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THE IDENTITY AND PERPETUITY OF THE CHURCH

THE gospel plan of salvation is in itself the proof of divine revelation. The first chapter of the Ephesian epistle sets forth supernatural origin of the scheme of redemption. In the third chapter the apostle writes of the revelation which “when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge”—the inspired knowledge of the gospel—‘ as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.’ The scheme of human redemption as foretold by the prophets, of the Old Testament is fulfilled in Christianity. It could not have been originated by man; it cannot be a human plan. (1 Cor. 1:18-31)

The same apostle in the first and second chapters of Corinthians contrasts ancient human philosophy and the divine wisdom of the gospel in the new testament. In former ages no eye had
seen, no ear had heard, and no heart had known the things revealed by the Holy Spirit through the men whom God had immediately inspired to reveal them. (1 Cor. 2:1-9) The revelation of the new testament came through the “earthen vessels” of inspired apostles (2 Cor. 4:1-4), whose knowledge was not the information of natural men (1 Cor. 2:10-11); for natural men could not receive the knowledge of these things through natural channels of information. Philosophers and scientists are natural men, and they can by natural means receive the knowledge of natural things; but spiritual things are revealed things-revealed by the Holy Spirit through spiritual men, the inspired apostles of Jesus Christ—and scientists cannot by natural means discover them.

Through chemical experiments, the chemist may receive scientific information, but he cannot receive the things of divine revelation through his natural experiments. The geologist can receive sedimentary information through his geological discoveries, but he cannot receive the knowledge of the things of divine revelation through his natural research. The astronomer by the telescope and spectroscope may receive astrophysical information through the science of astronomical investigation, but he cannot know the things of divine revelation through natural investigations.
The purpose of the present treatise is to observe the church as the product of divine wisdom and revelation.

(1) The church as a manifeste of divine wisdom- (Eph. 3:9-10).

As the heavenly firmament declares the glory of God and his creative handiwork (Psa 19), so the spiritual institution manifests, by exhibition, its divine origin—that it is the *manifold* wisdom of God, comprehensive of the various features of the divine plan, making perceptible to men (verse 9) the unfolding of an eternal purpose.

Divine revelation versus human prudence is seen in the existence of the church. It is not a natural institution. It could not have been designed by the human mind. Hence, the divine architecture is exhibited, manifested, in the church. As a building exhibits the skill of the architect, the church as a spiritual institution manifests the wisdom that is divine, not human—"Which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence." (Eph. 1:8) "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3)

The comprehensiveness of the church is here made to be co-extensive with the whole scheme o
redemption. (Eph. 1:10-11--20:23) The dignity of the church as the body of Christ, its grandeur as the building and habitation of God, including the Jew and the Gentile in one spiritual commonwealth, in which realm "elective" grace is conditioned on obedience and character rather than respect of persons by omnipotent partiality, and all of this by a foreordained plan—a fore-approved plan—"according to his will," the revelation of which is the gospel (Rom. 16:25-26); and it exalts the church to the highest sphere of divine knowledge and wisdom, beyond the prudence of men to devise or the power of the human mind to plan.


The church being coextensive with the scheme of human redemption, will be in existence as long as time endures.

1. The kingdom stands forever—Dan. 2:44-45. The kingdom of Daniel's prophecy is identified in Mark 1:15 and Matt. 16:19 to be the kingdom of Christ—the church. Daniel said it would "stand forever." Jesus said the "gates of hades shall not prevail against it." Paul called it a kingdom which "cannot be moved." If not the same, one cannot end to let the other begin, and the other cannot be moved to allow the first to con-
continue--so an irresistible force would come in contact with an immovable object!

