

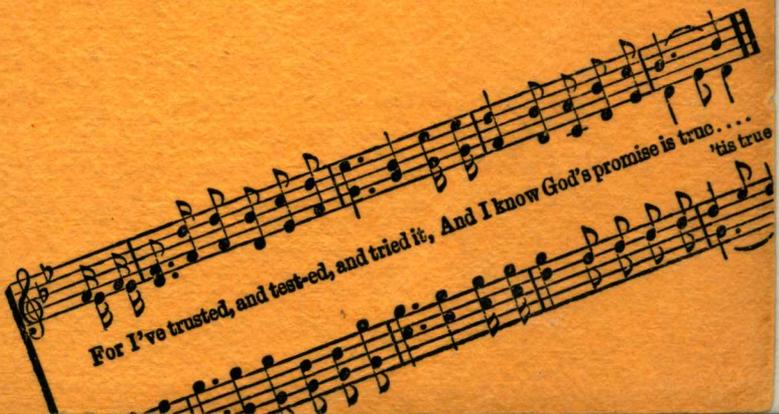
Madeline A. Wilson



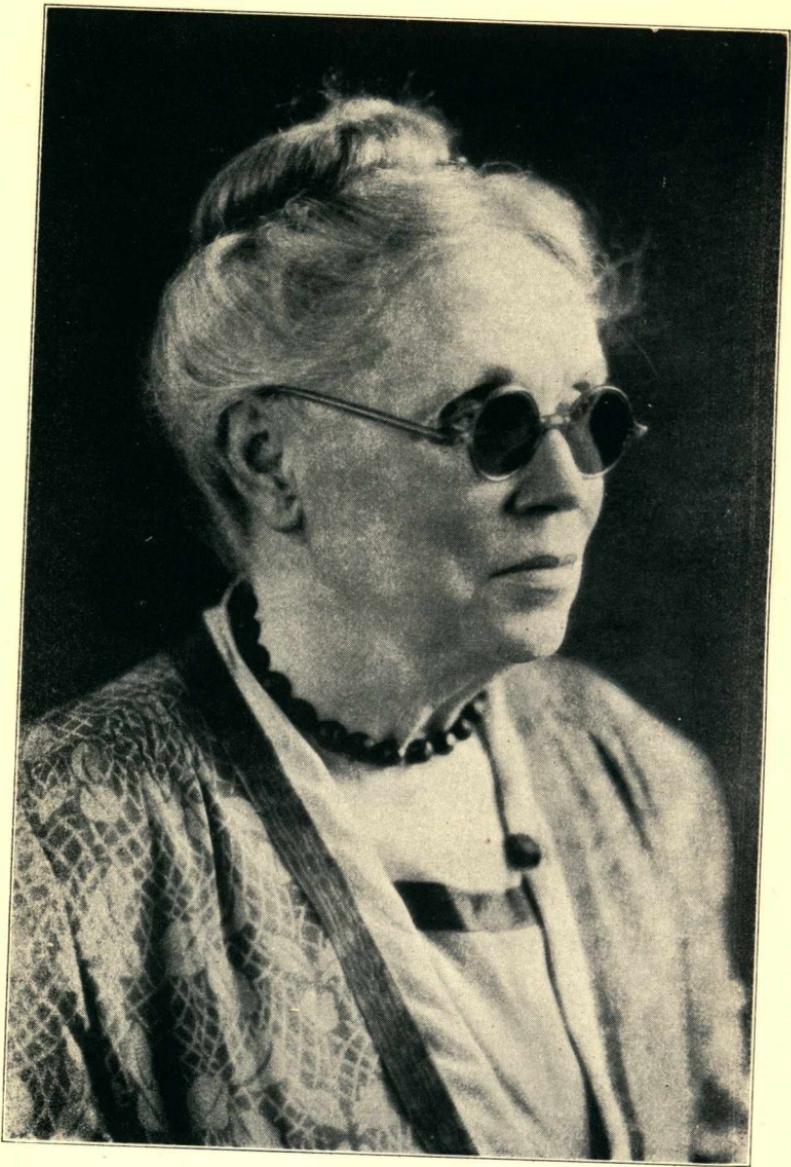
Singing At Her Work

—
A Biography of
Mrs. C. H. Morris

—
Mary Ethel Wiess



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MRS. C. H. MORRIS
(Taken about a year before she passed away; an excellent likeness)

SINGING AT HER WORK

A Biography of Mrs. C. H. Morris

--- By ---

Mary Ethel Wiess

Author of
"A Mother's Problems"

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

2923 Troost Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

SINGING AT HER WORK

Just a year and a day had passed since the capture of Fort Sumter and the beginning of the great Civil War. The dark clouds of conflict had spread their gloom over the entire nation, and even the little village of Pennsville, among the hills of Morgan County, Ohio, vibrated to the general excitement. Men and women gathered on street corners and in the grocery stores to discuss the Battle of Shiloh, fought just the week before. Citizens drilled in the square, small boys played at war in back yards and alleys, and the women and girls made bandages and lint for the hospitals at the front.

In one home in Pennsville, however, was a woman fighting a different battle — the battle that every mother must fight alone; and when evening came, neighbors paused in their discussion of the war, to say to one another:

“Mis’ Naylor has another girl!”

“Another girl! And how many does that make?”

“Five — two boys and three girls.”

The neighbors went their way, talking about the war, and never knowing that in the arms of Olivia Naylor lay a babe that was to some day bless thousands of people over the whole earth. Much like other babies she seemed; but in spite of the clouds of war that shadowed her birth, God had planted in this tiny mite a bit of heaven’s sunshine, and a heart that just would sing and sing and sing. For this babe became the beloved Mrs. C. H. Morris, whose beautiful gospel songs are sung all up and down our land, wherever revival fires burn,

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and across the sea where our missionaries are carrying the message of salvation.

“What are you going to call her?” the neighbors asked.

“We have named her Lelia,” was the answer, and it is easy to imagine, in a year or two, the tiny tot, little Lelia Naylor, running about the home and the village dressed in the very full skirts and the tiny puffed sleeves of that period. It is easy to picture her in church with her mother, while her father was away at war; squirming about during the sermon, as small youngsters will, and her bright gray eyes beaming with pleasure and relief when the preacher announced a hymn — and joining in lustily with her baby voice, for already she loved to sing.

In 1866, after John T. E. Naylor returned from the war, the family moved to Malta, Ohio. This was a move of less than ten miles, but until just before her death it was the longest move that Lelia Naylor ever made. Malta lies on the west bank of the Muskingum river, about midway between the city of Zanesville, Ohio, and the Ohio river. It is not a large town — there are perhaps a couple of hundred homes there today. But it is pinned up against the hillside like a beautiful picture, the windows of the houses on the upper street looking out over the roofs of the homes on the lower street — looking out across the blue waters of the river and the green hills of Morgan County. Just across the river lies the sister town, McConnelsville. McConnelsville is spread out a little more — the hills do not crowd the river quite so closely; but the two towns are like one — the local papers proudly call them Twin Cities, a name one sees applied to many of the business concerns. An iron bridge spans the Muskingum and the McConnelsville folks are as much neigh-

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bors with their friends in Malta as though no river divided them.

So it was in Malta that little Lelia spent her girlhood. There were two more little sisters in the home by this time — seven children in all. And it was not long after this move was made that John Naylor died, leaving his little flock fatherless.

“I can remember no carefree childhood days,” Mrs. Morris used to say. “Always there was work to be done and every penny stretched to the limit.”

Again it is not hard to picture her, attired as little girls dressed in the early seventies, hurrying to help with the dishes before going to school, combing the little sisters' hair, running errands, sweeping porches, bringing water, skipping happily along the steep streets to the schoolhouse. In school she made a perfect record. Any teacher will tell you that in every class one or two pupils stand out above the average — one or two who inspire teacher and class alike. Lelia Naylor was one of those outstanding ones. She was outstanding not only in her classes but in the fun of the school. Those who know say that one of the chief traits of the Naylor family was a lively sense of humor, a jollity that made them welcome wherever they went; and in Lelia this characteristic must often have been manifest in the sparkle of her bright gray eyes, her gay laughter, and her love of a good joke.

