study the Bible under the leadership of renowned teachers. These conferences attracted people from all parts of the world. He organized a colportage association for the purpose of printing and distributing Christian literature at the lowest possible cost. His mighty influence was felt in such organizations as the Student Volunteer Movement, the Sunday School movement, the Young Men's Christian Association, and in many other groups. In this chapter we shall see in what way his influence still continues to operate.

B. In Individual Lives

One way in which a man's influence lives on is in the lives of other men. We can estimate the greatness of a leader by his personal influence in the lives of others who in their turn become leaders. This is particularly true in the case of Mr. Moody.

"Henry Drummond and James Stalker in Scotland, Wilfred T. Grenfell in England, in America Robert E. Speer and John R. Mott and other college bred men now bearing heavy Christian burdens were fashioned by this powerful leader. The valiant missionary in China, D. John Kenneth McKenzie was only one of the many whose choice of missionary calling was in large measure due to him. In many a city, town and hamlet in Great Britain, the United States and Canada, one will find today laymen who attribute their present interest in the kingdom to words which D. L. Moody spoke in their hearing years ago."¹

One of Mr. Moody's methods was to speak to someone every day about Jesus Christ, with an endeavor to lead him to Christ. If we could call before us the individuals to whom he spoke, both in his informal contacts with men and through the more formal meetings in the inquiry room, we should have a wonderful testimony of his continuing influence in the lives of men. We choose two outstanding testimonies to illustrate this point.

Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell, in speaking of his debt to Mr. Moody, says:

"Just three months ago I was in the dear old home of my boyhood, with every earthly luxury at one's

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1. "D. L. Moody's Value for Our Time and All Time"; Editorial, p. 619, The Congregationalist and Christian World, November 12, 1914

bidding, yet today these rugged, ice-bound shores are again furnishing me with a joy no money could provide. Today we have treated thirty sick folks. Most of their troubles were from chronic want of proper food. They are men of independent spirit, yet only five could raise ten cents for the mission box. Riding at anchor here I have been analyzing the causes that brought me to this barren coast these twenty-two years, a large section of one's life. The answer is an odd one: an American, a man of the humblest birth, a man invested with no human authority, a man I only once spoke to—D. L. Moody."¹

Telling about the impression of Mr. Moody upon him after the first General Conference he had attended in 1887, Robert E. Speer writes:

"When that conference was over I was not sure whether I went back home on earth or above. I only knew there was a boy caught up if not into the seventh heaven, then into some third or fourth heaven where he saw and heard things which he could not utter ... And when I look back over that experience I see Mr. Moody's familiar form and hear his shrewd voice as he stood there by the door of those open heavens and called us in."²

Not only was Mr. Moody's influence felt in religious circles and in the lives of those who have carried on Christian work, but it was manifest also in the more secular walks of life as well.

"Not long after his father's death, Mr. William R. Moody called on President McKinley at the White House to invite him to Northfield. He was quickly given preference over other callers and ushered into an inner room. Alone there with the President, Mr. Moody sought to extend his invitation as quickly as possible, but the President bade him sit down saying, 'I want to talk with you, Mr. Moody. Do you realize your father was a very great man?' 'I am sure he was

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1. Grenfell, Wilfred T.: "My Debt to Mr. Moody"; p. 633, The Congregationalist and Christian World, November 12, 1914
2. Speer, Robert E.: The Founder's Day Address; The Northfield Schools, East Northfield, Massachusetts, February 5, 1931

a good one,' was the modest reply. 'But,' persisted President McKinley, 'he was a great man too, and when greatness and goodness are combined you have a rare character.'"1

The late President Wilson's tribute to Mr. Moody is given in these words:

"I was in a very plebeian place. I was in a barber shop, sitting in a chair, when I became aware that a personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself and sat in the next chair to me. Every word that he uttered, though it was not in the least didactic, showed a personal and vital interest in the man who was serving him; and before I got through with what was being done to me, I was aware that I had attended an evangelistic service, because Mr. Moody was in the next chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he left and noted the singular effect his visit had upon the barbers in that shop. They talked in undertones. They did not know his name, but they knew that something had elevated their thoughts. And I felt that I left that place as I should have left a place of worship."2

From these and many other available illustrations we see that Mr. Moody's influence continued to bear fruit in the lives of great men after he himself had passed on to another life. His work was not a passing enthusiasm in the lives of individuals; it was a permanent reality.