Jesus connected the church and the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-20); Paul connected the kingdom with the church (Col. 1:13, 18), and again represents the church to be the kingdom. (Heb. 12:23, 28)

2. The church throughout all ages-Eph. 3:10, 11, 21.

The passage says "to him be glory in the church throughout all ages." But the glory of Christ is not confined to the earth. (Jno. 17:5; Lk. 24:26) So the glory of the church may not always be or have been confined to its visible existence on the earth. (Luke 18:8) The glory of the church may be lost in apostasy. As the holy Shekinah was not present in the tabernacle (Hag. 2:1-3), so of the church-its glory may depart. Dan. 8:12 refers to truth "cast down to the ground," which indicates the state of apostasy.

(3) The divine characteristics of the church--Matt. 16:16-20

The setting up of the church of Christ on the earth was the culmination of all the plans and the purposes of God from the beginning to the end of time (Eph. 3:10, 11, 21) It was the inauguration of a kingdom not of the world-"now is my
kingdom not from hence” (Jno, 18:36)–but the “kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 16:19) Here the kingdom of Christ is paralleled in a sense with the world kingdom of Rome, but infinitely grander in character, scope and power. The origin of the kingdom of heaven and its perpetuity on the earth “throughout all ages, world without end” imparts to it divine characteristics attached to no other institution.

1. The origin of the church-(Eph. 2:14-15)

The church is referred to as the "one new man," a divine creation. The physical creation was perfected in Adam, the spiritual creation was perfected in the church, the new creation (Col. 1:13-18). The church came into being by an act of creation and by the exertion of divine and direct power as was exerted in the physical creation. (Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:16-18) The miracles of attending the inauguration of the church bear testimony to this fact. (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4; Eph. 4:8-16) But miracles were provisional, not permanent. The miracle of creation did not become a part of the created world, but the means of creating the world; so the miracles connected with the inauguration of the church and the revelation of the gospel did not became a part of the revealed will of God, but the means of revealing the will of God-they were provisional,
not permanent. The miracle of creation gave place to natural law, and the miracles in the beginning of the church gave place to spiritual law, the revealed word of God.

The law of procreation, is the law of propagation, the established law of the universe of all realms-every seed after its kind. “Let the earth put forth grass . . . herbs yielding seed . . . after their kind. . . . and the earth brought forth . . . yielding seed . . . and trees bearing fruit wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind.” (Gen. 1:11-12) This is the unvarying law and order in the natural world.


The law of propagation applies to the spiritual realm as definitely as to the natural and operates according to the same principle. This fact is made fundamental in the parable of the Sower And The Seed. Luke’s application of the parable reads: “The seed is the word of God.” (Lk. 8:11) Matthew represents the good seed as “sons of the kingdom” (Matt. 13), so the word of God is the “seed of the kingdom."


Jesus said to Nicodemus: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (Jno. 3:3) Peter explains how such a birth is produced: “Being born again, not of corruptible
seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God.” (1 Pet. 1:22) Paul says it is “by the gospel.” (1 Cor. 4:15) James says “by the word of truth.” (Jas. 1:18)

4. The law of the Spirit makes free—Rom. 8 A-4.

Here it is declared that law, not miracle, operates in the spiritual realm; it is “the law of the Spirit,” the gospel, that makes one free from sin.

5. The propagation of the truth—Jno. 8:32.

The principle by which the church, or kingdom, is maintained and perpetuated is by preaching the truth, not by fleshly succession.

Where was the church when the truth was cast down? Take the illustration of the wheat in the pyramids of Egypt—the seed had not been propagated for centuries, but in a perfect state of preservation, and when planted it produced the same wheat, after its kind. That is what such passages as Lk. 8:11, Matt. 13:23, 38 and 1 Pet. 1:23-25 mean. The visible succession of the church, fleshly succession, is not essential to “shall stand forever” and “shall not prevail against”—for the kingdom exists in the seed, just as the wheat lived in the seed preserved in the Egyptian granary for centuries.
The church is perpetuated through seed, not through a succession of visible congregations, and if it is lost to sight in the centuries, the seed of God’s word that produces it is in a perfect state of preservation—therefore, in the seed the kingdom has its existence, and the word will bear fruit after its kind, as in the beginning. (Gen. 1:11-12)

(4) The voice of history.