Olivia Naylor was a godly mother. She took her children to church and to Sunday school, and taught them the principles of Christian living. The family attended the Methodist Protestant Church in McConnellsville. There, sitting stiffly in the old fashioned pews, she heard from the lips of her teachers and pastor the old, familiar story of redemption through the blood of Jesus. She learned there of the Garden and the Tempter; of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; of Moses and the

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Children of Israel, and of David and Solomon and the temple in Jerusalem, and of the captivity of God's people, and of their return, and God's mercy in sending them prophets and preachers; of Elijah and Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah; but most of all she grew to love the stories of Jesus and His death and resurrection. At the age of ten she was converted. She says of that occasion:

"When I was ten years old I was led to give my heart to God. It was not a form of giving my heart to God. I knew then that I needed a Savior. Three different years I went forward to the altar and prayed and prayed, until a man came and laid his hand on my head and said, 'Why, little girl, God is here and ready to forgive your sins.'"

From that time on Lelia Naylor lived for God. She carried the same bit of sunshine in her heart, and still she would sing and sing and sing; but her gaiety was tempered and mellowed by a deep and sincere devotion to her Lord.

Her love for music deepened also, and to her great joy, she began to take piano lessons. A lady who lived near the Naylor's recognized the unusual talent in the child, and allowed her to come to her home and use her piano for practising. Perhaps this good neighbor never lived to know how very much she was contributing to the song of the world when she helped to give this bright child a chance to learn. Lelia must surely have made good use of her opportunity, too, for at the age of twelve and thirteen years, she was playing the reed organ for prayermeeting in the church.

II.

As the two brothers and five sisters in the Naylor family grew older the financial pressure increased. The hard times of the seventies came along — a depression that lasted for sev-

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eral years — and Lelia was never able to finish her schooling. She was a big girl now, and felt well able to take up her share of the burden of the family. So she and her mother, and one of the sisters, started a small millinery shop, on the McConnellsville side of the river. Can you remember the little millinery shops of fifty years ago? The small store room on a level with the street, the single counter, the big mirror and a chair or two made up the shop; but on the counter were hats and hats and hats, on standards — hats of every color and shape. More thrilling still was the back room, separated perhaps by a wall, but more often just by a curtain or a screen. It was in this back room that the “trimmer” worked amidst a fascinating confusion of “shapes,” silks, velvets, ribbons, feathers, artificial flowers, buckles and beads. Did you ever, when you were real little, slip shyly around the corner of the screen and watch with big, childish eyes the nimble fingers of the trimmer fashioning smart hats and bonnets from the materials in her lap? Those were the days when crinolines were being abandoned for the bustle. Dresses and coats were elaborate and heavily trimmed; and the hats were the funny little pancake affairs, turned up in the back, such as are seen in the Godey prints of that period. There is no doubt that Lelia Naylor’s skillful fingers fashioned many a stylish head-gear in those days, nor that her sparkling gray eyes and jolly conversation helped sell many a hat to the elite of the village.

While Lelia worked hard in the shop in the daytime, her life was by no means dull. As she trimmed hats or made dresses or stitched vests (for she worked as a tailoress for a time) she had many interesting things to think about. The social life of the twin towns was typical of the small town social life of America’s middle west. Most of their affairs centered in the church and the school. There was the church so-

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cial, the choir practice, and of course, the revival; there was usually a singing school, spelling bees and the literary society. In whatever of these Lelia entered, she was a leader, not only in planning and promoting, but in all the fun and mischief. But her greatest delight was in the activities of the church. Who that was young in those days can forget the winter revivals among the Methodists? People came from miles around, young men brought their sweethearts in buggies and one horse sleighs, and older men brought their wives and families in wagons or bob-sleds. Though the church was lighted with oil lamps, and the music was furnished by a reed organ, the meeting lacked nothing in enthusiasm and earnestness, and the fire of God was on the people. Young men and women in the choir sang the old hymns, old men prayed, sometimes over long, but none the less fervently, and the preachers preached with the unction of the Spirit. More often than not God came on the scene, and sinners fell at the altar and repented and were born into the Kingdom. Such were the meetings at the little Methodist Protestant church in McConnelsville, and there Lelia Naylor was a leading spirit. Her voice rang sweet and clear in the songs, and her tender persuasion brought many of her friends to the altar. Neither was she missing from the group that laughed and chatted in subdued tones on the church steps after the meeting, in that most exciting moment when the girls waited while the young men went to the hitching racks and brought around the rigs to take the girls home.

However, Lelia did not wait for a prince to ride in from a distant kingdom to claim her as his bride. Among the young people that went about together in Malta and McConnelsville was a young man of near her own age, brought up in the schools of the twin villages. This was Charles H. Morris. Charles was the only son of a well-to-do family of McConnels-

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ville, a lively, popular boy, who loved to roam the hills and study the wild things that made their home there. It is hard to tell just when the romance between these two began, but we do know that in 1881, when Lelia was nineteen years old, they were married, and she took the name by which she afterward became known around the world — Mrs. C. H. Morris. To her sisters and intimate friends she was known as Leil, and in later years her family lovingly referred to her as “Mammy More”; the neighbors called her husband “C. H.”; but as Mrs. C. H. Morris she appears in the gospel song books of almost every protestant denomination.

The young Morrises lived on in McConnellsville. In the early years of their married life “Father” Morris, as the neighbors called the father of “C. H.,” built for them the home on Kennebec Avenue, where they lived all the rest of their lives until 1928. This was a large, seven-room frame house, facing the east, with a wide veranda along the south and east sides. It stands high up on a hill, among great trees, with a large lawn sloping down to the street. Just back of it the elder Morrises built a somewhat similar house for themselves. Across the street stands the quaint brick house of the Rusks, surrounded by wonderful pines and firs and larches. Here was, indeed, a haven for birds, and it is small wonder that the young C. H. Morris was enticed into a close study of their lives and habits.

While the Naylor were a Methodist Protestant family, the Morrises were Methodist Episcopal, and attended church on the McConnellsville side of the river. So, after her marriage, Mrs. Morris transferred her membership to the church of her husband’s family, of which she was a member for the rest of her life. She soon took her place as an adult worker in the church, and delighted to serve her Lord in every depart-

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ment, whether Sunday school, Epworth League, Missionary Society, or in the choir. As her voice developed, she took special delight in the musical part of the services, and the little wistful, pathetic note that crept into her voice, enriched it and gave it an appeal that carried the gospel message straight to the hearts of her hearers.

III.

Early in the eighties, other duties claimed the attention of the Morrises. For not only did God see in this consecrated young woman a choice saint whom He later planned to honor with a special gift, but He saw a worthy mother to whom He purposed to entrust young lives. First came Fanny—who after all was not so *many, many* years younger than her own mother, and who, thus sharing her mother's later youth, perhaps stood closer to her than any other person in the world. Somehow, there is a tie between a mother and her elder daughter that is different from any other human tie. To Fanny she gave a splendid musical education, and it was Fanny who shared with her the task of giving her songs to the world, and who was with her to the very end. Next came the twins, and they called them Mary and Will. Last of all was a baby boy, and they named him Fred. These four lively youngsters, all born during the eighties, filled the days of Lelia Morris with a round of small duties such as every young mother knows. There were always meals to prepare, beds to make, dishes to wash, rooms to clean and set in order, small garments to make and mend, little faces to wash, cut fingers and stubbed toes to heal. There were canning and preserving to do, apple butter to make, butter to churn. Like the woman of Solomon's description, she rose early and gave food to her family; and, too, like this woman, she stretched forth her hand to the

I Know God's Promise Is True

C. H. M.

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Mrs. C. H. Morris



1. For God so loved this sin - ful world, His Son he free - ly gave,
2. I was a way - ward, wand'ring child, A slave to sin and fear,
3. The "who - so - ev - er" of the Lord, I trust - ed was for me;
4. E - ter - nal life, be - gun be - low, Now fills my heart and soul,



That who - so - ev - er would be - lieve, E - ter - nal life should have.
Un - til this bless - ed prom - ise fell Like mu - sic on my ear.
I took him at his gra - cious word, From sin he set me free.
I'll sing his praise for - ev - er - more, Who has re - deem - ed my soul.



