

THE GOSPEL SONG MOVEMENT

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Introduction.

When my attention was first directed to the Gospel Song Movement as a subject for my Thesis, it seemed hardly suitable for such a discussion as would be required. But the further I studied into it, the more I became convinced of the importance and need of an adequate discussion of it. Very little has been written, and what little I could find was for the most part scrappy and prejudiced. As a consequence it has been necessary to make a study of a large number of Hymn Books and Gospel Song Books, and to do a good deal of outside research work through letters and interviews. This work it has been impossible to tabulate, and the Bibliography given at the end of this Thesis touches but a small part of the research done.

I have sought to give credit for all information received from the books consulted. Much of the data for Chapter IV was found in Hall's "Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers;" it was impossible in that chapter to designate the source of every statement.

I was greatly encouraged in my work by the sympathetic interest of pastors with whom I discussed the question, and others with whom I corresponded. Especial encouragement was received from Dr. D. B. Towner of the Moody Bible Institute, and Dr. A. C. Dixon of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London, as also from Dr.

Aquilla Webb, of this city.

I hope this discussion of the Movement will be of use in bringing the matter to more prominent notice, and in bringing about a better condition of affairs than now exist.

Chapter I.

What is the Gospel Song Movement?

The value of singing in public worship has been recognized from very early times. "Everywhere and always public worship has chosen to make utterance freely through poetry meant for singing, and to count music, usually both vocal and instrumental, as a cherished and indispensable part of its liturgical apparatus..... The union of religion with music, therefore, can be illustrated by instances drawn from every quarter of the civilized world and from every age throughout not less than three millenⁿiums."*

This fact is conceded by all and is of importance to us in the consideration of our present subject, first, because the music of different periods in the world's history is a true indication, perhaps the truest, of the religious conditions of those periods: Second, because revivals of religious fervor and enthusiasm are marked by revivals of song. "It is a remarkable fact that some of the greatest religious revivals in the Church --as the Reformation, Pietism, Moravianism, Methodism -- were sung as well as preached and written into the hearts of the people, and that the leaders of these revivals--Luther, Spener, Zinzendorf, Wesley--were themselves hymnists."**

There is, however, one marked difference between the use of singing in these revivals and its use in our present-day revivals.

*Waldo S. Pratt. Musical Ministries in the Church, pp.11-12.

**Aquila Webb. Lectures on Hymnology

In these others the singing accompanied the preaching, grew out of it, and was used of God to prepare men's hearts for the preaching of the Gospel and often even to bring about conversion itself. But, as far as I can find, this effect was largely unpremeditated, the singing growing out of the fervor of the revival. In the Gospel Song Movement, on the other hand, the singing is definitely used as one of the forces of the Revival, and for the first time the singer and the solo, as well as the congregational song, are found along with the preacher and the sermon.

The name "The Gospel Song Movement" is a name applied to the rapid rise and development of the production and use of the "Gospel Song," or "Revival Song," or "Evangelistic Song," all three names being given to this type of music. It seems to have been first given to it in 1873. In that year Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey were touring England, and Mr. Sankey's singing was styled "Singing the Gospel." It finds its explanation in the fact that in it, as its name implies, the singing of the Gospel is the main purpose.

The Church from very early times has been blessed with great hymns of devotion and adoration. We still find in our hymn books translations of hymns by John of Damascus (8th Century), Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), Bernard of Clugny (about 1122) and others. Later came Luther (1483-1546), Bishop Ken (1637-1711), Isaac Watts (1674-1748), Charles Wesley (1703-1788) and others, whose names are household words to the hymn-lover, but it has been left to the nineteenth century and to American Christianity to produce the song in which the pre-eminent note is the singing

of the Gospel; which makes a personal appeal to the unsaved; which is the counterpart, in the music of the Church, of the Revival Sermon in the preaching of the Church. Breed says, "What lay evangelism is to the ordained ministry, the Gospel Song is to the regular church music."*

The hymns of previous ages have, in general, fallen into four classes: hymns of worship, hymns of praise, hymns of personal experience, and hymns of prayer and aspiration. But the hymn, or more properly perhaps the song, in which music is definitely used as the channel for an appeal to the unsaved, is distinctly a new thing in Church Music. The distinction between these classes can best be shown by examples. Under hymns of worship would come such hymns as:-

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!"

It is evident that the frame of mind which can find expression in such words is one of true worship.

An example of the hymn of praise would be:-

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let Angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

A hymn of personal experience would be:-

"Am I a soldier of the Cross--
A follower of the Lamb--
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?"

Hymns of prayer and aspiration would include:-

"As pants the hart for cooling streams
When heated in the chase,

* History and Use of Hymns. p. 331.

So longs my soul, O God, for Thee,
And Thy refreshing grace."

Compare with these one or two of our modern Gospel Songs, and the difference will be both seen and felt. Take, for example, the "Glory Song,"

"When all my labors and trials are o'er,
And I am safe on that beautiful shore,
Just to be near the dear Lord I adore,
Will thro' the ages be glory for me.

Chorus: O that will be glory for me,
Glory for me, glory for me,
When by His grace I shall look on His face,
That will be glory, be glory for me."

or a song of still more definite appeal --

"Come every soul by sin oppress'd,
There's mercy with the Lord,
And He will surely give you rest
By trusting in His Word!"

In both of these there is distinctly a new note struck, which differentiates the music, the song, from all that has gone before.

It must not be thought, however, that any hard and fast lines can be drawn between the songs of the Gospel Song Movement and the hymns of previous Church Music. In many cases composers whose chief productions have been of a distinctly Gospel Song character have produced hymns which compare favorably with those of earlier composers. Mrs. C. H. Morris, for example, who has written such Gospel Songs as

"If you are tired of the load of your sin,
Let Jesus come into your heart.
If you desire a new life to begin,
Let Jesus come into your heart."

is also the author of

"Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
Draw me, my Savior, so precious Thou art;
Fold me, O fold me close to Thy breast,
Shelter me safe in that haven of rest."

Still the distinction in a general way exists, and I would sum up the whole situation by saying that, the whole realm of Church music being under consideration, the Church Hymn would be at one extreme with its precious jewels of song, ancient and modern, while at the other extreme would be the modern popular Gospel Song, and between would be a sort of neutral territory in which it is hard to make distinctions, where Mrs. Morris'

"Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart"

is found side by side with Sarah F. Adams'

"Nearer, My God, to Thee"

which it much resembles.

Nor is this overlapping of the classes confined to such examples as I have given, but, in addition, it is not uncommon to find hymns like those of Isaac Watts set to music by a modern Gospel Song Composer, and sent forth as part of the movement.