The Bible teaches that the church of Christ, the kingdom of Christ, was established on the Pentecost of Acts 2, and history joins with revelation in affirming this truth. Such historians as Orchard, Mosheim, William Smith, Fausett, Fisher, Schaff, Benedict and Armitage testify to this fact. The beginning of the church is thus established by the prophecies of the old testament, the teaching of the new testament, and by the voice of history.

These same historians bear testimony against the so-called church succession of denominational bodies as being the new testament church; and they are but a few of the many historians of all denominations who testify against the doctrine of an unbroken line of church succession through human denominational organizations.

The new testament has left unmistakable marks of identity on the true church, and any church professing to be such must offer these credentials.
THE following insertion from the pen of C. R. Nichol has appeared in several mediums, quite deservedly, and because it touches a matter of moment TORCH gives it additional conveyance to the readers for a wider-currency among the churches.

THE CHURCH

"LET THE CHURCH BE THE CHURCH"

I quote the following from a letter recently received: "I wonder how you feel about the present controversy among the brethren in regard to mission work. It seems to me that we have done so little in the past, that this increase in our activity is alarming. I would hate to think that we do not have enough of the grace of God to stand a little success. I have just finished reading the Gospel Advocate from 1855 to 1861. Tolbert Fanning in this five year period, was fighting for the very life of the church. It would seem that his plea, and others, succeeded, but now that it has succeeded, we are afraid that something wrong is in the offing. Would like to have a line from you."

So far as I know there has been no controversy over doing missionary work. There has been an adverse criticism over a congregation "sponsoring" a work, when it knew it was not in position, financially,
to do the work “sponsored,” nor was it in their program to attempt the work within and of themselves. They had planned to send men to congregations throughout the land, asking them to send to them money to assist them in doing a work for which they proposed to be surety, and that they distribute the money as seemed to them good.

There is a marked difference in an emergency arising in a congregation, and a congregation deliberately creating an emergency, and then soliciting other congregations to send them money to be disbursed as they see proper, in mission work, or erecting buildings.

Less than a year ago I was in an assembly of considerable size, composed largely of members of the church of Christ from different communities. The speaker on the occasion, tried, as it appeared to me to “high-pressure” those from different congregations into sending money to a “sponsoring” congregation which would disburse the money as seemed good to that congregation in missionary work, in erecting buildings. Some degree of success attended his effort. Need there be a comment made touching the “high-pressure” method in a large congregation?

Do the elders of the “sponsoring” church sustain the same relationship to the congregation which they try to induce to send to them money, that they do to the congregation in which they are elders? If “No” what relationship do they sustain to the congregations (churches) from whom they seek to raise money. What relationship do the congregations over which the elders of the “sponsoring” congregations are not elders sustain to the elders of the “sponsoring” church?
You tell me that Tolbert Fanning fought for “the church to be the church,” and that his effort, with that of others, “succeeded.” It is my persuasion that the church should be the church, and that the local congregation is the largest organization ordained by the Lord for the accomplishment of all the work he has commanded at the hands of congregations. I am not in sympathy with the statement I often hear: “We need a twentieth century church; that the church the Lord established was quite adequate for the first century, but we have come a long way since then, and the way work was done then is antiquated, outmoded, and there is now need for larger organizations, and different methods than those of the first churches in the first century, when churches labored under the direction of the elders in local congregations.” To say that there is need for different methods now is tacitly to declare that the Lord was near-sighted, and did not know the progress which we would make, and the need for a different program than that of the first century.

Some years ago there lived in the U. S. a man of whom it was said: “He is a one man missionary society.” He had for his slogan, “Greater Things For God.” Some weeks ago I talked with a successful business man, a member of the church of Christ, and he said to me, in the presence of others: “I am not pleased with something the church (congregation) of which I am a member is doing; but think what great work we are doing.” Is there a flare now among congregations to do “great things” and leave God out of the thinking?