CHORUS



'Tis true, oh, yes, 'tis true, God's won - der - ful prom - ise is true;
the prom - ise is true, 'tis true;



For I've trusted, and test - ed, and tried it, And I know God's promise is true. . . .
'tis true.



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needy, she clothed her family well against the snow of winter, and always her speech was governed by the law of wisdom and kindness.

This decade was a period of spiritual and intellectual growth, too, for Mrs. Morris. Gradually, her home on Kennebec Avenue became a gathering place for the people of the church and community. With her husband, she gathered a goodly collection of books, until their library became known as the finest in the county. Some of her time was given to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which at that time was making a most staunch and courageous fight against the liquor traffic. Mr. Morris, working daily at his trade as a plumber and a tinner, increased his knowledge of birds. The boys and men of the community, tramping the hills in quest of game, often found him in some wooded ravine, sitting motionless on a stump or log, watching and studying his feathered friends. Sometimes he embodied his observations in articles for publication — and these were always considered reliable and authoritative. Both Mr. and Mrs. Morris increased their interest in literature; and the home was really one of the cultural centers of the Twin Cities. With all this, Mrs. Morris did not for a moment falter in her devotion to her Savior, nor in her service in His army.

IV.

This period of busy young motherhood culminated in an event which opened a new epoch in the life of Lelia Morris. Until this time she had followed her Lord faithfully, walking in all the light He had shed upon her pathway. For twenty years her zeal, her fervor and her beautiful hopefulness had marked her out from among the Christians with whom she worked. In the year 1892, when she was thirty years old, she

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was attending campmeeting at Mountain Lake Park, Maryland. It was there that she first heard holiness preached. An evangelist came to the camp who told her that after regeneration there is a second work of grace which cleanses the heart, gives power to the spirit, fills the waiting child of God with the Holy Ghost. Although this was from the beginning a vital doctrine of the Methodist church, it was neglected even at that early day.

She says of it: "I read in books about the Holy Spirit and how that we might have the Holy Spirit come into our lives. I had read this over and over again, but thought it was for bishops and preachers and those doing great work for God. I did not suppose it was for me. Only did I find out in the preaching that it was for the young, such as I. I was so glad when I found that I might have the Holy Spirit in my life. So I opened my heart and let the Holy Spirit come in."

It was as simple as that. The blessing that some have sought for years, with tears and groanings, this unassuming soul received by just opening her heart and letting the Holy Spirit come in. One great secret of the life of this wonderful woman seems to be that she never allowed herself to become complex—never believed that she was "different," that she was a "genius," or that she had "temperament," or that she ought to live in any unusual way. Some might almost question that anyone living as beautiful a Christian life as Mrs. Morris had need of a further cleansing. She herself had no doubt of it. From her own experience and from the scripture she knew that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." This holiness meant to her not so much a doctrine or an experience (though it was that too) as the very person, the Holy Ghost himself, indwelling in her life. She says:

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"I have tried to honor the Holy Spirit. . . . We are living in the times of the Holy Spirit. We are living in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. If we honor Him, our lives will radiate joy and gladness. This I have tried to do."

But the sanctification of her soul, wonderful as it was, became more than a spiritual experience to her. Unexpectedly, it opened up to her the lifework that has made her a blessing not only to her own home and church circle, but to countless millions of people. Nor was this blessing for her lifetime alone, but will continue as long as the church shall endure — until the Lord himself shall appear, and who knows, but we may sing her songs even away over in the Beautiful City?

Soon after she received the blessing of sanctification she was sitting in her home, sewing on the sewing machine, making a small garment for one of her children, and AS SHE WORKED SHE SANG. She told a friend about it thus:

"I was sitting in the very corner where you are sitting now. I was stitching on my machine and singing at my work. Suddenly I realized that I was singing a message from my heart. I walked over to the piano and played it. From that time on I have written and played little hymns. New songs crowded into my mind, four or five in a day. You just would not believe how fast they came."

Again she says: "I opened my heart and let the Holy Spirit come in, without any thought of writing a song, for I had never tried to; but when I found the Lord, He led me into writing songs. So many songs cropped into my heart. I would run to the piano and write them and hide them for fear of being made fun of. I never expected to give them to a publisher. One day I told my mother. 'Play some for me, daughter,' said my mother. She then told me that they were of the

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Spirit. I shall not go into detail, but from then He has been my help and Friend. It was through the Holy Spirit as I said when I began this, I have just kept on writing these little messages as they come into my heart and mind, and I have been sending them to the publishers all these years."

One of these first songs was "I Can't Tell It All"; after showing it to her mother, she took it to the choir leader of the church in Malta, Mr. Frank Davis. He, too, recognized the merit of her work. An evangelist who was there at the time realized that here was something out of the ordinary. He persuaded her to take the song with her to Mountain Lake Park, where Dr. H. L. Gilmour was at the time. This she did, and under Dr. Gilmour's help and advice first began to have her songs published.

The songs without a doubt came from a source outside herself. A modern writer was recently asked: "How is it that you write with so little effort, while Miss _____ (naming another modern writer of equal popularity) is totally exhausted after a day of writing?"

"The answer is easy," she replied. "Every writer is one of two things, a factory or a channel. Miss _____ is a factory, producing every word of her books out of her own being. I am just a channel — I just open my mind and let the story flow through me from somewhere."

The psychology of this may be a knotty problem for modern thinkers; but it is not hard for the Christian who knows the Holy Spirit to know where Mrs. Morris got the words and melodies that came flooding into her heart. Filled with the Holy Ghost and with love for God, He was able to pour through her as through a mold the gospel messages He wished to send to His people.

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V.

For twenty years no great change occurred in the outward life of Mrs. Morris. She continued to live in the house on Kennebec Avenue; she faithfully carried on her labors in the Methodist Church; her days were still filled with cooking, sewing, cleaning, mending. Her brothers and sisters were by this time all grown up and scattered. One of the older sisters married a missionary and went to the South American field. The older brother, J. T. Naylor, became an instructor in Du Pauw University. Villa, one of the younger sisters, became the wife of Dr. James Ball Naylor, who is himself well known as a poet; the others married and went to other places, and the time came when Mrs. Olivia Naylor became a member of her daughter's household. And a very welcome member she was, for the peculiarly strong tie between Mrs. Morris and her mother was known to all her friends.

This period ran through the late nineties and the early part of the new century — through the administration of President McKinley, the days of the Spanish-American war, the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo and the assassination of Mr. McKinley. The towns of McConnellsville and Malta have always been interested and active in political life. During the campaign of 1896, when McKinley ran against Wm. Jennings Bryan for president, and Mark Hanna was the Republican candidate for United States Senator, it was Dr. James Ball Naylor, the brother-in-law of Mrs. Morris, who wrote the words to many of the campaign songs, and a local musician, Mr. Hoyt, composed the music. Those were the days when women were beginning to ride bicycles, and the more conservative were horrified because the cyclists sometimes wore bloomers. The automobile was still only an experiment, and airplanes had only been dreamed of. The ideal beauty

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of that period was the "Gibson Girl," with her hair in a high pompadour, her skirt widely flared at the bottom, with the waistline tight. The drawings of Howard Chandler Christy, who was also a native of Morgan county, surely must have determined the notions of beauty of many of the young girls of that time. Architecturally, it was an age of ugliness and permanency. People built great houses of brick or frame, trimmed them with much "gingerbread work" and added round towers at the corners. They stand today as monuments of bad taste and extravagance.

But in spite of the shortcomings of the period, it was a merry age in which to be young. The Morris children were grown to high school age by this time, and the home on Kennebec Avenue was filled with young voices and laughter. There was little of formality and convention there. The girls of the neighborhood would run in and stop for Fanny and Mary to go to school, the boys would come for Fred and Will to go hunting. The Morris library was always available for the children of the town to consult in their studies. Sometimes they would gather about and play and sing. Sometimes there would be games; and always Lelia Morris's laugh would ring out as fresh and joyful as any of the girls', and always her voice helped in song. In after years Fanny said, "Nothing was too much trouble for her to do for the young folks." Years later, when she was preparing to go and live with Fanny in Auburn, New York, her sister, Villa, helped her to pack her dishes.

