

# Christendom Anno Domini M D C C C C I

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VOL. II.

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A Presentation of Christian Con-  
ditions and Activities in *Every Country*  
*of the World* at the Beginning of  
the Twentieth Century by more  
than sixty Competent Contributors

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# REVIVAL MOVEMENTS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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NEW YORK.

[A revival presupposes a condition of deadness from which a spiritual resurrection is desired. The ideal condition would naturally be that in which a continuous state of religious efficiency is maintained. Some have even ventured to coin the word "vival" as expressive of that ideal state. A "revival" is etymologically therefore a making an individual or church to live again, after a lapse into spiritual lethargy. But while the desirable condition would be that in which the church is always animated with the intensest zeal and enthusiasm, as a matter of fact, as we look back in history, we note a periodic recurrence of seasons of spiritual ebb and flow. The kingdom of God in its visible unfolding has experienced a series of retardations and accelerations.

Surely the supreme need of the church of Christ in the opening years of the twentieth century is a revival of spiritual power. Without being unduly pessimistic, we are compelled to admit that the tendencies of the times are grave enough to call for the most serious consideration. Many things that ought to be very sacred to Christians are imperiled. The fundamental truths of the evangelical faith, the loyalty of the people to that righteousness which exalteth a nation, and even Christianity itself as an authoritative revelation of God to our race—all are exposed to a storm of controversy which grows more vehement every day. The condition of the churches themselves is far from satisfactory. They abound in activity, but their fruitfulness is scanty. Statistics that have a lurid prominence in newspaper reports emphasize a widespread and growing conviction of spiritual impotence and sterility. The machinery is ample enough, but "the spirit of life is not in the wheels." The cry for years has been for an increase in the number of effective preachers, for an improvement in the organization of our Sunday-schools, for a better financial system, for larger accommodation for public worship, and for more attractive services in the sanctuary. Cheering progress has been made along these lines; but something more is needed, and the need was never felt more keenly than now. That something more is a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, which alone can vitalize congregational machinery and activity. Its necessity has always been acknowledged in petition and meditation, but of late the acknowledgment has grown in many hearts into a longing of passionate intensity.

But critical as is the condition of the church in many respects, there is much to inspire every believer in the vital forces of Christianity with con-

fidence. Men who have a knowledge of the times express the conviction that we are on the edge of a great manifestation of the presence and power of the Spirit of God. Already signs of a more intense spiritual life are making their appearance in our churches. The fire has been kindled, and it is silently but surely spreading. The prayer of many is that it may flame up into a great revival which shall sweep the continent from ocean to ocean. For the sake of the churches, for the sake of the irreligious multitude, for the sake of the struggle with unbelief and with the paralyzing forces of indifferentism—the worst of all isms—may God grant the fulfillment of the prayer so that the whole nation may become conscious of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit! Prayerful expectation justifies hopefulness.—Unidentified.—Ed.]

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THE nineteenth century, though born in a religious revival, passed away, apparently, in a state of apathy and indifference such as have not been known in the church for years.

Not apathy, let it be observed, regarding benevolence, for the giving of the members of the church has been most generous, and hundreds of thousands of dollars have in recent years passed through its treasury for the betterment of society and the honor of Christ. Certainly, never in the world's history have there been so many benevolent works carried on through the inspiration and under the guidance of the church as at the present time.

Nor is indifference to religion so manifest in the matter of attendance upon church services; while here and there may be found churches where the attendance has greatly decreased, yet, as a matter of fact, the morning service at least continues to be well attended, and the interest in prayer meetings, as a rule, encouraging.

But so far as conversions are concerned, the close of the nineteenth century leaves ample room for discouragement; and, since it is our business to win men to Christ, and to preach in such a way that sinners may be converted, there is certainly, as shown in the reports of the various churches, recently made, an indication of a serious defect somewhere in the effectiveness of our services.

But our discouragement is evidently to be our encouragement, for already we hear the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, and in many quarters there are not wanting signs of abundance of rain.

The modern Christianity presents us with a glorious series of revival movements, a résumé of which is as follows:

First—The great Reformation, properly beginning in the fourteenth and extending into the sixteenth century.

Second—The work of God in the seventeenth century in the days of Owen, Bunyan, Baxter and Flavel.