C. In the Church

1. Interdenominational Emphasis

In his great evangelistic campaigns Mr. Moody did much to bring about a more friendly relationship and

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1. "D. L. Moody's Value for Our Time and All Time"; p. 619, The Congregationalist and Christian World, November 12, 1914
2. Wilson, Woodrow: "A Word from the President"; *ibid.*, p. 624

a more vital coöperation between the denominations. He was not a denominational man. Rather he was a humble layman who was willing to work in and through any denomination or group that would help him present the Gospel message. It was not his purpose to start new sects but to revitalize the organizations and movements already in operation.

"The greatest of all modern revivalists, Dwight L. Moody, did not have a denominational hair in his head, while the revival movements since his day have been more and more undenominational in character and have had a considerable unifying influence."¹

2. Individual Approach

Mr. Moody's method in revitalizing the life of the church was through the individual approach. He felt that if he stimulated the individual to zeal and enthusiasm in the Christian life and work that the problems of the church would take care of themselves. Mr. Moody once said to Theodore Cuyler:

"... if you want to kindle a fire, you collect a handful of sticks, light them with a match, and keep on blowing 'til they blaze. Then you may heap on the wood. I am working here with a handful of Christians, endeavouring to warm them up with love for Christ; and, if they keep well kindled, a general revival will come, and outside sinners will be converted."²

D. L. Moody's method of simple aggressive evangelism, directed to the individual, based upon the Bible, and centered in Christ, is being used by many Christian

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1. Sweet, William Warren: The Story of Religions in America, p. 517
2. Cuyler: Recollections of a Long Life, p. 90

leaders throughout the world today. The Moody Centenary celebrations have brought out his continued influence in modern evangelism. On the other hand, the apparent weakness of the church in many places may be due to the fact that the leaders have lost this simple, direct, aggressive, and personal appeal. If so, it may be concluded that if the church desires to work for and to attain solid results today, it must recapture the fire and zeal, and fundamental approach of Mr. Moody.

3. Subdivision of Responsibility

One aspect of his approach was the subdivision of labor. Mr. Moody believed in putting people to work, in the delegating of responsibility to individuals in the church life and work. He believed that it was the place of the church to provide an outlet for the enthusiasm of the Christian faith. This emphasis of Mr. Moody has helped to bring about a reconsideration of the place of the organization and of business-like efficiency in every aspect of the church's program. The polity of most churches today recognizes a correlative relationship between clergy and laity.

4. Use of Gospel Hymns

Comparatively few people know that Mr. Moody originated, so to speak, Gospel music. He had learned the value of singing the Gospel message in his Sunday school work. Thus, when he began his evangelistic meet-

ings, he made much of singing the Sunday school songs. He and Mr. Sankey were responsible for the publication of a hymn book of Gospel songs.¹ He also popularized solo singing and quartet work along with preaching. Since his time Gospel songs have played a vital part in the life of the church.

5. The Moody Memorial Church.

"In any estimate of Mr. Moody's surviving influence throughout the world, surely the Moody Memorial Church is noteworthy."²

The permanent influence of D. L. Moody's methods of evangelism may best be illustrated by the work of the now Moody Memorial Church, in Chicago. It was founded in 1863. Today it is larger and more influential than ever. The church is interdenominational and welcomes all Christians who love the Word of God. The whole emphasis of its program, as it was in Moody's day, is on a Bible-teaching, preaching, and evangelizing ministry. The church carries on aggressive evangelistic and missionary endeavors, paying particular attention to those who are not Christian and to those who are poor. Its motto is: "Ever Welcome to this House of God are Strangers and the Poor." At present it has a membership of about four thousand.

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1. Cf. supra p. 67

2. Fitt: Moody Still Lives, p. 81

6. Rescue Missions

Another outgrowth of D. L. Moody's work is to be found in the so-called rescue missions. They are special missions concerned with the very lowest stratum of society. Throughout America, especially in the large cities, they carry on a very necessary service.¹ The outstanding evangelist since Moody's day, William A. ("Billy") Sunday, was brought to Christ in Chicago through one of these missions.