"My dishes don't look as nice as they used to," she said, "but you know, when the young folks used to come to our house and have their good times, they always insisted on washing the dishes."

Could anything better reveal the spirit of the home?

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VI.

The first published songs of Mrs. Morris in the early nineties were followed by many others, until the number ran into the hundreds. Mostly they were militant, victorious songs. It is said of her, "She was a real soldier," and surely some of her songs have caught the swing and the rush of battle. "The Fight Is On" was written during these years, as was also "At the Battle's Front," two of the great war songs of the church today. And there were triumphant songs of praise as well. It was in 1906 that she published:

*Had I a thousand tongues to sing
The half could ne'er be told
Of love so rich, so full and free,
Of blessings manifold;
Of grace that faileth never,
Peace flowing as a river,
From God the glorious Giver,
To Him give thanks.*

Again she wrote:

*Victory, victory, blessed blood-bought victory,
Victory, victory, victory all the time.
As Jehovah liveth, strength divine He giveth,
Unto those who know Him, victory all the time.*

The song of testimony and devotion was not lacking. Among these none surpasses "Nearer, Still Nearer." There is a depth and a spiritual quality to this song that can scarcely be found except in the old hymns of the church. And in the same spirit of deep devotion she wrote in "Sweet Will of God":

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*My stubborn will at last hath yielded,
I would be Thine, and Thine alone;
And this the prayer my lips are bringing,
"Lord, let in me Thy will be done."
Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.*

But the theme she loved best, and on which she wrote most frequently, was the theme of the sanctified heart. In 1900 she wrote:

*"The power, the power, the Pentecostal power,
Is just the same today."*

And again, in 1910:

*"I heard God's voice commanding, 'Go up the land possess,'
And trusting in His grace I followed on.
From Egypt's cruel bondage and from the wilderness,
From Kadesh into Canaan I have gone.
'Tis good to live in Canaan, where grapes of Eshcol grow;
'Tis good to live in Canaan, where milk and honey flow;
'Tis good to live in Canaan, and full salvation know,
I find it good to live in Canaan."*

One of the most striking things about Mrs. Morris as a song writer was the fact that she not only wrote the words to her songs, but the music as well — not just the melody, but the harmony. And although she had never studied harmony and composition, the publishers seldom had to alter the music as she had written it. Another notable thing is the variety of her music. There is no monotony about it. Each song is fresh

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and new and different. Just the other day a group of high school boys, just playing their trombones and horns and clarinets to amuse themselves, swung into one of her choir numbers, "Tis Marvelous and Wonderful," and were putting all their souls into the swinging rhythm of the music — and the music gave back to them all and more than Sousa's marches or a stirring patriotic song could give them. Surely the heart that wrote that music was a heart that had caught and held the spirit of youth and gladness and victory.

VII.

When the younger daughter, Mary Morris, was still just a young girl, she attended a campmeeting with her mother one summer, and there received a call to the mission field. Of this occasion Mrs. Morris says:

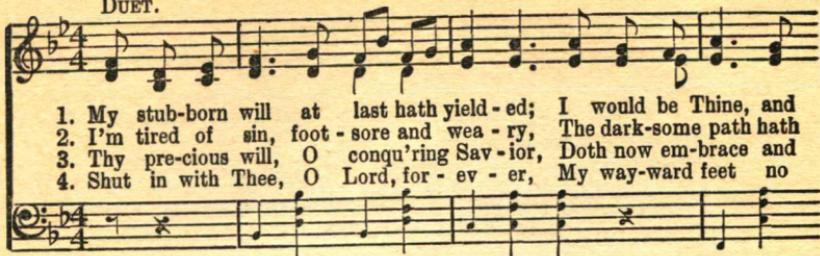
"The greatest thing I have ever done, in my estimation, was the rearing of a daughter to go to China as a missionary. While attending a campmeeting, a call was given for those young people attending, pledging for life service. There were several young people who gave themselves, among them my daughter. The person in charge said, 'Girls, when you go home and tell your mothers what you have done, they will not let you go to China or Alaska or Africa, for they will say, "We need you right at home." 'Now,' said she, 'I have a message for you mothers in the audience. Would you be willing to let your daughters go?' I said this too, and when the test came and I heard that my daughter was to go to China, I said, 'Yes, Lord; everything on the altar. She is not mine any more.' A great many persons have said she should be at home with her blind mother. She is married and has the duties of a wife. I have been so happy to receive her letters in which she tells of being able to give a message for the first time to those

Sweet Will of God.

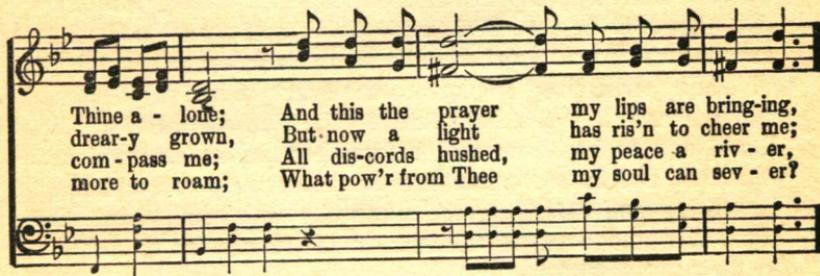
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Mrs. C. H. M.
DUET.

Mrs. C. H. Morris.



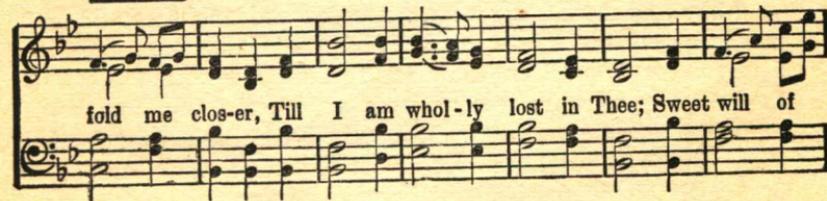
1. My stub-born will at last hath yield-ed; I would be Thine, and
2. I'm tired of sin, foot-sore and wea-ry, The dark-some path hath
3. Thy pre-cious will, O conqu'ring Sav-ior, Doth now em-brace and
4. Shut in with Thee, O Lord, for-ev-er, My way-ward feet no



Thine a-lone; And this the prayer my lips are bring-ing,
dear-y grown, But now a light has ris'n to cheer me;
com-pass me; All dis-cords hushed, my peace a riv-er,
more to roam; What pow'r from Thee my soul can sev-er?



rit. CHORUS
"Lord, let in me Thy will be done."
I find in Thee my Star, my Sun. Sweet will of God, still
My soul a pris-oned bird set free.
The cen-ter of God's will my home.



fold me clos-er, Till I am whol-ly lost in Thee; Sweet will of



God, still fold me clos-er, Till I am whol-ly lost in Thee.

SINGING AT HER WORK

darkened minds and hearts. I think you will agree with me that this is the best thing I have ever done."

For Mary really did become a missionary. She married Rev. Frank T. Cartwright, and it was with him that she spent eleven years in China. Mr. Cartwright is now a secretary of the Methodist Board of Missions, and there is still a possibility that they will be returned to the fields and spend more time carrying the gospel to those who sit in darkness.

Fanny, who lived so close to the heart of her mother, also married and left the home nest. She became Mrs. W. R. Lunk, and as has been said before, became an accomplished musician, and in later years was the utmost help to her mother in writing and arranging the songs she composed. Both the sons, Will and Fred, married and made homes for themselves in their native state.

Life ran along evenly for Lelia Morris — and if she had peculiar trials of her own, her most intimate friends could only guess of it, save for the small note of pathos in her voice that seemed to increase and to be intensified. A young man who took care of the church building during those years, but who never met her in later years, said of her:

"She always seemed to me the most perfect Christian I ever knew. In the church she was active in almost everything. She was a leader in the Epworth League, sang in the choir, and was always at prayermeeting."