It is to be noted further, that just as in the words there is found the distinction mentioned above, so also in the tune we find the extremes and the overlapping territory. The grandeur of Martin Luther's tune to his

"A mighty fortress is our God"

or John B. Dykes' tune to Reginald Heber's

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

stands out in sharp contrast with the lighter tunes of

"You may have the joy-bells ringing in your heart."

or

"I will sing the wondrous story."

But there is no marked difference in the general tone of Mozart's tune "Disciple" to Lyte's

"Jesus, I my cross have taken"

and W. H. Doane's tune to Fanny Crosby's

"Jesus keep me near the Cross."

With these facts in mind it will be clear that, in general, what follows in the discussion of the movement must be understood to refer, not to the neutral ground where Gospel Song and Hymn overlap, but to the territory in which the Gospel Song reigns supreme, with little or no intrusion from the Hymn.

It is necessarily a very difficult thing to analyse a song, but there are certain things about the Gospel Song which may be noted, and which serve to give it its distinctive character:

1. Its appeal is almost wholly to the emotions, with little or no appeal to the conscience. Where the great Church hymns stir the very depths of one's religious experience, and leave behind them a profound and lasting impression, the Gospel Song too often merely ruffles the surface and leaves no impression.
2. There is an absence of the qualities of adoration and worship. The songs portray the joys of the Christian life, and appeal to the unsaved: they are, as noted above, the counterpart of the Revival Sermon.
3. Its music is generally light and catchy, easy to learn, easy to sing, and often of such a character as to be wholly unworthy of use in Christian worship.
4. There is almost invariably a chorus, often easily learned, a very popular feature with most people.

Gospel Songs, thus composed, and set to fitting tunes, have been very popular, and, gathered into collections of various sizes and merits, have had wide circulation, their popularity however not being always justified by their merits. This popularity has been especially marked in America. Indeed it might truly be said that this is an American movement, for while it has touched other countries, and while many thousands of Gospel Song Books have been sold in these countries, this has been chiefly if not wholly due to American evangelizing tours, and the books used and sold have generally been American song-books.

The reason for this lies in the marked adaptation of the Gospel Song to the American temperament.

1. It satisfies the American craving for novelty. It is a regrettable fact, that today we have such a craving after the new thing, that too often we fall in love with a thing simply because of its newness. The new book, the new play, the new fad, often unworthy, replace in our esteem the older, tried ones. The passage of time, instead of endearing things to us, detracts from them in our eyes, and we are ever ready to discard the old for the new. Perhaps this is due in large measure to the utilitarian demands of the age, for the old machinery, the old business methods, cannot cope with the new: the horse cannot cope with the automobile, the horse-car with the electric car. But in the realms of literature and art such a tendency is to be regretted. We cannot shut our eyes to it, however, and being present it affords one reason for the popularity of the Gospel Song, since its prolific production is always bringing new songs before us.

2. It satisfies the demand for speedy success. Success has come to be the great test of the age. It is the successful man who is everywhere applauded, and the more speedy the success, the sooner is won the coveted approval of one's fellows. The Gospel Song, by its appeal to the emotions, produces a speedier success in preparing for the sermon than do the older hymns, and is consequently more widely used. There is grave doubt whether the preparation is thorough, and whether the after-results are as permanent as they should be, but they are undoubtedly speedier, and every effort is made by the singer to make them as speedy as possible. To work and pray and wait is not the slogan of today. We want results and we want them quickly.

3. It satisfies the passion for excitement and speed. The American prides himself on being a "hustler." Whether in business or play, he wants things to be moving, and is restless unless they are doing so. He must travel by the express train, the express elevator: he must take the street-car, if only for a few blocks, because it "saves time:" his national game must be full of exciting incidents or he is displeased: does he visit Europe? then he "does" France in a week, Italy in a week, London in a day.

Conditions are the same when we turn to religion. Here too he must see action. To quote a common expression, "things must be doing." Now the Gospel Song gives him just the thing he craves. With its quick action, its appeal to the emotions, it easily lays hold of him and produces in him the emotional excitement that he craves. That this does not last is no fault in his

eyes. He does not especially want it to do so. Some new thing will give another excitement a little later, and meantime he enjoys it while it lasts.

4. On the part of the composer, the tendency to attempt a task without adequate preparation is satisfied. Our country is full of men who have left school, or left special preparation for some field of labor, because another field has opened to them which called for less preparation. Even in our Seminaries we are not without the man who "takes his hand from the plough" when an attractive field opens up for him, and is seen in school no more.

This is true also of many of our Gospel Song composers, and as a consequence we are overwhelmed by a mass of song production, a large part of it by men of little or no training. This is one fact that has brought upon the movement the wrath of musicians and composers. But the general public, not being "skilled to understand" musical niceties, has accepted without question the songs that have been put out, and because these songs have caught their fancy, have encouraged their production.

5. The lack of the song-spirit among our American people is still another factor. Were we a singing people we should be more ready to learn and sing the older hymns and tunes of the Church. But because we are not, we prefer the easy, catchy tune, and so patronize the Gospel Song rather than the Hymn. The pastor and evangelist too, perhaps unwisely, have sought the easiest way to get us to sing, and so have unintentionally, but none the less surely, aided in the enthronement of the Gospel Song.

In addition to the foregoing there remain to be noted certain mechanical qualities of the Gospel Song Book which have aided in its popularity. Among these are:

1. The size of the Books. In contrast to the unwieldy collections of our Church Hymnals, numbering often over 1000 hymns, the Gospel Song Books have uniformly been small enough for easy use, rarely numbering over two or three hundred songs. This has made it possible to know the contents of the book more thoroughly, though even at that the contents are not fully known by the majority of those that use them.
2. The price of the collections has brought them within easy reach of all. The regular Hymnals of the Churches are rarely published at less than one dollar each, while the Gospel Song Collections rarely exceed twenty five cents a copy.
3. The style of printing makes it easier to follow the music and words. In the larger Hymnals the music is generally printed first, and the words follow in smaller type at the bottom of the music. This makes it hard to follow the music when singing the words. The Gospel Song Book, on the other hand, invariably prints the words between the treble and bass clefs of the music, thus making the singing much easier. The only departure from this rule has been when older hymns have been included in the collections.