D. In Organized Education

1. Schools

"An institution is a human personality, writ large and with indelible ink. 'An institution is the lengthened shadow of a man.' Where the sun of progress shines, that shadow is sharply cast, and surely remains."²

Mr. Moody used to say, "My school work will not tell much until the century closes, but when I am gone I shall leave some grand men and women behind."³ His prophecy is being fulfilled today. His schools stand as a permanent memorial to his name. The influence of the Northfield schools and the Moody Bible Institute is being felt in all walks of life. Organized with the purpose of preparing young men and women for a well-rounded life, with a cur-

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2. Thompson, Charles Lemuel: The Religious Foundations of America, p. 291

1. Morgan, G. Campbell: "Dwight Lyman Moody as I Knew Him"; p. 7, The Christian, January 7, 1937

3. Fitt: op. cit., p. 97

riculum designed to enable them to meet the intellectual and spiritual problems of the day, these schools, ever growing in their influence, are sending forth a continual stream of youth to fill places of prominence and influence in the world. Many Mount Hermon men and Northfield women are now ministers and missionaries. These schools have also served as models for similar institutions in many lands.

The Moody Bible Institute is the "richest source of foreign mission recruits in the world."¹ When organized, it was Mr. Moody's purpose that the school should send trained, consecrated, and gifted young people into the lay activities of the church. His purpose is being realized in a more remarkable way perhaps than he ever dreamed. The church of yesterday and today owes a great debt of gratitude for the inestimable contributions the students of the Moody Bible Institute have made to its life. When Mr. Moody died there were about three hundred students enrolled; in 1935 there were 1079. The English Bible is still basic in the organization of the curriculum. A marked spirit of evangelism prevails.

The general plan and purpose of the Moody Bible Institute have attracted attention throughout the world. It is estimated that about seventy-five similar schools have come into existence since Mr. Moody's death. They

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1. Fitt: op. cit., p. 154

too carry on his spirit. Mr. Moody's emphasis upon the place of the English Bible in the curriculum has found its way into many theological seminaries.

2. The Colportage Association

The Colportage Association started by Mr. Moody is more active than ever. It carries on the aims of its founder by printing and publishing Christian literature at the lowest possible cost. During a period of forty-one years a total publication of over ten million copies of the colportage library in six languages and one hundred sixty-one titles has been realized. A total of over seventy million units of testaments, Gospel portions, hymn books, tracts, and other literature has been put into circulation. It is interesting to note that the colportage idea has stimulated other men to start similar associations.

3. Bible Conferences

The Bible Conference idea started by Mr. Moody in 1880 is still very popular at Northfield. As in the days of its founder, Bible study is the leading feature. Outstanding teachers are brought from all parts of the world to teach the Holy Scriptures.

Similar conferences have been started in many places here and abroad. All of them are modeled more or less after the Northfield Conference. The writer has been privileged to attend one of these for a number of summers

at Montrose, Pennsylvania. This conference, begun by R. A. Torrey, carries out in purpose and plan Mr. Moody's ideals of combining education with evangelization.

Though we have given but a brief account of each of the outstanding permanent values resulting from the life and work of Mr. Moody, yet we may draw certain obvious conclusions which will show that Mr. Moody's ideas and methods of evangelism and education are as potent today, if not more so, than when he was living. In his schools we find the outworking of his emphasis upon the value of the development of the spiritual life, of the place of the English Bible, and of the need for practical Christian service. His educational and evangelistic methods are best perpetuated at the Institute and the summer conferences.

E. The Twentieth Century Regard for D. L. Moody

The Centenary celebrations of 1937 have focused the attention of the world upon the true greatness of D. L. Moody. Both in America and the British Isles many books and articles have been printed in commemoration of his birth and depicting his life and influence. The following are representative of the many statements made, giving us a further insight into the regard in which the twentieth century holds the man and his work.