“Let the church be the church.”
To the foregoing we add, and let the college be a college. The trend of things is to turn the schools into churches and to turn the churches into schools. Classes in colleges are being conducted as church services and classes in churches are being put on a college basis. Some colleges open classes with "silent prayer," and have "devotional" periods for "sentence" prayers. This seems to be a sort of ring-around-rosy' praying exercise, or circle praying. One student (boy or girl) begins with a sentence-prayer ("just anything on your heart"), the next in order says a sentence, and so on until it goes around the circle! It is supposed to be a voluntary exercise, but when one student, who is a Christian but did not participate because she did not believe such rigamarole in worship is right, she was waited upon by an upper classman who asked her if she did not believe in worshipping God. Thus for a supposedly voluntary exercise an undue pressure, designed to humiliate and embarrass was placed upon a student who did not wish to participate. So in schools students are virtually made to "go to church" every time they 'go to class, and the schools become churches.

On the other hand, the churches are being turned into schools, and when our children at-
tend church services now they are required to virtually “go to school.” The church classes are being put on the graded school, the high school and collegiate basis, with promotions from lower to higher grades, in some places on the basis of examinations, as in school. Just what is the church anyway? It is not intended that it should be operated as a school. We go for study, meditation, teaching and worship, but not for grades and promotions. Why not let the schools be schools, and let churches be the church.

But the order of the day is for “educators” among us to send some outside expert, usually a woman teacher, to teach the teachers in various churches how to teach. The churches are expected to pay these women experts now, as they would support preachers in meetings, to teach the teachers how to teach! Very soon (if not even now) we shall have travelling women going from church to church teaching the teachers. Already it has been advertised in connection with meetings that “Brother and Sister Blank” will assist this-or-that church at such-and-such a place in a gospel meeting.

Certainly our young people should be taught the new testament, the word of God, in church services and the propriety of an arrangement in natural classifications is not here questioned. But
teaching them the pure word of God is the purpose, extent and limit of such services. There are women in every congregation who can take the new testament in a class of children, read it with them, and tell them what it says. And there are men who can conduct Bible study in the same way for the adults, without secularizing the services of the church to academic standards and collegiate ratings. There is no substitute for simple Bible study in church services, and it was not intended that the church be put on the school and college status. Whence cometh these things, and whither do they lead? ‘Already the school men boast that the churches are indebted to the colleges for their preachers and therefore obligated to pay the colleges for the service rendered by contributing to the schools. Now they want to furnish the church another set of workers, called super-teachers to teach the teachers; and soon they will want to provide elders to elder the elders, and on, until the churches will have been subordinated to the colleges completely, thereby subsidizing the church to institutional schools.

Brother Nichol is right in what he said, and so is this: “Let the church be the church” and make the college be a college.
Austin Taylor says:

“The Lord has told us what to do and by example shown us how to do it. This is enough for all who want to “fear God and keep his commandments,” which is the “whole duty of man.” All institutions and organizations of men only show weakness and lack of faith. “Let God be true and every man a liar.” Anything unscriptural will bring strife and trouble. When a church has the spirit of the Pharisee who loved the praise of men, and of Diotrephes who wanted preeminence, the desire to glorify Christ is shut out. The real spiritual power of a congregation is within itself, not borrowed from another. ‘Others may see the good works of a church and be encouraged to glorify God in the same manner, both following the same Guide, not one following the other. A showing of zeal may arouse zeal, but unless it is coupled with truth and ‘with humility it is worse than no zeal. All departures; large and small, have been flattened and the promoters gone down beneath the weight of their disgrace in the eyes of good people. The Christian Missionary Society has been a failure in every way. It developed at ‘one time that ninety percent of the money sent ‘went to promoters, and ten percent to preachers on the ground doing the work. The plans that were promoted years ago around Sherman and Dallas turned out the same way. It was the same way with Don Carlos Janes. There are always some thieves connected with these projects; and selfish men connected with them who want to make a show, take advantage of the innocent and the ignorant. These
beggars never bother here; if one comes he will be given a “warm” reception. This “getting ready” to save souls across the sea by building institutions, colleges and relief sheds is attracting interest, but when it comes to preaching the plain gospel to Catholics and Lutherans, and typical foreign classes in this country, the fever goes down below normal. But this **preaching** must be done if souls are saved. I do not know a sponsoring church that would support a **real gospel meeting**, such as held by great gospel preachers of the past, in the place where they are located. Straight gospel sermons would empty their pews. There are 140,000,000 people in the United States of America who have not obeyed the gospel. Multitudes of them would obey the gospel and be saved if they were taught. It is a false idea to wade through millions of people who have not heard it, and tread the ocean, to reach a limited few of the same kind of people: it is the wrong appeal; the wrong plan; and makes the wrong impression. If some one would say, “judge not that ye be not judged,” remember that Paul said, “warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” It is up to a few of you to preach the truth; some will falter, and others fall by the wayside, but many will endure to the end.”