One other feature of the Movement is to be noted, namely, that the popularity of its songs is due far more to the character of their music than to the words. Lutkin, discussing hymn

tunes, says, "Many a hymn of mediocre merit has been sung into fame and widespread use thro' the compelling power of the tune, while many a worthy hymn has been unable to survive inadequate musical expression." And again, "So far as the general public is concerned the tune holds indisputably the supremacy."*

Lutkin's judgment is undoubtedly correct in its application to the Gospel Song. A very cursory glance over the field will show many songs in common use whose use is not merited by their words, but is due wholly to the popularity of the tunes to which they have been set.

*"Music in the Church." p. 1.

Chapter II.

Hymnody in America Prior to the Gospel Song Movement.

When our first settlers landed on the shores of the New World they came to find a land where they might be free from political and religious oppression, where they could worship God without fear and favor.

The Pilgrim Fathers who landed at Plymouth in 1620 brought with them their independent views, the most important of which in the subsequent history of this country was the doctrine of religious liberty. Several parties of emigrants left England in the opening years of the seventeenth century, some possessed of the same spirit that animated the Pilgrim Fathers, and others possessed by the desire to better themselves financially in the New World. It is distressing to have to record that most of those who came to obtain religious freedom, bitterly persecuted other Denominations when they themselves came to be the dominant religious party. These early years, consequently, saw a bitter struggle among the colonists, but after this period the principle of religious liberty was accepted.

Along with this sentiment was a corresponding growth in the ideal of political liberty, which found expression in the assertion of the rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" of all men, set forth in the Declaration of Independence. This

sentiment played a large part later in the emancipation of the Negro. This brief resume of early conditions would be of no value in our consideration of the Gospel Song Movement, were it not that the spirit of liberty there seen is evidenced also by a growing tendency toward freedom in the realm of Hymnody. The spirit of independence which fought and gained religious and political liberty, found expression also in a breaking away from old ideals and standards in Hymnody, which culminated in the poetry of the Gospel Song Movement, a culmination which in my judgment was inevitable. To trace the course of this development in American Hymnody will be the aim of this chapter.

The settlers whose first landings on these shores have been mentioned above, brought with them from England a deep-rooted prejudice in favor of Psalm-singing. This was an element of their Calvinism. The two great Protestant parties in Europe at that time were Lutherans and Calvinists. The Lutherans freely employed hymn-singing in their churches, and in Germany at that time it was common. But England was prevailingly Calvinistic, and, following the views of Calvin, regarded hymns with prejudice and confined themselves to the psalms. Calvin did not deny the right of the Church to compose and use hymns, but he did claim that the Psalms were the Best Church music that could be used. It was out of this atmosphere that our early settlers came, and it is not surprising therefore to find them prejudiced in favor of the Psalms.

The Introduction to the "Bay Psalm Book" of 1640, the first book printed in America, sets forth that the Pilgrim Fathers

brought with them from the Old World as their Psalter, Henry Ainsworth's "Version of the Psalms in Prose and Meter" with the printed tunes. A few years later a party of Puritans, under the leadership of John Endicott, landed at Salem, Massachusetts, bringing with them as their psalter the "Psalms" of Sternhold and Hopkins, which had for many years been published with the ordinary editions of the English Bible, and which were also set to music.

These two parties, the Puritans holding the religious views of the Established Church of England, and the Pilgrim Fathers holding Independent views, were alike in this, that both held to the Psalms as the proper music for use in church worship. Their loyalty to the Psalms is still further seen by the fact that by 1640, becoming dissatisfied with the "detractions from, additions to and variations of" the "Psalms" of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the paraphrasing of Ainsworth, they had prepared, under the leadership of Cotton Mather, a new version of the Psalms, "The Bay Psalm Book," in the preparation of which the committee of "30 pious and learned ministers" had as their ideal the strictest possible adherence to the Hebrew text, with the result that their renderings were in many cases harsh and dry. The translators acknowledged that their verses were not always smooth and elegant, but claimed that this was preferable to wilfully smoothing where the Hebrew was rough. The following quotation will show the character of their work:

Psalm 1. "O Blessed man, that in th' advice
of wicked doeth not walk;
Nor stand in sinners' way, nor sit
in chayre of scornfull folk,
But in the law of Jehovah
is his longing delight:
and in his law doth meditate,
by day and eke by night."

Psalm 23. "The Lord to me a shepherd is,
 want therefore shall not I.
 He in the fields of tender grasse
 doth cause mee downe to lie:
 To waters calme me gently leads
 Restore my soule doth hee:
 Hee doth in paths of righteousness,
 for his name's sake leade mee."

In spite of the harshness of its verse the Version became immensely popular, the only apparent reason for this being its strict adherence to the original text. So great was its popularity, that in 1651 a revised and enlarged edition was published under the title "The Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testament." Already at this early stage therefore there may be seen, in the title to this enlarged edition, a slight departure from the attitude of prejudice against hymns. This new and enlarged edition ran through 27 editions, the last edition being printed in 1762. As reflecting on the situation in Great Britain we are told that there were 20 English editions and six Scotch editions printed.

For over a century the Bay Psalm Book maintained its popularity, but from 1751 on it began to be replaced by Tate and Brady's "Version of the Psalms." I have not been able to examine a copy of this Version, but according to Benson the psalms were singable and pleasant, while still keeping true to the spirit of the original. Some of them were more like hymns, and are to be found today in our Hymnals. The Baptist Hymn and Praise Book published in 1904 has two of them, Nos. 3 and 60. I quote No. 60 as showing their style

"Thro'all the changing scenes of life,
 In trouble and in joy,
 The praises of my God shall still
 My heart and tongue employ.

"Of His deliverance I will boast
 Till all who are distressed
 From my example comfort take
 And charm their griefs to rest.

"Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
 With me exalt His name.
 When in distress to Him I called,
 He to my rescue came.

"Oh, make but trial of His love,
 Experience will decide
 How blest are they, and only they,
 Who in His truth confide."

(In Wesley's Hymns and Tunes, published in England in 1877, this hymn is given with six verses).

A comparison of this hymn with verses 1 to 8 of Psalm 34, from which it is taken, will show the free paraphrasing as well as the beauty of the Hymn. The fact that this Version, with its free paraphrasing, should begin to "replace the Bay Psalm Book" is clear evidence of the breaking down of the prejudice which led to the publication of the latter.

Contemporary with the introduction of Tate and Brady's Version, and sharing with it in the development toward a freer hymnody, came Dr. Watts' "Imitations of the Psalms of David."