More and more songs were composed and published. More people began to come to the Morris home. It became, indeed, a mecca for evangelists and singers, choir directors and publishers. The summer seasons were an especial joy, for they brought the campmeetings. Mountain Lake Park, Maryland, where she first found the Lord as her Sanctifier, and where she first really discovered her gift for song, was especially precious

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to her. Old Camp Sychar, at Mt. Vernon, Ohio, knew her familiarly. At Sebring Camp she was an honored guest. The village of McConnelsville for many years supported a summer chautauqua, for which they erected an attractive tabernacle. In this project Mrs. Morris was also much interested.

The winters she spent as hundreds of other women in the small towns of America spend their winters — sewing, attending church, preparing for the holidays, welcoming home the family for Christmas dinner; helping in the winter revival in her church, helping work out the problems of church finances, attending the Missionary Society and W. C. T. U. meetings, writing to her absent children, waiting eagerly their letters to her, especially messages from the daughter in China. But in all this activity she always found time for new songs — the pencil and tablet always lay on the pantry shelf.

VIII.

In 1913 a new trouble menaced. Slowly, gradually, but none the less surely, Lelia Morris's eyesight was failing. For some years her children and friends had warned her about straining her eyes, but she failed to listen to them. The progress of the trouble was slow; for many months she was able to see light as though it came through the ground glass of a camera, and the objects as mere shadows on that glass. Her son Will fixed up a large blackboard in a sunny room upstairs, and cut lines on it to represent the staff — lines twenty-eight feet long. On these for a time she wrote out the melodies of her songs. But this was far from satisfactory. In a few years she had to give up trying to write music in that way.

She never complained. In 1912, when she sensed the darkness approaching, she wrote:

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*When my way grows dark and no light I see,
When my friends forsake and life's comforts flee,
Then I know His grace will sufficient be,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

Some time later, when the certainty of blindness was borne in upon her, she wrote:

*Since Thou know'st, O Father, the way that I must go,
While a pilgrim stranger I wander here below,
This my prayer, O Master, that Thou would'st hold my hand
Guard and guide and bring me safe to the Glory Land.*

*With my hand in Thine, Lord, I am not afraid,
Tho' the storms in fury break above my head.
Soon the clouds will scatter, and the sun will shine,
I am not afraid, Lord, with my hand in Thine.*

*So today I'm walking by faith and not by sight,
Knowing that Thou, Father, wilt surely guide aright.
Tho' some clouds may gather, and tho' some tears may fall,
I shall reach yon haven through my All in All.*

Such was the beautiful trust she had in her Savior. Her greatest desire seems to be expressed in the song that has reached the hearts of more people than anything else she has written — "Nearer, Still Nearer." Who does not remember the beautiful words and touching melody?

*Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
Draw me, my Savior, so precious Thou art;
Fold me, oh, fold me, close to Thy breast,
Shelter me now in that Haven of Rest.*

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Her blindness, while it could but be a tremendous handicap, did not stop her in her work, either as a writer or as a housewife. She was skilled on the typewriter, and could leave her work in the machine and go back and take it up where she left off.

The use of the typewriter was in itself no small achievement. She did not learn to use it until after she lost her sight. A government agent taught her the touch system, and Mr. Cartwright says that during their absence the typewritten letters from Mammy More came in regularly every week—and in China as regularly as the mail boats arrived from America.

"It was remarkable," he says, "how accurately she did this writing. Occasionally a mistake occurred that was serious. If her guide finger got on the wrong key the entire line or sentence would be scrambled and we would have to guess at the meaning."

This same government worker also taught her to read Braille, but not very easily. She read only a little.

But learning to write her songs without sight was not so great a task as learning to do her housework. For a short time she kept outside help, but mostly she did everything herself. She was able to cook, wash dishes, sweep, sew, iron.

"People tell of the blind having an unusual sense of touch," she said, "but I do not have that. Much of the time my hands are numb."

Nevertheless she must have had a sense of which she was not conscious, for she could select from her kitchen drawer the particular sharp knife—she had several—that she wanted for a certain task; she could go to her linen drawer and select the tablecloth that she wanted for any occasion. She could joint a chicken with speed and accuracy, without cutting her hands or making any mistake. If any think this is easily done,

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let them shut their eyes and try it. It was a huge task; but in time Mrs. Morris became practically as good a housekeeper as she had been when she had the use of her eyes.

Sometimes those who are crippled or blind or afflicted in any way, keep their affliction ever before the minds of their friends. This is a thing that Mrs. Morris never did. She had a sweet, devoted neighbor, Mrs. Laura McClosky, who many times played the Good Samaritan and helped Mrs. Morris to and from the church or wherever she wanted to go. Mrs. McClosky tells many amusing incidents arising out of the fact that Mrs. Morris' friends actually *forgot* that she was blind. One time Mrs. McClosky went over to see her, and Mrs. Morris had made herself a new hat. Apparently she never lost the skill acquired in the old days of the millinery shop.

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. McClosky, "that is a beautiful hat — so becoming."

"And," she says, in telling the incident, "*I seized her and led her over to the mirror to see herself!*"

Mrs. Morris laughed and laughed over the mistake, but Mrs. McClosky says, "I felt more like crying!"

Mrs. McClosky, or "Aunt Lollie," as they lovingly called her, tells another incident, when she went over to call on her friend, and found them all in gales of laughter.

"We have the best joke on Daddy," they said.

It seems that a house across the way had been sold, remodeled and was that evening for the first time, lighted from top to bottom. And "Daddy" had *led her out into the yard to look at it!*

To be sentenced to a life of darkness could but try the courage of the bravest; yet her sweet spirit of submission was unchanging to the last.

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IX.

The closing decade of the life of Mrs. Morris brought her increasing fame as a song writer. She was now an outstanding figure in the world of religious music, though among her townspeople she was just the same friend and neighbor. It is doubtful if they ever fully realized that a celebrity was in their midst. Outwardly her life was much the same. The time came when her father-in-law was taken into their home, and she cared for him in his last years as she had for her own mother.

These years were saddened, too, by the death of her son Will, one of the twins. She had depended much on Will in several ways. Mrs. Rusk, her neighbor, once asked her how she avoided repeating her songs out of such a multitude of tunes and verses; wasn't she likely to write the same one over sometimes, thinking it was new?

"Oh," she said, "I don't think so, and if I do feel afraid of it I just run over to Will — he has a good memory — and I ask him if I have ever made that tune before."

Will's death occurred some four or five years before her own. The visits from song leaders and evangelists became more and more frequent. The best known of her songs began to be translated into other languages. Her son-in-law, Frank T. Cartwright, writes:

"On one of our visits Mammy More told of receiving a book containing one of her songs which had been translated into an African dialect — Zulu, I believe. Her quiet joy in the knowledge that her music was helping the missionary work down there in Africa was touching to us. When Mrs. Cartwright was a patient in a Seventh Day Adventist hospital in Shanghai, she heard the staff and nurses singing at their daily

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chapel service 'Nearer, Still Nearer' as translated into Chinese. At that time they did not know that in the hospital was the daughter of Mrs. Morris."

Letters began to come in from distant lands, asking for the songs, for information concerning the composer, requests for photographs, letters of appreciation. The following letter, with its quaint English, shows the esteem in which Mrs. Morris was held in Germany.

"(Germany) d. 5-2, 1929.

Dear Madam:

I thank you *very much* for your letter for purpose of Mrs. Chas. Morris. I am so glad of that.

The hymn, 'Nearer, Still Nearer,' is very used in Germany and printed in 'Deutsches Reicheliederbuch' (2'400 000 copies).

I like to know:

- 1) Year of birth of the poetess
- 2) Place " " " " "
- 3) Christian name of the poetess (:Chas. H.)??

The publication of 'The Singers and Their Songs' is not to have in Germany. If possible, will you send me her picture (photography) for a work of hymnology.

Please, will you *very accelerate* the reply.

Yours faithfully, Dr. S——."