**Remarks**

The foregoing lines are words of thoughtful reflection and worthwhile wisdom. **We have** all heard of “plans” before this present promotion panic struck. **When digression threatened the**
churches of Tennessee and Kentucky, there was "The Louisville Plan," which was defended by all of the preachers who went the digressive way. The Lipscombs, Sewells and Srygleys fought the Cowdens and Erretts and Pendletons. In Texas our loyal preachers fought against the McPhersons, McKissicks Lockharts and Holsapple's, who promoted the digressive "plans." When the smoke of the battle cleared, some among ourselves wanted plans; so came Don Carlos Janes and his ilk, with "Greater Things For God."

Now we have "The Lubbock Plan," and an ado over a "Brother Blank's Plan," as though the Lord had no plan. Must men have a plan? If so, of what value is the New Testament to the church today for a pattern in either work or worship? The church is living over again the days of digression, the principles of which are represented in and advocated by some leading churches, prominent preachers and organized institutions. If history repeats, the course will be the same, and so will be the outcome: diminished churches, disloyal preachers, unfaithful members; but as Brother Taylor has so well said, "many will endure," and there will be the ultimate triumph of truth over error.
MEMBERSHIP MANIA

The propriety of members of the church identifying themselves with the congregation in a new place when they change locations, especially where there is more than one congregation in the place, is not to be criticised or even questioned. But there has been an over-emphasis of essentiality on the formality of “placing membership.” It is even advocated now that when a boy or a girl goes away from home to school, his or her membership must be withdrawn from the congregation at home, and placed with a congregation where the school is located; and when he or she returns home, the membership must be again placed with the home congregation—and each time it is reported as an “addition.”

Now we must join a class in the church. What is called a class has always been considered a convenient arrangement for teaching the Bible. But it has become something to belong to, something to join. Some classes have their rules of attendance, and if one misses a specified number of times, off comes his or her name, which stays off until he or she joins the class again. No, thanks—I do not wish to join a class—I did not even join the church!

Once more, we say with Brother Nichol, “let the church be the church. "

19
"IN THE DAYS OF THOSE KINGS"

THE objection to the obvious truth that the kingdom established on the day of Pentecost in the days of the Roman kings was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Dan. 2:44-45 is based on the claim that it was not in the days of "those kings," but rather in the days of the kings of 'only one of the kingdoms mentioned in Daniel’s prophecy. According to this reasoning the kingdom must of necessity be established when all four of the universal kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar’s ‘dream and of Daniel’s interpretation would exist simultaneously, and in power at the same time. Just who could imagine that? There was never a time, according ‘to such an idea, from the date of the dream until the last of the Roman emperors passed off the stage of history, that the dream and its interpretation by Daniel could have been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the future kingdom theory. The notion makes God utter a prophecy through a
dream and its interpretation which it was physically impossible to fulfill. Within the ordinary bounds of history and of reason such a thing could never be accomplished; for it calls for the sway of the four universal kingdoms at the same time. Actually, the sway of the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image, did not overlap; but their territories did overlap; the kingdoms were over the same nations and over the same peoples. The people of Israel were under all four of these kingdoms. So it not only did not historically happen that these reigns were simultaneous, but in the very nature of things it was physically impossible that it could have happened. Can any one imagine four universal kingdoms holding sway at the same time? Such a picture is a worse jumble than an unsolved jigsaw puzzle.