Dr. Watts seems to have first published his collection of Hymns, but the time was not ripe for such a departure and he met with a good deal of opposition. In order to keep it before the public he was forced to publish with it his "Imitations of the Psalms." His work was distinctly an advance on that of Tate and Brady, in that he freely introduced New Testament truths into his paraphrases, a practice of which I find no evidence in such hymns of Tate and Brady as I have been able to examine. An illustration of this is seen in his rendering of Psalm 118,

verses 22 and 23, which runs

"Behold the sure foundation-stone,
Which God in Zion lays,
To build our heavenly hopes upon,
And His eternal praise.

"Chosen of God, to sinners dear,
We now adore Thy name;
We trust our whole salvation here,
Nor can we suffer shame.

"The foolish builders, scribe and priest,
Reject it with disdain:
Yet on this rock the Church shall rest
And envy rage in vain.

"What tho' the gates of hell withstood,
Yet must this building rise:
'Tis thine own work, almighty God,
And wondrous in our eyes."

Here we have a very beautiful paraphrasing of the Psalm, but at the same time the atmosphere is that of the New Testament rather than the Old.

In the Psalms of Dr. Watts we find also the refrain, a feature which has come to be associated with our modern Gospel Song, but which is to be found in the original psalms, the 5th and 11th verses of Psalm 42 and the 5th verse of Psalm 43, for example, being a true refrain. Dr. Watts differs both from the original practise and from our modern practise, in that he does not confine himself to one refrain. In Psalm 50 he has no fewer than seven different refrains which occur without any apparent order. In Psalm 136, where, in the original, the refrain occurs as the last half of every verse, Dr. Watts uses two refrains which alternate through the Psalm, that after verses 1, 3, etc., being

"His power and grace
Are still the same
And let His Name
Have endless praise."

after verses 2, 4, etc., the refrain is

"Thy mercy, Lord,
 Shall still endure,
 And ever sure
 Abides Thy Word."

Dr. Watts' Hymns are of course a still further advance in the direction of freedom, for here there is no attempt to follow the Psalms, but any Scripture passage is taken as a starting point, and indeed often no Scripture at all, but merely some religious truth or sentiment.

Dr. Watts has contributed so many fine Hymns, not a few of which are still alive, that one is tempted to linger over his work, but the limits of this discussion preclude such a course.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century a further step was taken by the publication of Denominational Hymn Books. In 1766 a collection of Hymns for the use of Baptists was published, entitled "Hymns and Spiritual Songs." In 1789 the Reformed Dutch Denomination published a collection of Hymns; in the same year the Protestant Episcopal Church added 27 hymns to its version of Tate and Brady, and by the end of the century Hymn Books had been published by nearly all the leading Denominations. These books, of course, still included very largely the Psalms and Hymns of Watts and others but found room also for the inclusion of new Hymns.

About the beginning of the 19th century, the trend toward a more liberal hymnody became more pronounced. This period was one of unrest and reform. The great Temperance Movement came to prominence: the agitation against slavery began to take form: what Bacon calls "The Second Awakening," was ushered in by the Camp-Meeting, and spread over the West and South-West, while a growing

religious sense in the East came to light somewhat sooner. "It was not done and over with at the end of a few years, and then followed by a long period of reaction. It was the beginning of a long period of vigorous and 'abundant life,' moving forward, not, indeed, with even and unvarying flow, yet with continuous current, marked with these alternations of exaltation and subsidence which seem, whether for evil or for good, to have become a fixed characteristic of American Church History.

* The widespread revivals of the first decade of the nineteenth century saved the Church in America from its low estate, and girded it for stupendous tasks that were about to be devolved upon it."* It was, moreover, a period when the missionary spirit began to lay hold of American Christianity. In 1810 came the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, followed in the next few years by the formation of missionary societies by the Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists.

This new and vigorous life, with its changing attitude toward the heathen and toward wrong, made itself felt in the realm of Hymnody by a growing demand for Hymns more suited to its expression than ^{were} the older Hymns of the Church. In the Introduction to the "Dover Selection" published in 1828, Andrew Broaddus says, "the main body of the volume is to consist of a selection of those more popular compositions, generally called 'Spiritual Songs'..... With regard to the compositions called 'Spiritual Songs' the reader is apprised that they are for popular use." In the "advertisement" to a selection of hymns published at Lowell, Mass., in 1829 by E. W. Freeman, we read "The work of revival

* Bacon. "American Christianity." p. 244.

which has been carried forward in this town for more than three years past and which is still progressing, seems to call for a greater number and a more extensive variety of hymns than are usually found in collections of this kind." In the Preface to "The Psalmist," published in 1843, the compilers say "The demand for a new compilation of hymns for the use of Baptist Churches has been for several years growing more and more imperious. The public voice has called for an effort to fill up the acknowledged deficiencies of our existing collections."

Turning to the Presbyterians I find in the preface to Joshua Leavitt's "Christian Lyre," published in 1830, the following--- "Every person conversant with revivals must have observed that whenever meetings for prayer and conference assume a special interest, there is a desire to use hymns and music of a different character from those ordinarily heard in the Church." In the Preface to Hastings' "Spiritual Songs," published in 1834, the editor says "In the larger and more dignified assemblies, psalmody will continue to hold its appropriate place; but for social and private uses, something is needed which is more familiar, more melodious and more easy of execution. The importance of such music has become too evident to escape the notice of intelligent Christians; and the demand for it, especially in seasons of revival, has been of late increasing."

More extracts of this nature could be given, but these will suffice to show the growing demand among American Christians for a freer style of hymnody, one more suited to the expression of the earnest religious life that had awakened. It is not surprising then to find this period marked by a considerable production

of song books, chiefly designated as being for "private" or "social" or "revival" use, and containing more or less music of a freer type. At first there are few of these songs included, but the number grows larger as the years pass. Winchell's arrangement of Watts' with Supplement, published in 1832, contains five selections under the head "Invitations and Promises." I give the first verse of one of these as illustrating their nature:

"Ye wretched, hungry, starving poor,
Behold a royal feast!
Where mercy spreads her bounteous store
For every humble guest."

Others that occur with more or less frequency are

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you farther go;
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?
Hell beneath is gaping wide,
Vengeance waits the dread command,
Soon to stop your sport and pride
And sink you with the damned.

Chorus.

Then be entreated now to stop--
For unless you warning take
Ere you are aware, you'll drop
Into the burning lake."

"How painfully pleasing the fond recollection
Of youthful emotions and innocent joys,
When blessed with parental advice and affection,
Surrounded with mercies, with peace from on high!
I still view the chair of my father and mother,
The seats of their offspring as ranged on each hand,
And that richest of books, which excels every other,
The family Bible, which lay on the stand;
The old-fashioned Bible, the dear blessed Bible,
The family Bible, that lay on the stand."