None of these things were able to turn her head, or make her other than the simple, motherly Christian neighbor that she always had been. Her presence in the campmeetings was becoming notable, and she was usually asked to sit on the platform. During the last four years of her life, several oc-

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casions were arranged in her honor. In 1925 a revival was held in the Malta church, with Mr. Wieand present as song evangelist. On Friday night of that meeting, the entire service was in honor of Mrs. Morris. The local paper of that date tells it thus:

“It was Friday night, however, that brought friends and neighbors, regardless of church affiliations, to honor Mrs. C. H. Morris, who has lived among us all her life and yet is not as widely known in her own county as she is to the uttermost parts of the earth. When the matter of a ‘Mrs. Morris’ Night’ was broached to Rev. Mr. Gillilan, he at once became very enthusiastic and asked his evangelistic songsters to put forth every effort to acquaint our people with some of the facts concerning the great life work of Mrs. Morris. Having her songs all over America they were well able to arrange the program.

“Mr. Wieand announced that only songs written by Mrs. Morris would be used. The numbers rendered by the choir and those by the Misses Howard were so exceptionally well presented that simply writing of it would not adequately convey the impressions of that hour. Pastor Gillilan and Mr. Wieand were both very happy in their remarks of felicitations. Then followed the reading of messages of congratulations from notables in Christian work, among them being letters from Homer Rodeheaver, the Tabernacle Publishing Company, Chas. H. Gabriel, the Marietta District Conference (which was then in session), and others.

“Following this there was presented to Mrs. Morris a bouquet of beautiful roses. The whole audience arose and

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broke out in spontaneous applause as Mrs. Morris arose to respond to this greeting. Among other things she said:

“In a way, I have been afraid of this meeting and tried to beg off from it. It is hard for me, because I am rather backward, but I am not afraid any more. It brings me into such beautiful fellowship. All are one great family, and what an opportunity to make a little music and sing a little song. I trust God may be honored.

“I am thoroughly enjoying the work of these blessed people. They are artists in their line. I have heard many sing — there are none better.

“I have prayed that I might honor Jesus, that I might lift Him up to the world. I have tried to honor the Holy Spirit. Because you know in this day a great many are trying to be saved through service and many are honoring things which do not honor the Holy Spirit. We are living in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. We are living in the times of the Holy Spirit. If we honor Him, our lives will radiate joy and gladness. This I have tried to do.”

In March, 1928, a great revival was held at East Liverpool, Ohio, in charge of Rev. Haldor Lillenas. Mr. Lillenas had for many years been a writer and publisher of gospel songs, and had used many of the songs of Mrs. Morris. He says:

“Some months after my first visit to Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Lillenas and I were engaged in a revival at East Liverpool, Ohio, and knowing that Mrs. Morris had been blind for a number of years and had no opportunity to be in revival meetings, we drove a hundred and fifty miles over to McCon-

A Holy Ghost Revival.

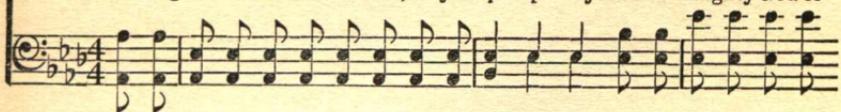
Mrs. C. H. M.

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Mrs. C. H. Morris.



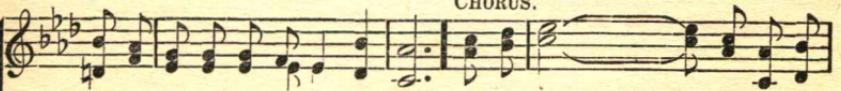
1. For a Ho-ly Ghost re-viv-al, blessed Lord, we pray, Send the Pen-te-cos-tal
2. May the church on earth be quickened and new life re-ceive, May lost sinners be a-
3. Send a great world-wide revival, may the peo-ple say That the mighty God of



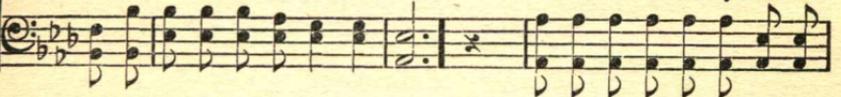
bles-sing in our hearts to-day; Old-time Holy Ghost re-lig-ion in the old-time way;
 wakened and in Christ believe; More of power and of blessing than we can conceive;
 Pen-te-cost still lives to-day, Still convicting and converting in the old-time way;



CHORUS.



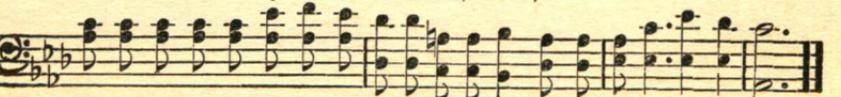
Send a Ho-ly Ghost re-viv-al, Lord. Send a Ho - - - ly Ghost re-
 Send a bless-ed Ho -ly Ghost re-



viv-al, Lord, May the Spir - - - it on us be out-poured; Send a
 viv-al, Lord, May the Spir-it in His full-ness on us be out-poured;



Ho - - - ly Ghost re-viv - al, Lord, And be-gin it in my heart.
 Send a bless-ed Ho-ly Ghost re-viv-al now, O Lord,



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nelsonville and arranged to have her with us a number of days at our meeting at East Liverpool.

"It was a great joy to her to be able to be in meetings where they were featuring her wonderful songs and naturally we had the people sing largely her numbers while she was with us.

"I do not think that a writer has ever lived whose songs are as full of Scriptural truth and who at the same time wrote the music to so many singable and effective songs."

A fact that added greatly to the enjoyment of this revival was the presence of her daughter Fanny and husband. They had driven from their home and were there during the time she was attending. In June, 1928, the General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene met in Columbus, Ohio, and Mrs. Morris was an honored guest of the assembly.

X.

Each year the occasion most anticipated by Mrs. Morris was the visit from Fanny. These visits were not just filled with an exchange of news, and meeting relatives; for it was then that Fanny arranged and wrote out the accumulation of songs that her mother had composed during the year. There must have been no small collection each year, for during the thirty-seven years of her song writing career, she wrote more than fifteen hundred songs, both words and melodies. The words, of course, she had typewritten, but the melodies she had carried in her mind, and then would play them on the piano and Mrs. Lunk would write them out.

"Each year," says Mrs. Lunk, "it was a little harder to leave her, as I realized how handicapped she was, and how much she needed me. My great regret is that we didn't insist

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upon their breaking up the home and coming to us before they did. I know now that she worked way beyond her strength those last few years."

Mr. Cartwright tells an incident connected with the breaking up of the home in McConnelsville which shows the deep love for her family which marked Mrs. Morris and also showed the way in which prayer was her guide. The Lunks had been urging for some time that the business be closed, the home sold, and that Mr. and Mrs. Morris move to Auburn. The arguments were all good, unanswerable, but still Mammy More would not say the word. Finally Fanny went to McConnelsville with the avowed purpose of persuading her mother to consent.

The discussion did not end as she planned. Acknowledging that they *ought* to move, she nevertheless said:

"Well, the China children are due for another furlough next year, and they enjoyed the old home so much when they were here before. I'm going to keep it open until after Mamie and the children come and go back to China."

While the discussion was actually in progress the mail arrived and there was a letter from the secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions telling the Morrises that Mr. Cartwright had been called home to be a secretary of the Board, and that the family would probably live in or near New York. The decision was then easy.

It was in the fall of 1928 that she did finally consent to go to live with the Lunks in Auburn. This was the fall following her trip to the Nazarene General Assembly in Columbus. It was a gloomy day in McConnelsville when she departed. For so many years she had been the mainstay in church and missionary society, they hardly knew how to do without her. "Aunt Lollie" McClosky says:

SINGING AT HER WORK

“Did you ever hear her pray? Oh, she could just melt the hearts of everyone, and when she sang, no one could hold any bitter thoughts.”

Aunt Lollie did not often urge her to sing; but once, as she tells, in missionary meeting she asked her to sing “With My Hand in Thine,” and almost everyone present wept. And the same dear neighbor gives us a most intimate picture of the sweet hominess of Mrs. Morris.

“On summer evenings,” she says, “after we came from church or prayermeeting, we would sit on her porch and talk and talk, about the things of God, until way late — and Daddy would bring out crackers and cheese, and then we would talk some more.”

What would you give to have been there, just to sit and listen to those two old saints?