Third—The great awakening in the eighteenth century in the days of Whitefield, Wesley, Edwards, Brainerd and the Tennents.

Fourth—The revival of the nineteenth century, beginning about 1790 and reaching to about the year 1840.

Fifth—The revival of 1857 to 1860.

Sixth—The special work of grace as carried on under the leadership of Mr. Dwight L. Moody.

The work of grace which ushered in the nineteenth century began about the year 1790. In the old country the fearful inroads of French infidelity had sapped the foundations of faith and hope in God, till the hearts of the faithful began to fail them for fear. This aroused such men as Bishop Porteus, Andrew Fuller, Rowland Hill and kindred spirits in England to such noble efforts as greatly blessed the world; a simultaneous work in Scotland being carried on under the Haldanes and others. This work of grace was the direct cause of the formation of the Religious Tract Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the London Missionary and the Church Missionary societies; also the first society for evangelizing the heathen, and the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. In the north of Wales, also, under the labors of Charles of Bala, the Apostle of North Wales, a great revival occurred in the beginning of the year 1791.

The influence of French infidelity, aided and represented by Paine's "Age of Reason" and Voltaire's assaults upon Christianity, was felt in America, until it became fashionable for the upper classes to sneer at the Bible and ridicule the foundations of the faith of the people. But when the enemy was thus coming in like a flood the Lord lifted up a standard against him. In different parts of the country God began to manifest Himself in the outpouring of His Spirit, as, for example, in western Pennsylvania about the year 1790; also in northern and western Virginia, and a little later in the Eastern States. These awakenings introduce us to the names of such men as Bellamy, Griffin, the younger Edwards, Backus, Mills, Dwight, Livingston, Nettleton and Lyman Beecher, besides many others who in their day did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God.

In 1792 began the unbroken series of American revivals—in Maine, in Massachusetts, in Connecticut, and, indeed, in all the New

England States. By 1802 remarkable revivals had spread through most of the Western and Northern States, while Dr. Ashael Nettleton has left on record the fact that, commencing with 1798, not less than one hundred and fifty churches in New England were favored with the special effusions of the Holy Spirit, and thousands of souls were translated from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

In 1812 Ashael Nettleton began to preach as an evangelist and continued his labors for upward of twenty years. Dr. Nettleton's life was marvelously forceful and his ministry signally helpful. He was a most Godly man, serious, circumspect, discreet, and gifted with rare discrimination, enabling him to know and read men, and greatly aiding him to adapt himself in his instructions to men's various moods. He preached and labored in revivals in so wise a manner as to render religion and revivals real and respected. The converts, with very few exceptions, were eminently intelligent and sound, and proved by their subsequent lives that they possessed the power as well as the form of Godliness. For seven years he labored in Connecticut, accomplishing remarkable results, then made a short tour into the State of New York and back again to Connecticut; visited England in the spring of 1831; returned to America for subsequent labors, and died May 16, 1844, his last words being, "While ye have the light walk in the light."

#### REVIVALS IN COLLEGES.

Perhaps nowhere have revivals of religion been oftener or better illustrated than in colleges.

*In Oberlin College*, from 1836 to 1841, was a period which was regarded as almost a continuous revival. Meetings for inquiry were held every Sunday. From 1836 to 1838 there was a season of refreshing never to be forgotten. Occasionally the theological recitation or lecture hour would be spent in fervent prayer and earnest supplication. When students met in the most casual way, before they parted they sang and prayed together. Oberlin still feels the power of those days.

*In Amherst College*, from 1827 to 1831, under the presidency of Dr. Heman Humphry, there was a great awakening; for several weeks there was a manifest increase of concern for those who were ready to perish; then there came a great outpouring of the Holy



[CHARLES G. FINNEY.]

Ghost, and in a very few days the students began to press into the Kingdom, and the influences upon the institution were visible and salutary.

*In Dartmouth College*, in 1805 to 1815, there was a great revival. Suddenly, without premonition, the Spirit of God descended and saved the greater part of the students. The chapel, the recitation room, every place of meeting, became a scene of weeping. Most of all those who were converted at this time became ministers of the Gospel or missionaries of the Cross.