"He was a child of light, luminously human in the service of the divine, all the more human because he increasingly sought the glory of God. He moved and

won men by his naturalness. He could throw his line through wit and humour, but in the central heart of all his merriment there was a holy place where nothing dwelt that was common or unclean."¹

"While Moody belonged chiefly to his own age, he was among the immortals."²

"It is not the body that matters, but the spirit, and Mr. Moody's spirit is burning more brightly than ever."³

"Dwight L. Moody, the most effectual evangelist of the post-war period .."⁴

"Neither God nor man will let such a life die. It lives in the appeal which it has made and is making today and will continue to make in all the years which are to come."⁵

"History ranks Moody with Wesley and Whitefield and credits him with being a cause, rather than an effect of the tidal wave of religious awakening that swept the world in the Eighteen Seventies and Eighteen Eighties. Dr. Francis L. Patton called him 'one of those who come along only once in about 400 years.' Professor Henry Drummond said, 'He was the greatest human I ever knew.'"⁶

Mr. Moody, although not the founder or leader of any denomination or church group, not even an ordained minister, nevertheless made such an impression upon the conscience of the English-speaking world that thousands have been crowding to the places where centenary meetings,

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1. Jowett, John Henry: The Preacher, His Life and Work, pp. 187f.
2. Editorial, p. 65, Advance, February 1, 1937
3. Wilfred T. Grenfell
4. Sweet: The Story of Religions in America, p. 481
5. McDowell: "Dwight L. Moody, Ambassador for Christ"; p. 429, Church Management, May, 1936
6. Robbins, L. H.: "Moody's Spirit Marches Forward"; New York Times Magazine, p. 12, January 31, 1937

celebrating the hundredth anniversary of his birth, have been held. In New York City, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and other large and small communities in our land and in the British Isles, people have paused in the routine of their daily lives to pay tribute to the memory of the man who, through individuals, institutions, and movements, still points the way to the Christ whom he loved and served.

"He that doeth the will of
God abideth forever."

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A RETROSPECT

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A RETROSPECT

Throughout this thesis we have centered our attention on D. L. Moody's methods of evangelism with reference to their permanent value. In making this investigation, a brief resume of the historical background of the times in which he worked was undertaken. The salient features on his early development were presented. His characteristic methods of work were examined. Finally, we have looked at his methods in the light of their permanent value.

Having completed this study, we are now ready to draw some pertinent conclusions from the facts presented as to the present applicability of his methods.

After the Civil War, our country had passed from a relatively decentralized agricultural group life to one definitely more centralized. This produced a new setting for the work of the evangelist. Industrialism and urbanization are the two key words of the era. The influx to the city has continued to be a dominant factor in our civilization, constituting one of the chief sources of our religious and social problems. As long as we possess this type of organization and centralization in life and govern-

ment, the problems which Moody faced will be essentially identical with those confronting our own times. In so far as the structure of society is not likely to change in these essential characteristics, which had become dominant by the Seventies and Eighties, so far are D. L. Moody's principles and practices certainly applicable to the needs of today. But even though the essential structure of society should become less centralized, of which there is little apparent likelihood, nevertheless D. L. Moody's methods of evangelism would still be applicable, because they are based upon and suited to fundamental requirements of human nature.

Moody's approach was not to society en masse. He realized that the individual was the basis of society, and he believed that when the individual was regenerated and taught in the Christian life his social integration could largely be trusted to take care of itself. In making his personal, individual approach we find him building upon a trait just as real as human personality itself. He was realizing upon the potential worth of the individual. His appeal and message were distinctively to the individual, and his dealing with society, never overlooked, was thus given a permanence and solidarity otherwise impossible.

His message centered in the love of God as revealed through Jesus Christ to a world lost in sin. He accepted whole-heartedly the authority and integrity of

the Scriptures with a sincerity that drew men to Christ, and a compassion that moved them to serve Him. Simplicity, common sense, practicalness, adaptability, characterized the man, his message, and his methods.

In all his work he used two fundamental approaches, the educational and the evangelistic. In the combination of these we may perceive something of the causes, humanly speaking, of Mr. Moody's success.

So his personal power was enhanced by all that has been suggested, but with all his capacities and capabilities he had something to give humanity besides efficient, practical, and worthy human traits. His power and ministry can not fully be understood upon a merely naturalistic basis. His human qualities were but instruments in the hand of God. Christian leaders today may well catch the vision, proclaim the message, manifest the drive, and use the methods of Moody, of whom it is said:

"A hundred years is but a little while in the history of the influence of such a man."¹

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1. Editorial, p. 137; The Christian Century, February 3, 1937

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