Lack of space prevents the citation of more of these, but these will demonstrate how far the taste of the Christians of this country had travelled since the publication of the Bay Psalm Book,

and how nearly these songs are approaching our Gospel Song.

In this period also we find the first work of a good many of those who later became known as composers of Gospel Song Music. W. H. Doane, W. B. Bradbury, Lowell Mason, Philip Phillips and others may be mentioned. Dr. Mason and Dr. Hastings began to greatly influence the lives and work of composers. J. H. Hall in his "Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers," mentions no less than 17 Gospel Song composers who took musical work under them.

We note also the development of two other streams of hymnody that did much to prepare the way for the Gospel Song, namely, the Sunday School Hymn Books and the Y.M.C.A. Hymn Books. Both of these very nearly approached the style of the Gospel Song Book, the great difference being that they were intended for the young while the Gospel Song is intended for all.

Chapter III.

Musical Antecedents of the Gospel Song.

Just as we found, in the case of the words of our Gospel Songs, that they are the natural culmination of a long-standing tendency in American hymnody, so when we turn to the tunes we find the way already blazed out. It will be our purpose in this chapter to trace the musical antecedents of the Gospel Song, confining our attention to the history of Church music in America, since, as has been already emphasized, the Gospel Song is peculiarly an American production.

Original American Church Music.

Our first settlers used the psalm tunes set to the versions of Ainsworth and of Sternhold and Hopkins. Belcher in his "Historical Sketches of Hymns" says, "At the time of the founding of the Colonies in the United States singing by note was common, the psalm being lined out by the leader and sung by the congregation. The period of sect controversy which followed brought about a decline in this art."

There grew up a difference of opinion as to whether congregations should or should not join in the singing. Newman in his "History of the Baptist Churches in the United States" mentions the churches at Pennepek, Pa., and Cohansey, N. J., as having trouble over "predestination, psalm-singing and imposition of

hands." Ritter says "Among the early settlers of the Colonies, as among the Dissenters in England, there existed much difference of opinion regarding the manner of singing in church. Some maintained that Christians should not sing at all, but only make melody in their hearts.' Others did not object to singing, but thought it wrong to sing the psalms. Some would only allow Christians to sing, while the assembly should join in silence and respond "Amen!"* The result of this division was that gradually congregational singing almost died out.

In 1647 Rev. John Cotton published a tract in which he endeavored to remove some of the obstacles to psalm-singing. This doubtless helped, but Ritter says again, "Many of the psalm-tunes sung by the Pilgrim Fathers sank into oblivion; and it is said, that for eighty or ninety years not more than ten different tunes, is so many, were used in public worship."** Quoting from Hood's "History of Music in New England" he says, "The few music-books that had from time to time found their way into the Colonies were rapidly decreasing, and the few they had were unlike each other. The cultivation of music was neglected; and, until in the latter part of the seventeenth, and the commencement of the eighteenth, centuries, the congregations throughout New England were rarely able to sing more than three or four tunes."*** These statements find confirmation in the fact that the Bay Psalm Book contained only six tunes.

In 1720 Rev. Thomas Symmes of Bradford, Mass., began to fight for more singing in Church worship and suggested the formation of singing societies for the cultivation of musical taste and

* "Music in America."pp.6-7.

** " " " " p. 9.

*** " " " " p. 10.

ability. This suggestion was followed, and led to a revival of congregational singing. The tunes sung were still, however, psalm-tunes, though in this century anthems and hymn-tunes were coming into use.

From this time on there are evident two distinct tendencies in American Church Music, one toward a more correct and classical, and the other toward a more popular style. Our task is now to trace the popular tendency, though it is to be noted that, until the advent of the Gospel Song Book, it finds little or no entrance into the hymnals of the various Denominations. It is found chiefly in the history of three movements:

1. The work of William Billings.
2. Camp Meeting Songs.
3. The "spirituals."

1. The Work of William Billings.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century we find in William Billings' work a distinct departure from the regular Church Hymn. While not by any means to be compared with our modern Gospel Song writers, there are yet in his work evidences of that freer style in Church Music which finds its culmination in the Gospel Song.

His work seems to have been of a very crude character, due in large measure to the fact that in his day there were almost no facilities in this country for the study of music. Born in 1746, he died in 1800 and is credited with being perhaps the best known of an early American school of music, very undeveloped, but among the masses very popular, in which the chief element was

the "fugue," a tune in which a succession of notes in one part is followed by a similar succession of notes in another part, and so on. Songs by Billings continued after his death to be included in song and hymn collections.

Breed finds in our Gospel Song Tunes evidence of a revival of the fugue.

Billings was an enthusiastic admirer of the fugue. Most of the writers who mention his work quote his description of it, and I repeat it as indicating those elements in it which made it so popular with the people of his day; as indicating also the wide difference between it and the regular church-music. "It has twenty times the power of the old slow tunes; each part striving for mastery and victory, the audience entertained and delighted, their minds surpassingly agitated and extremely fluctuated, sometimes declaring for one part, and sometimes for another. Now the solemn bass demands their attention--next the manly tenor--now the lofty counter--now the versatile treble. Now here--now there--now here again. O, ecstatic! Rush on, you sons of harmony!"

"With William Billings burst forth a rich growth of American psalm-tune composers. It is to the historian so far the most interesting epoch of American musical development. There was original life, great impulse, and energy about it. It was infancy in art; but it was alive and seemed promising."*

Our interest in the work of Billings and the school of music which he represented lies chiefly in the distinct departure which it shows from the accepted standards of Church music.

* Ritter. "Music in America." p. 73.

3. Camp Meeting Songs.

In July 1800, in Logan County, Kentucky, was held the first Camp Meeting. A Presbyterian minister had announced a meeting and in his announcement notified the people to come prepared to camp on the ground. The novelty of the proposal appealed to the people and they came from all directions, Methodists and Presbyterians being in the majority. The meeting was so well attended and successful that others took up the idea, and soon camp-meetings became very numerous. The people who attended them had, however, no hymn-books, and, according to Benson, the old hymns "were felt to be too sober to express the overwrought feelings of the preacher and the song,"* and so there arose a new type of song; "Rough and irregular couplets or stanzas were concocted out of Scripture phrases and every-day speech, with liberal interspersing of Hallelujahs and refrains. Such ejaculatory hymns were frequently started by an excited auditor during the preaching and taken up by the throng, until the meeting dissolved into a 'singing ecstasy' culminating in a general handshaking. Sometimes they were given forth by a preacher who had a sense of rhythm, under the excitement of his preaching and the agitation of his audience. Hymns were also composed more deliberately out of meeting, and taught to the people or lined out from the pulpit."**

The similarity of this camp-meeting music to the Gospel Song will be apparent when Benson's description is read. "It is individualistic, and deals with the rescue of a sinner: sometimes in direct appeal to 'sinners! 'backsliders' or 'mourners;' sometimes by reciting the terms of salvation; sometimes as a narrative

* Benson. "The English Hymn." p. 292.