In 1814 there was a great *awakening in Princeton*. Every religious service, both on secular days and on Sundays, was attended with a solemnity that was very impressive; then, suddenly, without any special instruction, deep searching of heart began and lasted for about four weeks, until there were very few left in the college that were not impressed with the reality and importance of spiritual religion. It was said that there was not a room that was not a place of earnest and secret devotion.

*Revivals in Yale College* have been of frequent occurrence. They began with the presence of Edward Beecher, who was a tutor in Yale. He was burdened for the condition of the students, and one Sunday night chose for his text, "If the Lord be God, then follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." From that Sunday service in Yale College dates a new era. Many impenitent were awakened and converted, and the whole college was transformed. These are but a few of the many tokens of Divine favor which have been shown in the educational institutions of the land. Since then, under the direction of the Young Men's Christian Association, there is not a college in all the land but has been visited by some special manifestation of the power and the presence of God.

#### THE PRINCE OF EVANGELISTS.

Charles G. Finney was born in Litchfield County, Conn., August 29, 1792. Neither of his parents professed religion. While pursuing his profession, the practice of law, he was brought under conviction by the preaching of Rev. George W. Gale, of Adams, N. Y. One Sunday evening in the autumn of 1821 he determined that he would be a Christian, but he could not bring himself to the point of public confession. During Monday and Tuesday his conviction deepened; early Wednesday morning, leaving his office, he passed a piece

of woods, just over the hill from the town, and throwing himself upon his knees and then upon his face, God met and gave him peace and joy. In 1825 he started out upon his wonderful career in evangelism, and his power and success easily made him the Prince of Evangelists. In western New York the most remarkable evidences of the presence of God accompanied his preaching. Mr. Finney would spend days without eating and nights without sleeping, and as he would begin to preach the power of God would fall upon the people so that frequently he would be obliged to stop his address in order to give them an opportunity to find peace. In 1831 there was a special work of grace in the city of New York; thousands of Christians assembled for prayer, conversions occurred in all parts of the city, the churches were crowded to overflowing. An old theatre on Chatham Street was purchased, and here Mr. Finney began to preach, taking as his first text: "Who is on the Lord's side?" For seventy successive nights he preached to immense crowds. The bar-room was changed into a prayer-room, and the first man who knelt there poured out his heart in these words: "Oh, Lord, forgive my sins. The last time I was here I was a wicked actor on this stage. Oh, Lord, have mercy upon me!" For three years this building continued to be used for revival meetings.

The period commencing with the year 1792 and terminating with 1842, was a memorable period in the history of the American church. Scarcely any portion of it but was graciously visited by the outpouring of the Spirit. It has been estimated that from 1815 to 1840 the Spirit was poured out upon from four to five hundred churches and congregations annually, and from forty to fifty thousand were added by profession in a single year.

#### THE REVIVAL OF 1857.

It is an interesting fact in revivals, that they frequently succeed some great calamity, a prevailing epidemic, a general financial embarrassment or something of the sort. It was so with the wonderful work of grace which began in 1857; men seemed crazed with the desire for gold, speculation was at fever heat, and as a natural result there were failures everywhere. In a twinkling of an eye millionaires became bankrupts. In such a mood they were ready to listen to the voice of God. A little room in the lower part of New York belonging to the Reformed Dutch Church, Fulton Street, was

thrown open for a public noon-day prayer meeting. The City Missionary, Mr. Lanphier, who made the appointment, first met there with three persons, then six, then twenty, and thus the business men's prayer meeting began to attract attention. A call was made for a daily meeting, and very soon three crowded meetings for prayer were held. Such meetings sprang up in other parts of the city also; the example spread to Philadelphia, to Boston, and to other cities, until there was scarcely a town of importance in the United States in which the business men's prayer meeting was not a flourishing institution, and the leading agency in awakening public interest in religion. One day there came into the New York meeting a gentleman from Philadelphia who read with thrilling effect a hymn, one verse of which is here given :

"Where'er we meet, you always say  
 What's the news? What's the news?  
 Pray what's the order of the day?  
 What's the news? What's the news?  
 Oh! I have got good news to tell;  
 My Saviour hath done all things well,  
 And triumphed over death and hell.  
 That's the news. That's the news!"

The telegraph wires frequently carried messages between Philadelphia and New York concerning the progress of this work of grace.