The song, “With My Hand in Thine,” she called her “blind song” and she did not sing it very often. Her daughter Mary says of it:

“I never heard her sing it but once — of course, I was not home very much after she became blind, being in China most of the time. It was when the evangelist, Mrs. M. J. Harris, whom mother knew very well, was on one of her visits to our home when my children were small. She pulled mother by the hand, I remember, and said, ‘Come on in to the piano, Lelia, I want you to sing for me.’ And mother asked her if she had ever heard her blind song; she said she did not sing it often for it was too hard on her family, and it *was* almost more than we could stand. As she sang it clear through to the end, her voice never wavering, and full of the sweet confidence that was hers, we both, Mrs. Harris and I, sat there and sobbed aloud.”

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Is it any wonder that this song had the power to melt and to heal hearts and to smooth out strain and stress? Or is it strange that McConnelsville felt so keenly their loss when she moved away?

When she arrived in Auburn, the papers of that city took notice of her coming and published a short article concerning her life and work. The home in McConnelsville was occupied by a cousin of the family, Mrs. Ralston. But in Auburn she found her great joy in attending the services of the church, and her Lord was just as present with her as He had been in the old home village. Still, there is not a doubt that she missed old neighbors, familiar voices and the touch of well-known hands. Mrs. Lunk says:

"I sat beside her in church the Sunday before she was stricken in July, 1929, and I remember how her sweet, clear voice rang out as we sang the familiar hymns, the words of hundreds being known to her."

This was on July eighth. The following Thursday morning she and Mrs. Lunk prepared to can some cherries. While seeding the fruit, she seemed weary and remarked, "I guess I will take a little nap now."

But the "little nap" proved finally to be the "falling asleep" of one of God's saints, for she never regained consciousness, and almost two weeks later, on July 23, 1929, she passed away.

Surely the angel choirs must have rejoiced. Perhaps they had a new song prepared to sing with her when she arrived. Perhaps they waited for her to bring them one. At least we may well imagine that, with sight fully restored, and the infirmities of age dropped away, she must have swept through the heavenly gates and greeted her Lord as she had greeted

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Him for many years — in song! And surely now, after only these few years in glory, she has only just begun to explore the lovely possibilities of heavenly harmonies and the infinite variety of the instruments of the angel orchestras.

The dear body was brought back to McConnelsville, and Mrs. Ralston kindly insisted that she be brought to the home where her friends knew her for so long. She was laid to rest with fitting services. One of the most touching memorials, however, was some days later, when the Men's Quartet which she had herself organized and trained, but which could not be present at the funeral, went to the place of burial and standing uncovered by her grave, sang songs that she had written and songs that she had taught them. The thing that these four men did symbolized the feeling of the Christian world, which continues, and will continue to honor her in song.

Not many weeks ago, it was the privilege of the writer to sit in a revival service by the side of "Aunt Lollie" McClosky, and in the song service the choir and congregation joined in singing one of the tremendous chorus numbers written by Mrs. Morris, "God's Kingdom Is at Hand." Oh, how they did make it ring! Mrs. McClosky sat with tears in her eyes. She laid her hand upon mine and asked:

"Do you think the dead can see and hear what goes on here?"

"I do not know," was the answer.

"Oh," she said, "I hope so — how Mrs. Morris would love this."

There have been many services honoring Mrs. Morris since her death. There is a vogue for "Hymnology" and she occupies a place that can scarce be equaled. In May, 1932, in her home church, a service was held featuring her songs and

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her life and work. For this occasion a paper was prepared by her neighbor, Mrs. Annie Rusk, who lived across the street from Mrs. Morris and who had been known to her all her life. This paper, written under the caption "Reminiscence of Mrs. Morris," has a quality of sincerity and genuineness that it is impossible for anyone to attain unless he had known her intimately. It offers also a sort of summary of her entire life. For this reason we have included it in its entirety as a part of this biography, believing that the reader will gain from it a picture of Mrs. Morris as she really was, such as the body of this work cannot give.

MRS. MORRIS, A REMINISCENCE

Mrs. Annie Rusk

It has been more than three years ($3\frac{1}{2}$) since Mrs. Morris walked up the aisles of this room — three years in which we have lost a number of our faithful members. We miss them and we will not forget *one* of them. Each filled a niche no other can well fill. But an unusual personality was Mrs. Lelia N. Morris who could fill so many places — places that were hard to fill, too. We have had time in these years that have passed to realize what a loss her going away has been.

When her father died and her mother was left with seven children, some of them felt forced at an early age to acquire some pursuit that would be remunerative. Lelia, the fifth one, was resourceful and early became proficient in many things; in household affairs, in culinary matters, a seamstress, a milliner and a tailoress of ability.

But the love of music which she possessed was so strong that she found time to take piano and harmony lessons along with her other work. With her characteristic thoroughness she devoted herself to her music with the desire to make the best possible use of her time and opportunity, and we know in what good stead this musical study served her.

At an early age she united with the Methodist Protestant church of this place where the family belonged. After her marriage she came to this church where her husband's family belonged. She sang in the church choir and was interested in *all* church work. After a time with a growing family around her, she began to write some religious songs. She sent them to a publisher and had them accepted before any one outside the family

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knew about it, and it was not generally known until she had quite a number to her credit.

She became particularly interested in the evangelistic efforts of the church and her songs—most of them are especially suitable for such services. She became a very prolific writer and there seemed to be no end to the songs that she could pour forth as long as she retained her sight.

She was a busy home-maker and housekeeper with a family of four children, a large house to care for and much of the time assisting in the care of other relatives. Busy, not from necessity at this time but from choice, as it was not easy to secure assistance in the home. There was little time for idle moments. She was very methodical about everything she did. No time was wasted. If one went to her home to call or on an errand, he felt guilty of depriving her of the time in which she might have written a song; but she was always ready with a cheery word to greet one and after she became blind, she insisted that she could find her place again where she had been typing, so no apologies were needed for interrupting her work. She wrote tirelessly until her eyesight began to fail; still she kept on, resorting at last to a large board painted black with lines cut in the board to represent the staff, so she could feel the lines and know where to place the notes. She seemed to be overflowing with Christian sentiments that she could scarcely refrain from giving out in song. When her older daughter was at home, it was an easy matter to get the music written, as she could strike the notes on the piano and Fanny could put the notes on paper. She said, "It isn't hard work. The melody comes to me and it is no trouble to make the harmony." After she became blind, when her daughter came for her visits, there was an accumulation of songs ready to be written and sent to the publishers.

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I asked her one day how she could find time to think of all those words and tunes when she had so much to do. She said, "Oh, I get both words and music when I am about my household tasks, and then when I have a little time I am ready to write them down. My housework is just routine work and I don't need to give it thought. I wouldn't get much done if I didn't get my songs ready to be written down when I am mopping my floor or washing dishes."

"Well, Lelia," I said, "how do you know when you are not writing something you have written before? I should think you would repeat yourself."

"Well," she said, "there is some danger of that, but I think I never did; sometimes when I am a little afraid of it, I take the song over to Will (her son) and ask him if he ever heard that before. Will remembers well and will know if I repeat myself."

This was when the daughters were away from home. When one composes fifteen hundred tunes and writes fifteen hundred poems to accompany those tunes it is quite a talent to be able to write something different each time or to not repeat oneself in the music. Sometimes a publisher would write to her and ask for a song similar to one other that was popular and she was always equal to the task. We were talking one day about "The Fight Is On" which became very popular everywhere. A song leader wrote her and asked if she could write something else as acceptable that would appeal to the popular taste, just as that song did, and yet be a little different. She sat down and wrote "At the Battle Front," the song you have just heard. The chorus is "Hear the tramp, tramp, tramping of the army."

"I think that is prettier than 'The Fight Is On,'" I said.

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"Maybe it is," she said, "but it has never become so popular."

There has been a reaction against war songs, even spiritual war songs, so such are not quite so popular these days, but only a day or two ago "The Fight Is On" was sung over the radio by an accomplished singer.