** " " " " p. 292.

of personal experience for his warning or encouragement.....
 The refrain or chorus is perhaps the predominant feature, not always connected with the subject-matter of the stanza, but rather ejaculatory. In some instances such a refrain was merely tacked on to a familiar hymn or an arrangement of one."

The following features common to both Camp Meeting Song and Gospel Song may be noted:

- (1). They are emotional in their appeal.
- (2). They grow out of an unusual spiritual and emotional condition.
- (3). They are a breaking away from the more sober music of the Church.
- (4). They are personal in their character, both subjectively and objectively: expressing personal emotions and appealing directly to sinners.
- (5). They use the refrain.

Similar to the Camp Meeting Songs are the rude choruses sung by earlier settlers in log-houses and churches, to which Lorenz traces the Gospel Song.

3. The Spiritual.

Still another departure from orthodoxy in Church Music is found in the "spirituals," a type of music of far higher quality than the Camp Meeting Songs. Lorenz describes them as "Genuine 'folk songs' originated and loved by a stratum in our American social life analogous to the peasants of Europe." He traces them back to the old English and Scotch songs and ballads brought over by the colonists, but claims that in the "rhythmical momen-

tum" of their choruses they are distinctively American. The tune "Foundation" to "How Firm a Foundation" is a good and well-known example of the spiritual. Lorenz states that the number of spirituals was large, but that few of them have come down to us. The following quotation is important as indicating the place of the spiritual in the development of the Gospel Song Music:

"I should not have considered these 'spirituals' at such extreme length were not the subject so obscure and the materials so inaccessible, and especially were not the Gospel Song the direct outgrowth of them...."

"It is difficult to define the exact period when the 'spiritual' became a Gospel Song, but the transition occurred between 1850 and 1865. Dadmun, Horace Waters, Asa Hull, Hartsough, Philip Phillips, O'Kane-- all helped in the change. The 'spiritual' was simply a melody and could indulge in a good many vagaries which it would be difficult to harmonize. Wherever an organ or melodeon was introduced, wherever the singing-school with its four-part singing was organized, the 'spiritual,' in so far as it was minor in character and its harmonies were not simple and self-evident, ~~was crowded out~~ and gave place to the Gospel and Sunday-school Song. As we have seen, even among the 'spirituals' there had been songs that were so modern in style that they have been adopted as Gospel Songs.

"The Gospel Song has inherited from the 'spiritual' its chorus and interlinear refrain, its free rhythms, its repetition of words in the chorus, its simplicity of melody, its harmonic progression and balance --in general its hold upon and influence

over the people. It has lost a good deal of the sheer subjectivity of the 'spiritual,' as well as its sentimentality and diffusiveness. The Gospel Song usually has one definite thought and expresses it in three or four verses instead of eight to twelve as did many 'spirituals.' It has also lost its weird minor strains, its mingled major and minor phrases, and its characteristic use of the sixth and avoidance of the seventh."*

These three movements illustrate the fact that the more classical and artistically correct church music failed to satisfy the musical tastes of the masses of the people, largely because the people were musically uneducated. The fact that they sprang spontaneously from the people, and had great popularity, suggests at least that the Gospel Song fills a place in the musical life of the common people which cannot be filled by more classical music, and evidences the fact that it is not an artificial and transitory phase of Church music but one that has its roots deep in the tastes of the people.

The progress from psalmody to the free wording of the Gospel Song as traced in the preceding chapter, coupled with the above considerations, proves abundantly that the Gospel Song is the natural, and shall I say inevitable, outcome, along ~~the lines~~ the lines of both words and music, of tendencies that date back to the early days of American Christianity. In my judgment, the Gospel song, whether for good or bad, is here to stay.

* Lorenz. "Practical Church Music." pp. 105-106.

Chapter IV.

Brief History of the Movement.

So far in our discussion we have considered the words and tunes of American Church music separately, but about the middle of the Nineteenth Century we enter a period where these two streams mingle to form the Gospel Song. Lorenz, as we have seen, gives the years 1850 to 1865 as the years of transition from the Spiritual to the Gospel Song. Benson gives the Gospel Song as originating about 1851. The growth of Sunday School and Y.M.C.A. song books slightly antedates this, and confirms this as the approximate date of the beginning of the Gospel Song. There is agreement as to the date, but considerable difference of opinion as to who is entitled to the credit.

Benson says "More specifically the prominence of the Gospel Hymn in modern evangelism grew out of the 'Praise Services' organized as early as 1851 by Eben Tourjée who became President of the Boston Y.M.C.A. in 1871, and the singing of H. Thane Miller and W. H. Doane at the Association Conventions; the 'Services of Song' given by Philip Phillips at Sunday School Conventions and Christian Commission meetings and indeed around the globe, and in association with the Sunday School and evangelistic campaign of John H. Vincent and Dwight L. Moody in the West; and the work of Philip P. Bliss in connection with Moody's missionary labors

in Chicago. Phillips regarded himself as the pioneer in introducing 'the sacred solo into religious meetings, as defined worship,' and his association with Moody as 'doubtless the precedent which was followed by the Gospel partnership of Moody and Sankey.'**

Lorenz says "several years before Moody had found Sankey, Chaplain (later Bishop) McCabe had issued 'Winnowed Hymns' containing very largely the same selection of songs as those later used by Sankey, and it had a very wide use in America."**

Cuyler says Mr. Sankey "introduced a peculiar style of popular hymns which are calculated to awaken the careless, to melt the hardened and to guide the inquiring souls to the Lord Jesus Christ..... while he had many successors he was the pioneer."***

The claims made are so conflicting that it is hard to pass judgment upon them, but they all overlook two vital points: first, that songs of distinctly Gospel Song character appear earlier in the century than the song books of these men; second, that the date of the first Gospel Song Books and the date of the launching of the Gospel Song Movement are two very different things. Granting that all these men produced Gospel Songs, and some of them Gospel Song Books, I find no evidence in the work of any of them of the launching of the movement, until the work of Mr. Sankey, and not even to him was the movement due, though his name is inseparably linked with it and he played no small part in it. The truth seems to be that, more or less independently, composers in different parts of the country began to give expression to the demand which had arisen for freer music in religious worship.