#### ENGLAND AND ELSEWHERE.

Abroad the work was also extensive and powerful. The services in Exeter Hall, and the opening of Westminster Abbey, together with other prominent places of worship, meant the leading of thousands of souls to Christ. In England and in Wales it is estimated that the number of conversions in the various orthodox denominations was from thirty to thirty-five thousand. In Ireland, too, the work was remarkable. It has been said that in Belfast, then a city of 30,000 souls, there were 10,000 conversions. America, however, was the most favored in this gracious visitation, and such a time as that which was ushered in with 1857 was never known since the days of the Apostles. The results, of course, cannot be recorded certainly, nor the number of conversions. In New York State 200 towns were reported as having revivals; in New York City all the churches were largely increased in membership. It was estimated that there

were 10,000 conversions in the city of New York alone in that year.

DWIGHT L. MOODY.

This revival of 1857 was a layman's revival. God singles out from among the men of the church those who are to accomplish His will; such men as Mr. George H. Stewart, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Dwight L. Moody. Mr. Moody's work may be roughly divided into three periods; the first, growing out of the revival of 1857 and 1858, was largely carried on under the inspiration and direction of the Young Men's Christian Association. The second period, Mr. Moody wrought only at the united request of the churches and pastors, with their organized co-operation. The third period of his work was largely educational. It was while he was in the midst of this that God called him home.

Dwight L. Moody was born in Northfield, February 5, 1837. He was converted in Boston, and afterward removed to Chicago in 1856. His Sunday-school work in that city was phenomenal. The great revival of '57 and '58 led to the formation of the Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago. About this time Mr. Moody began attending the meetings, and by his personal efforts induced more than one hundred persons to join the praying band, and it was then that he decided to give up all his time to God's work. His first evangelistic work was really done in Chicago.

It was in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association work that Mr. Moody became acquainted with Mr. Sankey, who was to occupy so prominent a part with him in subsequent revival work. A sentence dropped by Mr. Varley, a British evangelist, to the effect "that it remains for the world to see what the Lord can do with a man wholly consecrated to Christ," was used of God to arouse Mr. Moody; he could not get away from the thought throughout his entire career; it largely helped to shape his life and work. In 1873 Moody and Sankey went to Liverpool. Their reception was not cheering, and their work was not in any way remarkable. In November of that year they arrived in Edinburgh; here was the beginning of the great meetings. Thousands of people attended their ministry, and all classes were reached with the Gospel. Their great success in Scotland opened the way for them in Ireland, and in 1874 the work was inaugurated in Belfast. As the meetings proceeded the interest became more and more apparent; thousands of

people were led to Christ. For ten weeks the evangelist labored in Ireland; wherever one went the topic of conversation was the revival services. Think of a man coming a hundred miles with his son fourteen years old, that he might come under the influence of the preaching. In 1874 they returned for work in the larger cities of England. After an address by Mr. Moody in Oxford Hall, to young men, along the line of Christian service, a campaign was planned, the results of which were most wholesome and encouraging. Services were conducted in Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, and then a second visit, on February 7, 1875, was made to Liverpool. Thousands of people were unable to hear the evangelist because of the crowds; the tide of enthusiasm rising with every added hour of their visit. On March 5, 1875, the work was inaugurated in London. A gathering of 1,500 ministers of all denominations had been called to confer and make and adopt plans. At the close of the first month's work in London it was said that the success of the meetings was marvelous, and in its way quite unexampled within the memory of living men, or in all that has been recorded by the pen of the English historian of the Christian Church.

On his return from Great Britain, Mr. Moody went to Northfield, there to spend some little time resting at his old home. The Gospel Campaign in America began at Brooklyn, on Sunday, October 24, 1875. The skating rink on Clermont Avenue, with its seating capacity of 6,000, was secured for the services. The very first meeting brought together enormous crowds; the rink was filled. Overflow meetings were held; still, there was no falling off in the crowds, who could not find even standing room. At least 15,000 people attended the services each day. The effect of the Brooklyn meetings was an awakening rather than the conversion of non-churchgoers. The meetings closed November 19th.