When, then, will the prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and image be fulfilled? Why, in the millennium, of course, we are told. There is no period of time nor age of the earth, according to the things said about it, so elastic, so versatile, so magical and so convenient as this millennium fancy. It solves all difficulties. After all of the speculating on prophecies, if there are any hard questions left over, just pass them on to the millennium, without explanation, and feel satisfied. God is supposed then to straighten out all of the
alleged mistakes of six thousand years of rule over the earth, bring forward and adjust all of his postponed prophecies and unfulfilled promises, square his account with the Jews who got in his way and thwarted his plans, and balance the books. Just pass it all over to the millennium!

There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that God will stage a historical pageant in a millennium, and bring all the kings of all the four kingdoms, universal empires, back to the stage at the same time, in order to have the historical background again in a sort of dramatic way to establish his own kingdom here on the earth. This manipulating of kings and kingdoms in order to manufacture a setting for a fantastic theory on a few verses in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, which millennialists attempt to make literal, is worse than fantasy, it is foolery.

In this view of such a pageant, God would not only find it necessary to dig up Jerusalem, but the remains of Babylon, Media, Grecia and Rome, and put the nation of Israel under all four of them at the same time before the Christ could come, inaugurate his kingdom and rule over them. In the millennium just whose wife shall Israel be, for they all had her!

Another thing-this land of America and its Americans were never under any of the four
universal kingdoms, nor under David’s rule; and since the theory has Christ sitting on David’s throne in Jerusalem, exercising David’s staff over David’s realm, shall we merely be there as strangers? What a mesh of spiritualizing and dramatizing they do in order to make a few symbolic passages literal!

This so-called millennium must needs be a very interesting thing. As a necessary consequence, it demands an extra-special resurrection. The wicked dead, according to the theory expounded, are not to be raised until the last end of the millennium; but the kingdom of Christ must be set up at the first end of the millennium. But those kings of the four universal kingdoms will be rated among the wicked dead. So a special permit will be required from God to raise up those wicked kings in an extraordinary resurrection, a thousand years ahead, of schedule, to reestablish their kingdoms, and kings and kingdoms also imply subjects, so there will be a rather sizable resurrection which the millennial schedule has not called for until now.

Close observation in the study of God’s word will show that God has always accomplished his purposes in the most simple, direct and reasonable way that would carry out his purpose. Miracles were not employed except when and where miracles
were necessary. And there can be no necessity for several thousand years and the use of several orders of resurrections, with the stupendous dramatic faking of bringing back into existence makebelieve ancient monarchies, just to establish his own kingdom for a mere thousand years. In order to provide a place for their millennium, the theorists will not only re-interpret the Bible, they will rewrite history itself, resurrect mankind back to the days of Eden, and make them live it all over again, just to get in that imaginary thousand years of their theory.

It is certainly the more sensible and sane to believe that Dan. 2:44-45 was to be, and was, fulfilled during the historical period embraced in the reigning of the four kingdoms mentioned in the image, represented to be Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Macedonia and Rome; rather than to let these kingdoms all perish, their kings turn to dust; their names and achievements erased from the memory of men-and then, after thousands of years, revive their dust and their bones and the ruins of their kingdoms, and in a great pageant stage an act in which they shall all again reign simultaneously. Theories that require such pagelantery to be true bear the prima facie evidence of their palpable falsity.
When Jesus the Christ proclaimed that “the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:14-15), he did not herald a premature announcement. The time had come; his kingdom came (Mark 9:1); and his hearers were witnesses who lived to see it and receive it. The Colossians were in it (Col. 1:13); the Hebrews were receiving it (Heb. 12:28)—present participle “receiving,” partaking of it, therefore were in it; John, the apostle, was a “brother and partaker in the kingdom and patience’ of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9); and we are all in “the kingdom of Christ and God” (Eph. 5:5) now. And Paul was in it with the Colossians (Col. 1:13-14), for he said God 'hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son.' The verb “hath” is past tense, not future, and the pronoun “us” included Paul himself. Jesus said the disciples would live to see it; John said the seven churches were in it, and that he was in it; Paul said the Colossians were in it, and that he was in it with them. These passages do not indicate any upset of the prophetic timetable, nor any postponement of kingdom prophecies. The kingdom came, and it is the church.
SINCE the last report in TORCH the editor has held gospel meetings in several sectors, and could write reams on the services and associations enjoyed among the people who love Christ and serve God in all these places.

