

“THE GOSPEL AWAKENING.”

COMPRISING THE

SERMONS AND ADDRESSES,

Prayer Meeting Talks and Bible Readings,

OF THE

GREAT REVIVAL MEETINGS,

CONDUCTED BY

MOODY AND SANKEY,

IN THE CITIES OF

Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Boston,

WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

CHRISTIAN CONVENTIONS OF MINISTERS AND LAYMEN.

From Verbatim Reports by our own Phonographer, and those of the New York Tribune, Chicago Inter-Ocean, Boston Journal and Boston Globe.

ALSO THE LIVES OF

D. L. MOODY, I. D. SANKEY, P. P. BLISS, REV. JOSEPH COOK,
AND FRANCES E. WILLARD.

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“HIS OWN BROTHER.”

“He first findeth his own brother, and brought him to Jesus.” JOHN 1:41.

I want to call your attention this morning to a text you will find in the 1st chapter according to John, part of the 41st verse: “He first findeth his own brother, and brought him to Jesus.”

I thought this morning I would just like to take a leaf out of my own life in the past, that it may help some of those present in this hall who have brothers that are very dear to them, but who are out of Christ. Twenty-one years ago last March, when God converted me, the very first thing that came into my mind was my six brothers. Then and there, I began to pray for them. I had never prayed for them before; and I began to cry to God that these six brothers and two sisters might be led home to peace. And for twenty-one years that has been my prayer; that has been my cry to God. I remember the first time I went home after my conversion. I thought I could tell them what God had done for me. I thought I had only to explain it, to have them all see the light. How disappointed I was when I left home that first time, after remaining for a few days, to find they did not see it. I was not very experienced in pleading for souls then. Perhaps I did not go at it in the right way. But I kept on, as best I could, And a few years after, when I was in this city—three years after, I was in a store on Lake street, a postman came one day and brought a letter that told me my youngest brother was given up by the physician to die. That day he was dying; I went into the fifth story of that building, and if ever I prayed earnestly in my life I did then, that my brother might be spared. He was the Benjamin of the family. He was born after my father died. I thought I could give him up then, if he only was a Christian. But I had not any hope. The thought that my brother, who was very dear to me, dearer to me than my life, it seemed, should die thus in his sins, was too much for me to stand; and I wrestled with God in prayer. It seemed God answered my prayer. The next letter said he was better. He had a run of typhoid fever that lasted forty-two days. And when he got off that bed, I felt, in answer to prayer, the boy was much dearer to me than ever before. But he never was well during sixteen or eighteen years. I remember fourteen years ago he came to me, to this city. I have that dear boy in my heart now. I thought then my opportunity had surely come, and I could lead him to Christ. But he was taken sick again; I could not keep him here. The doctor said he might live a number of years, but could not be cured. Naturally very ambitious and proud-spirited, he did not want to go back home. But the doctor said it was the best I could do, and I took him back to Massachusetts. I took him home from Chicago to Northfield, all the way preaching Christ to him. But he took no interest in my speech. Everything I said failed to influence him, although he seemed

to love me very much. And for fourteen years I kept that dear boy on my heart; I just kept on praying for him. Year after year, I went back to the old home just to spend a few days with him, that I might win him to Christ. He knew I wanted him to be a Christian; but it seemed he would not comply. He took no interest in the Bible, no interest in Christianity. He would talk politics, he would talk everything else; but you could not get him to talk of Christ or Christianity. I went back home a year ago, with a heart just burdened for the salvation of my family. My heart burned to draw them to Christ. I went to preaching in that town. In the last month, my heart going out to that dear boy, I asked all those present in the church willing to become Christians to rise; and he, my long-sought brother, rose for prayers. What a precious relief for my heart! He became an earnest Christian. He turned his face toward heaven that very night. He became an active Christian. And when they soon after decided to have a Young Men's Christian Association for that town, the young men wanted a president; and they elected him for president. Oh, that was a blessed day for me, when my brother, converted to God, after twenty years' prayer, took charge of that little band! I heard him make his first speech, and that seemed the happiest day of my life. He was a young man of great talents; he was the star of the family, the most promising one of the family. No one of us could have done as much for Christ, had he gone to him in his earliest manhood. And he went to work. He took a leading part in religious meetings. He went and talked with weak brothers, and set them on their feet again. He searched for souls on both sides of the Connecticut River, in both sides of the valley. More conversions took place after I left than when I was there. Every Sunday afternoon he would go out into the country and take charge of meetings; and as I used to stand in the pulpit sometimes, and look down on that young brother in his zealous work, no one but God knows how I loved him and rejoiced with great joy. And when God took him, he was in the midst of his work, bringing others to Christ. Oh, I want to tell you my thoughts after I left you suddenly! The first thought as I went toward my home—Oh, how deep the sorrow!. The dear boy was gone forever; and in the first moments grief will have its way. The text in scripture, the expression that David used when he lost Jonathan, kept coming into my mind: "I am very much distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy soul to me was wonderful." Yes, thy soul to me was wonderful. For these twenty years, I always knew he was going to meet me at the depot. I always found him waiting for me there; I never missed him. Sometimes, I was there three or four trains behind; but he was always watching and waiting for me. And that sadly beautiful hymn also kept coming into my mind: "We shall meet but we shall miss him; there will be one vacant chair." But over and above all these, the voice