From Brooklyn Moody and Sankey went to Philadelphia, and began their meetings in the old Pennsylvania Railroad Depot, at Thirteenth and Market streets, now occupied by the great store of John Wanamaker. About \$40,000 was spent in the reconstruction and equipment of the building; chairs for 10,000 people were secured. The regular meetings ended January 16th, with thousands of people converted and the whole city stirred as it had never been before nor since. The meetings in Philadelphia established Mr. Moody's leadership of the Lord's active army in the United States.

Following the Philadelphia meetings the great campaign in New

York was entered upon. The meetings in the Hippodrome began February 7, 1876. At the first meeting 7,000 were present in the main hall, and 4,000 others attended the overflow meeting; while several thousand were left in the streets. The service was fittingly opened with silent prayer; what that moment inaugurated for New York can never be estimated, both in time and extent, and in the results accomplished. The campaign in the New York Hippodrome was perhaps the most important ever conducted by Mr. Moody. In moving New York God moved the country, and the voice of the evangelist was heard throughout the entire land.

The great meetings in Chicago were held in October, 1876. The Boston meetings began the last of January, 1877, and both of these engagements, like those in other cities, were a wonderful demonstration of God's power. From this time Mr. Moody's activity seldom ceased, one tour was followed by another, and hardly a city or town of any great importance in this country failed to receive through his help a revival of interest in spiritual affairs. The meetings in Baltimore, in 1878, were marked by notable results; they began in October, 1878, and continued until May 16, 1879. It is not possible to speak of the work in other cities and towns, but everywhere Mr. Moody's name has been an inspiration and his life a benediction.

No one can study the history of revivals and not be impressed with their mighty influence upon the destiny of the race.

First. Society at large has been uplifted by revivals. When Divine grace is abundantly poured out it is felt at the very springs of society, and there cannot but be a corresponding elevation; the foundations of life are purified, and a social and civil renovation is the result. What would our own land, as well as Great Britain, have been but for the revival period of the seventeenth century?

Second. Missionary movements came from revivals; all those great benevolent enterprises which are the glory of this age originated just there; all the first foreign missionaries—Hall, Newall, Mills, Judson, Nott, Rice, Bingham, King and Thurston, and others who entered the field a little later—were converted and received their missionary baptism in revivals.

Third. An efficient ministry has come from revivals. "We hardly dare to lift the curtain to see what the ministry was previous to some of the great historic revivals, as in the days of Wiclif, Huss and Luther, or when Whitefield began his career. The character of the English clergy of those times is but too well known. Of the clergy

even as late as 1781, Cowper could write, without fear of contradiction :

"Except a few with Eli's spirit blessed,  
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest."

It must be remembered, too, that revivals mightily increase the number of ministers. It has been said by some one that nine-tenths of the ministry were the children of revivals.

Fourth. Institutions of learning owe much to revivals. Many originated directly in revivals. The founding of Princeton College is but one case of many where the beginnings were in revivals.

Fifth. Many of the strongest churches in the world have come from revivals. This is suggestion enough, and but faintly shows what we owe to revivals of religion. Blot out what God has done by revivals, and the sun would be shrouded in gloom, our churches would be vacant, missionary agencies would be things unknown, and distress would be on every side of us. "Oh, Lord, revive thy work."

The nineteenth century has truly been a marvelous one. It has witnessed among many others the birth of the following notable great movements: The enlarged work of Foreign Missions, the Bible societies in all lands, the Young Men's Christian Associations everywhere, the Young People's societies of Christian Endeavor, the Rescue Missions in cities, the inauguration of Bible Conferences, such as Keswick in England, and Northfield and Winona in America. God's grace to His people in days that are past was truly remarkable, and since He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, there is no reason why the future may not be better than the past. The age of revivals then is not yet past. No man dare stand up and assert that such times of refreshing as those to which reference has been made, will be not again vouchsafed to the Christian Church. The question for the individual to ask himself is: Am I right with God? Am I in a receptive mood? Am I absolutely consecrated to His service? Am I myself ready to be revived and willing to be used in any way God may please? Thus the duty of the individual man is perfectly simple and plain, viz.: to surrender himself unconditionally to God for spiritual uses. When many individuals in the churches do this, a rich spiritual blessing not only will come, but has come. God will be inquired of, and when He is inquired of in the spirit of entire submission and of earnest, importunate faith, He will not say His people nay.