We here have only a little acquaintance with her songs, as we have had only a limited number in our books. I am familiar with only about twenty-five or thirty myself, but I think we have the better ones. Several of her more pretentious pieces such as anthems and choir music we are not familiar with. She might have had a number of books published, composed entirely of her own songs, as they were sufficiently varied in style, but she was advised that it would be better to have them in different books. It is doubted whether she received the recompense that she should for these songs.

She did not pretend to remember all of her own songs. They were written quickly and sent away. I heard some one ask her to sing a certain song, giving the title.

"I don't know that song at all," she said.

"Why, it's one of *yours!*"

"Well, I don't remember all my own songs, but if I heard one I might recall that I had written it," she said, "but I do not know anything about that to which you refer."

So you see that it did seem strange that she did not repeat her songs.

Many evangelistic songs that we have in our books are not of a very high character, but those of Mrs. Morris were of the very best and were sought by the best publishers.

She had many callers and visitors from other places who had sung her songs and were anxious to see her and to engage in conversation with her. Many of them came unan-

SINGING AT HER WORK

nounced and she had to be ready any minute to receive them and a great deal of time was occupied in this way. Those who were interested in compiling song-books came long distances to talk on business relating to her songs. Some who were kindred spirits came to talk on religious subjects. The ministers of the two towns were frequent visitors.

She was an attendant for a number of summers at some of the better campmeetings of the country, such as Mountain Lake Park, Sebring and others, where she was one of the celebrities all were anxious to meet. She said she got so much inspiration from these assemblies that she was able to write better after she returned.

She had a very cheerful disposition — was even jolly in her earlier life. She knew well how to be friendly and to make everyone her friend. As the years passed and the infirmity of blindness came and cares and trials pressed more heavily, they left their softening impression, but there was no hardness or rebellious feeling; she looked up through clouded eyes and still sang on with calmness and submission,

*“Sweet will of God, still fold me closer
'Till I am wholly lost in Thee.”*

Many of us remember the old organ in the prayermeeting room, and on some occasions it was carried upstairs. No one could quite make the old organ accompany the singing like Mrs. Morris and she was just as capable when the piano came into use. She lost little of her ability after losing her sight because she was not dependent upon the notes for a familiar tune.

Her voice was strong and of a quality that made her easy to follow. She always kept good time, was neither too fast

"The Past Is All Under the Blood."

Mrs. C. H. M.

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Mrs. C. H. Morris.



1. A pres-ent and per-fect sal - va - tion I have In Je - sus my Sav - ior,
2. The blood of the Lamb cleans-eth now from all sin, Than snow makes me whiter;
3. The bur-den of guilt which so long I had borne, In weight like a moun-tain;
4. He leads me so gen-tly the way I should go, My won-der - ful Keep-er;
5. I'm lost and encompassed with won-der-ful Love, Tho' noth-ing I mer - it;



For He is a - bun-dant-ly a - ble to save, Both now and for - ev - er.
The Com-fort-er prom-ised a - bid-eth with-in, My path grow-ing bright-er.
The sins which had caused me so oft - en to mourn, All lost in the foun-tain.
And gives sweetest comfort the world cannot know, My peace growing deep-er.
A beau-ti - ful man-sion pre-par-ing a - bove, I soon shall in - her - it.



CHORUS.



He saves me just now, hal - le - lu - jah! The past is all



un - der the blood, And Cal - va - ry's flow makes me
un - der, yes, un - der the blood,



whit - er than snow, The past is all un - der the blood.



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nor too slow but seemed just right to suit the words, thus she was a fine leader in any service. If a verse or song were needed which would be especially appropriate for the moment, no time was lost in hunting the music, as she needed none and most of the words were at her tongue's end.

She was very modest about her work, scarcely ever singing her own songs except by request.

And then her prayers! Who will forget them; who will forget the ease and yet the fervor with which she talked to God as she expressed it in one of her songs, "Heart to Heart and Face to Face." Some one has said, "Your actions speak so loud we cannot hear what you say." Mrs. Morris had the confidence of all and when she spoke we knew her life would be as her words had indicated.

One of her most successful revival songs was "Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart":

*"Just now your doubtings give o'er,
Just now reject Him no more,
Just now throw open the door,
Let Jesus come into your heart."*

She received scores of letters about this song, telling how useful it was in revival services. We have used it very much here, too, and know of its strong appeal.

One of the earlier songs made use of many times was this:

*"I never can forget the day when Jesus saved me,
Speaking pardon to my guilty, sin-sick soul.
Or the blessed words of comfort there He gave me
'Go in peace, thy faith hath saved and made thee whole.'"*

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One that was typical of her is this:

*"There's a joy that does not cease
And a deep abiding peace
When the heart is right with God.
It makes all things with joy complete,
Makes strong the heart, life's cares to meet,
Turns sorrow's bitter into sweet,
This wonderful love of God."*

These were not mere words written to fit music, but they were the expressions of her soul and those who knew her felt them to be so, and were responsive to their appeal. That is the reason why we are reading them. Life's bitter had often been turned into sweet for her, and she had the deep abiding place.

She had a sincere and strong belief in the subject of holiness, and she was well acquainted with all the Bible references on that subject. She made that a special subject of study and was a willing and ready speaker on that topic. One of the songs in this vein is this:

*"He who has pardoned surely will cleanse you
All of the dross of thy nature refine,
Cleansed from all sin His spirit will enter,
Fill you and thrill you with power divine."*

*"Have you received since you believed,
The blessed Holy Ghost
He who was promised, Gift of the Father,
Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"*

SINGING AT HER WORK

And another:

*"Be holy, said Jesus, for holy am I,
God wants us to be like Him, HERE,
And grace all sufficient will freely supply,
God wants us to be like HIM HERE.*

*"Wonderful, 'tis wonderful, that mortals His
likeness should bear.
Yet this is His will for you and for me,
God wants us to be like Him here."*

To many her song "Nearer, Still Nearer" is one of the choicest of her compositions, being more nearly like a hymn than almost any other. The favorite with many congregations and perhaps with our own is "Sweeter as the Years Go By" with which we are all so familiar. I often wondered how she could sing without a tremor "He healed the broken-hearted and caused the blind to see" when the rest of us could but shed tears thinking of her sightless years.

She called me over one day not long before she went away to see a song book she had gotten that had come from Africa. It was a beautifully gotten up book, so neat and pretty and unusual. I couldn't tell her which were her songs at first, but I tried to describe how the notes were made and to read as a joke a song in the African language. I tried to make her see the music if I could. I finally guessed several of her pieces by the repetitions. I do not know now what they were. She said, "I thought you would like to see the book as they say it is interesting to look at. How good it makes me feel to think that even down in the heart of Africa I have been able to send something to help those people!"

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Some of her songs were translated, as you know, into Chinese and Korean and some Indian dialects, perhaps others; but I think this was the first that came from the heart of Africa.

I do not know now what was *her* favorite, although I may have heard her say; but this one we have heard her sing:

*“Just to trust in the Lord,
Just to lean on His Word,
Just to feel I am His every day,
Just to walk by His side
With His Spirit to guide,
Just to follow where He leads the way.”*

*“When my way darkest seems,
When are blighted my dreams,
Just to feel that the Lord knoweth best;
Just to yield to His will
Just to trust and be still,
Just to lean on His bosom and rest.”*

*“Just to say what He wants me to say,
And be still when He whispers to me;
Just to go where He wants me to go,
Just to be what He wants me to be.”*

One of her songs which seem to be of a later date was this:

*“I am resting on the wonderful assurance
While so crowned with glory is my pilgrim way,
That the pathway of the just still righter groweth,
Shining more and more unto the perfect day.”*

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*"Growing brighter every day,
Growing better all the way,
Let the hallelujahs roll
Jesus sweetly saves my soul,
And my way is growing brighter every day."*

It was a great joy to her that the gospel message, expressed in her songs, should be sung around the world. Yes, she had great joys — but she had sorrows, trials and difficulties, too, to the very end. But we trust that her way did "grow brighter" and that "Jesus' love did seem sweeter" as the days went by. I think I can almost hear her sing again:

*"Nearer, still nearer, while life shall last,
Till safe in Glory my anchor is cast,
Through endless ages, ever to be,
Nearer, my Savior, nearer to Thee."*

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