* Benson. The English Hymn. pp. 484-485.

** Lorenz. Practical Church Music pp. 105-106.

*** Introduction to Sankey's Story of the Gospel Hymns.

The launching of the Movement, however, was due to the genius of a man who himself was not a musician and of whom it is reported that he could not always recognize a tune when it was sung, but who yet saw the possibilities in the use of singing as an asset in evangelistic work. To Dwight L. Moody more than to any other man is due the wide popularity and influence of the Gospel Song. Before his time music had been used largely in connection with the great Revivals of the Church, but as far as I can learn nobody had deliberately undertaken to use it as a factor in evangelistic work, and it was the fact that the singing of these songs was one phase of the great lay revival movement led by him, that spread their popularity and really launched the movement. Lorenz says "Moody and Sankey's evangelistic campaign in England simply called the world's attention to the existence of this popular sacred music."*

Early in his life work, before he entered upon his great work of evangelism, Mr. Moody saw the value of music, and used it in his work. While still a salesman in Chicago, and using his spare time and talents in Sunday School work, he secured the services of a chorister for his School, believing it would be of help to the school. Some time later, in 1870, while engaged in Y.M.C.A. and evangelistic work in Chicago, he attended a National Convention of the Y.M.C.A. at Indianapolis. Here he met Mr. Sankey, and the meeting is told at length by practically all of Mr. Moody's biographers. The music of the Convention was lagging, and Mr. Sankey was urged by a friend to help the singing, which he did to such good effect that at the close of the meeting Mr.

* Lorenz. Practical Church Music, p. 106.

Moody invited him to leave his business and go to Chicago to help him in his work. The item of special interest in this meeting from our point of view lies in Mr. Moody's words "I have been looking for you for the last eight years," indicating how early he had realized the value of a singing partner in his work.

Mr. Moody's contribution to the movement was four-fold:

In the first place, he very early recognized the value of the Gospel Song, and almost from the beginning of his public work used it in his meetings. His long and fruitful partnership with Mr. Sankey is sufficient proof of this. The principle of a Gospel partnership between evangelist and singer is so wide-spread today, that it is hard to realize that it dates back no further than the work of Mr. Moody.

Second: He was the instrument in leading into the work some of the singers who were most prominently connected with the movement. Mr. Sankey, Mr. Bliss and Mr. Stebbins were all directly led to give up other work and enter the field of evangelistic singing thro' his influence.

Third: The great impetus to the movement, the impetus which made it the world-wide force it has become, came distinctly from its connection with the great revival campaigns of Mr. Moody and those whom he associated with him. So inseparably are the two connected, that it is impossible to discriminate between them either in popularity or in influence.

Fourth: By the founding of the Music Department of the Moody Bible Institute, he made provision for a continuation, under the

most favorable conditions, of the songs of the movement.

It is for these reasons, while freely admitting the previous existence of song-books of a Gospel Song character, and the similarity of the work of Philip Phillips and others, that I conclude the movement owes its inception to Mr. Moody.

I pass now to a brief survey of the men connected with him. To speak of all the men connected with the movement would be impossible within the limits of this Thesis, and I am confining myself to those whose connection with him gives them a distinct place in the movement. It must not be forgotten that there are many eminent Gospel Song composers whose names would find a place in any complete history of the movement, who have been rather drawn into its current than been its cause.

The first name that comes to the mind is that of Ira D. Sankey, not because he was the first to be associated with Mr. Moody, but because of his long partnership with him.

Ira David Sankey was born in Lawrence County, Pa., on August 28th, 1840. He very early became noted for his fine singing, but seems to have had little or no musical training. This fact, which might have been a drawback to him in other quarters, may have fitted him for more whole-hearted co-operation with Mr. Moody, the preacher who also had little education, for both of them were men who leaned hard on God, and God wondrously used their talents. Soon after his conversion in 1856 his father moved to Newcastle, where the young man, before he became 21 years of age, was appointed Superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School, which contained over 300 scholars. Here he began the practise of singing Gospel Solos, which proved a great attraction to the

Sunday School. In 1870 occurred his memorable meeting with Mr. Moody at Indianapolis. The day after this meeting he sang for Mr. Moody in the open air. He was still undecided, but several months later spent a week with Mr. Moody in Chicago, and at the close of that week resigned his position as a Revenue Collector and began the work which was to couple his name with that of Mr. Moody the world over. In 1873 he joined Mr. Moody in an evangelistic tour of Great Britain. During this tour the evangelists used Philip Phillips' "Hallowed Songs" for their meetings, but Mr. Sankey sang, as solos, songs which he had collected from time to time. His singing was so well received that a demand arose for copies of his songs, and an effort was made to have them appended to "Hallowed Songs." This the publishers refused to allow, and at last twenty three of them were published separately under the title "Sacred Songs and Solos." This, united with "Gospel Songs," published by Bliss in 1874, became the nucleus of the famous "Gospel Songs and Sacred Solos" of Sankey, Bliss and others, the circulation of which has run into millions. Of special interest in connection with the publication of this song-leaflet is the fact that the evangelists declined to use any of the profits, amounting to \$35,000, for their personal use. Indeed one of the most pleasing features of the work of all the men connected with Mr. Moody was their disinterestedness in the work. The one passion with them was to win men and women to Christ. Mr. Sankey sought this just as truly in his singing as did Mr. Moody in his preaching. Dr. Wilbur Chapman, in his life of Mr. Moody, quotes one of Mr. Sankey's Edinburgh hearers as saying, 'Mr. Sankey sings with the conviction that souls are receiving

Jesus between one note and the next." It was this fact, coupled with a voice of remarkable sweetness and power, that so eminently fitted him to be Mr. Moody's partner.

During this English tour, and after the return of the evangelists to this country, the singing of Mr. Sankey was immensely popular, and his songs were on everybody's lips. It would not be too much to say, that the great crowds which everywhere attended the meetings of the evangelists, were drawn just as much by the singing of Mr. Sankey as by the wonderful preaching of Mr. Moody.

Mr. Sankey was associated with Mr. Moody until the death of the latter in 1899, and did not long survive him, dying on August 13th, 1903, at Brooklyn, N. Y.