OKLAHOMA: It was my fourth meeting with the good church in Okmulgee, where Ted W. McElroy has preached several years, and is so highly esteemed and unanimously supported by these people. My friend and fellow of thirty years, Austin Taylor, led the singing. My estimate of him, and his worth to a gospel meeting, especially one of my own, can best be expressed in the lines which I wrote some years ago in the preface to his own songbook, entitled: "Greater Gospel Songs."

Any hymn book bearing the name of Austin Taylor as compiler carries its own recommendation. No gospel singer has enjoyed as wide acquaintance as he; none can "sing the wondrous love of Jesus" with more power and pathos than he. In his unselfish labors in "the wide harvest field" he has answered the call of
service with churches large and small, without discrimina-
tion, and has often gone with gospel preachers into fields
where there was no church at all of the New Testament
order. In the long and enviable record as a gospel
singer, he has the distinction of having led the
singing for more gospel meetings than any singer
living or dead; and he sings the gospel today with
as much feeling and fervency, pathos and power, as ever
before.

There is another distinction which belongs to Austin
Taylor: More than three million song books have been
sold bearing his name as compiler, and G. H. P. Sho-
walter as publisher. It is true that every book, regard-
less of who its author may be, must be judged upon
its merits. Song books are no exception to this
criterion. But the name and reputation of Austin
Taylor does nevertheless carry an advance guarantee
of the character and worth of the songs in the book
he offers to the churches. He knows songs. He knows
the church. He knows the truth. And he understands
the general needs of the churches in their regular work
and worship, and their special needs in gospel meet-
ings. He can be trusted to fill these needs.