from heaven at last made itself heard to my heart, “Thy brother shall rise again.” The cloud was lifted; and for about five hundred miles on my way to my home that verse rung in my ears. It seemed to echo and re-echo throughout all the journey, “Thy brother shall rise again.” Oh, the precious Bible! It never seemed to me so precious as it did that day. My call to mourning was the deepest I have ever known; for next perhaps to my wife, my two children, and my aged mother, I loved none so dearly as this youngest brother. But that precious promise gives the heart cause to rejoice, even in the sorrow of death. And again, in the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians what divine sustaining words I took to my soul.

“But some men will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.”

Dishonor! Oh, as we laid him down in the cold grave, I thought, as we laid him away, of the worms that would come to his body, and of the dishonor. But with what power the Word of God came to my soul then in these words, “It is raised in glory.” We sowed it in weakness; but it shall be raised in power. It seemed there was victory even in that trying hour. It was sown in corruption; but it shall be raised incorruptible. It was sown mortal; but it shall be raised immortal. It was sown a natural body; it shall be raised a spiritual body. And, as it had borne the image of the earthly, it shall also bear the image of the heavenly. I shall see that brother, by and by; then shall he be glorified. Yes, my friends, I could even rejoice as I read these blessed assurances of Scripture. The Word of God came to my soul as never before. Blessed Bible! how dark it would have been but for that blessed book. But by its beams all darkness was driven away. It seemed I could even thank God for the triumphant death of my dear brother, and almost envied him. No, I would not have God call him back from heaven into this dark world. Yon happy home beyond the grave is far better. What joy to tell of good deeds done. A minister down home told me that he did not know, a short time back, of a solitary young man in his neighborhood who would offer prayer; but now a numerous and zealous band of praying Christians were the fruits of my brother's life. And that text came forcibly to my mind: “Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, and their works do follow them.” There were these dear young Christian converts following him to his grave; his works did follow him. In the graveyard of the church that funeral day, I saw fifty of these young men, converted mostly in the past year. I shouted even there by the grave —I could not help it: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave,

where is thy victory?" And I seemed to hear a voice, as from the bosom of the Son of God: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

And on my way back from Northfield to Chicago, this has been my thought. If you, my dear Christian friend, have a brother out of Christ, go bring him in. You will, by and by, have to stand by the open grave of some dear brother; and to be without Christ, how can you bear it? And so, my friends, let me urge upon you, first of all, to go and find your own brother. If you have a brother out of Christ, go to him today; tell him how you love him, how you want him to be a Christian, how you are burdened and weighed down for his salvation. And then go to your sister, to your cousin, to your friend. Oh, do you each one of you write to some absent friend today, beseeching that Christ may be accepted just now! I thank God, from the bottom of my heart that my dear brother took a stand for Christ, and went to work. I thank God that now his works do follow him. The young Christian men met immediately after he died. A hundred of them came together to choose someone to take his place. And how it rejoiced my heart that George Moody took the place of Samuel, and has set himself earnestly to the work. He said, "From now I will try to follow more faithfully after Christ." And when we met Wednesday night—it was Tuesday we laid him away—another brother was harnessed to the work in place of the dear buried one. Oh, dear friends, if souls weigh on our hearts, let us go and bring them to Jesus. Let us write to them beseeching letters, if our lips cannot reach them. Let us not rest day or night. Let us this morning go out and bring our friends to Christ. Let us commence with our own families; let us find our brothers. If our brothers have yielded, let us go to our friends. If they are strangers to Christ, oh, go bring them now while you may. Exhort by word of mouth; exhort by fervent and repeated letters. Begin at once your mission, lest it be too late forever, and praise God for the dear privilege of bringing others to him.