TENNESSEE: With the exception of Texas, I
have preached more in Tennessee than any
other state of the union. Several years had elapsed,
however, between the schedule of regular
meeting engagements in Tennessee and the recent
Murfreesboro meeting. My first meetings at Mur-
freesboro were in 1926 and '27. According to my
recolletion of the past and observation of the
present the church there is better and stronger
now than it was in those years, though it was then rated as among Tennessee’s landmarks. George W. DeHoff is the preacher for this’ church, and his strong stand for the truth and uncompromising attitude toward error is the leading present contributing factor to the present health and strength of the church. He has lived with this church some six years and there is no thought on the part of the elders, nor of the members, in the direction of letting him go. Brother DeHoff is in the middle thirties, has attained unto high academic rating in the educational world, has been offered professorships on the faculties of some of the largest colleges and universities, but prefers to preach the gospel and serve the church with all of his time. He is author of some very fine books on vital subjects, of which his favorite one is "Alleged Discrepancies and Contradictions In The Bible" and he picked the right one for his favorite. His publication work stands out, and already he ranks with his nearest neighbor (geographically) in the volume of his publication business. His monthly, Christian Magazine, has a sizeable circulation and furnishes him an excellent and effective medium. It is a personal pleasure to commend him as a man, as a preacher, as an author, as a publisher, and to claim him as a friend.
The singing in the meeting was great in every way, led by Paul Brown, of Lewisburg; and if I am a judge of fruit, as a singer he is a “peach.” The meeting was largely attended from without the city. Many came from Nashville, some from adjoining states, and as many as sixty preachers of the gospel were counted in a single service. Young preachers, and other students, from David Lipscomb College were in regular attendance. Batsell Baxter, my teacher at old Thorp Spring College in Texas (1912-13), a long time friend of the whole Wallace family, was present more than once. Brother James Cope, President of Florida Christian College, visited the meeting. Thetus Pritchard came from Bristol, Va. and stayed through most of the meeting. Bob Farish, Glenn Sparks, of Birmingham, John Cox and Robert, Welch, of Florence, Alabama, were there. Brethren too many to mention, from places too numerous to name were there when the meeting ended, and I needed to get away, it was my friend Jack G. Dunn, of Shelbyville, who volunteered to drive me all the way to’ Memphis, the same night, to make a connection home-and this enjoyable company with Brother Jack, his worthy wife Nancy, and their precious Pam, "capped the climax” of these latest associations in Tennessee.
TEXAS: In the year 1916, at age 19, I preached in a meeting at Vernon, Texas. It was at that time a thriving town of 3,000 population, and the church was settled in the faith, strong and growing. It has been so ever since. Vernon is now a city of 20,000. The membership of the church has grown with the expanding population of the community. It requires four numerals to count the number of God’s people inside the city limits alone, and within the county there are many more. Some of the sturdiest people in the west compose the Vernon church, which has always had the good fortune to have competent elders and other capable leaders. Many fine preachers have served them in the ministry of the gospel, and their present preacher, John G. Reese, is “not a whit behind them all.” The recent meeting with them was up in the second dozen in which I have done the preaching through these thirty-six years. As in a number of others, Austin Taylor led the singing. In addition to the great meeting it was this time, it was joy immeasurable to be among these people again. Many of them I have watched grow up; I saw them baptized, marry, establish families, some of whom now have children old enough to be active in the church, and are. Old ones have gone on, others are old now and ready to go on, as all of us are going on. The meeting
was a reunion of friends, a revival for the church, and a gospel proclamation to the world. The preaching was carried over the local radio, station by remote control from the rostrum, with no restrictions imposed, and none observed. Denominationalism was condemned, names called; and error exposed in the same manner and exercise of freedom as if no microphone had been there. It is worthy of comment, and I thank God for it, that a church rated among the largest in the state, has elders and a preacher, who want it that way, and indorsed it when it was done that way. God bless them.

OTHER MEETINGS: At Bay City, Texas, H. W. Sargent, for a time supported by Norhill (Houston), has developed an energetic group into a going congregation-a tribute to his talents. This was a good meeting. At Seymour (Ind.) and Lisbon (Ohio), Wilson Wallace is pinch-hitting for me. Wilson is a good pinch-hitter. I feel no risk in sending him anywhere. He has a regular schedule of meetings, but frequently relieves me, with approval and praise only of his work by brethren in every place.
CHICAGO: Before these lines will be read another effort will be in process in Chicagoland. A public auditorium has been secured in downtown Aurora, adjacent to Chicago proper, a part of metropolitan Chicago. This work was started in connection with these Chicago efforts only a few months ago, and from a beginning of not more than a dozen members it has grown to an attendance of more than one hundred regularly. They are worthy people, faithful to the gospel, and deserving of assistance. The auditorium for the meeting will cost above $30.00 per day. The advertising of the meeting through the newspapers, radio, and the thousands of sheets of printed matter necessary to circularize the large area to bring the people to the meeting, poses an expensive undertaking. My services as preacher are being contributed, without cost to them-they have all, and more, than they can do. Donald Moyer, of Chicago, will lead the singing. To those who may read this, who have wanted a part in establishing the church in a "mission" field, here is the right work, in the right place, and it is the right time to do it-now. The work will be done, but much more speedily with the needed assistance. Contributions should be sent to Bob Leigh, treasurer, Church Of Christ, P. O. Box 735, Aurora, Illinois. We pray for a great gospel meeting in this Chicagoland city, and will report the results.
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