Two years before the meeting between Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey, occurred the meeting between Mr. Moody and Mr. P. P. Bliss. At the time Mr. Moody was holding Gospel Services in Woods' Museum, Chicago. It was his custom to preface his meetings by an open-air service. Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were passing by one Sunday night when they were attracted by his preaching and stopped to listen. The singing that night was not good, the usual leader not being present, and Mr. Bliss helped all he could. His singing caught Mr. Moody's attention, and from that day a friendship sprang up between the two men. Major Whittle, so long Mr. Moody's associate in the evangelistic field, is quoted as saying that he thought Mr. Moody got his first impression of the power of solo-singing in Gospel work from Mr. Bliss and Mr. C. M. Wyman.

After that first meeting Mr. Bliss frequently led the music at Mr. Moody's meetings. In letters written from Scotland in

1873 and 1874 Mr. Moody so strongly urged him and Major Whittle to form a Gospel partnership that at last they consented to a trial. They held a meeting together at Wankegan, Ill., in March 1874, and at the close of that meeting they both gave up their previous work and devoted themselves to the evangelistic field. From that time on they were associated in the work until the tragic death of Mr. and Mrs. Bliss in the train disaster at Ashtabula in 1876.

Mr. Bliss's work was of a very high order. As in the case of Mr. Sankey, he was blessed with a very fine voice and had but one passion in his work, the conversion of souls. In addition to his singing he was a composer of considerable merit. Prof. F. W. Root says of his work, "His Gospel Hymns contain no pointless verses, awkward rhythms or forced rhymes, but on the contrary, glow with all that gives life to such composition." During his life-time his most popular song was "Hold the Fort, for I am coming," but its popularity has died out, and we now remember most his "Almost persuaded," an invitation song that has been used with great power.

On the death of Mr. Bliss his place as Major Whittle's singer was filled by James McGranaham. Unlike Mr. Sankey, McGranaham had a splendid musical preparation before becoming an evangelistic singer. His friends and music teachers planned for him a career as an operatic star, but the death of Mr. Bliss, of whom he was an intimate friend, brought him into touch with Major Whittle and changed all his plans. From that time on he devoted himself to the work of his dead friend, and made a name for himself in the realm of Gospel Song. He was associated with Moody and Sankey

in their Great Britain tour of 1883, and continued as Major Whittle's singer until his health began to fail in 1890. He died July 9, 1907.

Like Mr. Bliss, he was a composer as well as a singer, and in addition, had the distinction of being the pioneer in the use of the Male Choir in Gospel Song.

Mr. Geo. C. Stebbins, who took McGranaham's place when his health began to fail, first met Mr. Moody in Chicago in 1870 to 1874. In 1876, during a visit to Mr. Moody at Northfield, he was induced by him to enter the evangelistic field under his direction, which he did that fall. He was engaged in organizing choirs for the Moody and Sankey meetings in Chicago that year, and then assisted other evangelists. At first associated with Dr. Pentecost, the ill-health of Mr. McGranaham brought him finally into partnership with Major Whittle.

Bliss, McGranaham and Stebbins were all fortunate in being associated with Major Whittle. He was a man of education and culture and wrote a number of hymns under the pen-name "El Nathan." His standard was high. He once said "I hope I shall never write a hymn that does not contain a message-- there are too many hymns that are just a meaningless jingle of words; to do good a hymn must be founded on God's word and carry the message of God's love." As a consequence he sought to put his best into his hymns, with such good effect that Mr. Moody said of his work, "I think Major Whittle has written some of the best hymns of this century." It is hard to estimate the extent to which his ideals influenced

the musical standards of the three singers who were associated with him.

Coming a little later, but still early enough to find a place in this brief survey, was Dr. D. B. Towner. Born in 1850, he early became known for his fine voice, and spent much time in singing. In the Fall of 1885, he joined Mr. Moody in evangelistic work and remained in that work until the Fall of 1892, when he took charge of the music department at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Under his direction that Department has grown greatly in effectiveness, and today is perhaps the greatest single influence on the Gospel Song Movement.

Our sketch would be incomplete without reference to Mrs. Van Alstyne, better known by her maiden name, Fanny Crosby. It will be noted that, apart from Mr. Moody, she is the only person whose work is here described who was not a singer. The reason for this is that the movement is pre-eminently a musical one. It is the style of its music even more than its words that mark it as distinctive: it is to its composers and singers, far more than to its authors, that its popularity and influence are due. Certain names stand out in its music as leaders, but, except for Fanny Crosby, there is hardly a name among its authors that is much known outside the circle of composers or of those who have made a special study of Church music.

Frances Jane Crosby was born in Putnam County, N. Y., on March 24th 1820. When six weeks old, owing to bad medical advice, she became totally blind, but never in later life expressed any resentment at her affliction. At a very early age she began to write poetry. She first became known as the author of popular

songs, including "There's music in the air," and "Never forget the dear ones," but turned her attention to Gospel Song writing, and became easily the most prolific author since the days of Watts and Wesley, publishing in all some 8000 pieces. In 1858 she was married to Alexander Van Alstyne, a blind musician. It is a very pleasing comment on his attitude toward her, that he insisted on her continuing to publish her work under her already famous maiden name. She died in 1915, just six weeks short of her 95th birthday.

Concerning her work there is considerable difference of opinion. Julian in his "Dictionary of Hymnology" says: "Notwithstanding the immense circulation thus given to Mrs. Van Alstyne's Hymns, they are, with few exceptions, very weak and poor, their simplicity and earnestness being their redeeming features. Their popularity is largely due to the melodies to which they are wedded!" Similar is the judgment of Bodine in his "Some Hymns and Hymn Writers," who says: "Most of these are without value, but a few have met with large popular favor."

But the "Literary Digest" of February 27, 1915, publishing the account of her death, quoted estimates of her work from a number of American newspapers, from which I take the following:

New York Times -- She "was easily first in the authorship of the so-called 'Gospel Hymns' whose direct appeal to men's primitive beliefs and emotions have been found effective by revivalists."

Philadelphia Record -- "Miss Crosby expressed universal religious emotion in fluent and rhythmic verse that found an echo in millions of hearts, and while no person can rise to poetic heights as often as she wrote a hymn, she had taste and a sense

of melody, as well as piety, and many of her spiritual songs are permanent and valuable additions to religious literature."

In my judgment these last estimates of her work come nearer the truth than the others, and our hymnody has been greatly enriched by her work.

With the work of Mr. Moody and the group of men connected with him the Gospel Song Movement is fairly launched. Dr. W. H. Doane, E. O. Excell, Chas. H. Gabriel, W. J. Kirkpatrick and others contributed largely to it, and in spite of strenuous opposition by musicians and our more conservative religious leaders, it had, before the great Revival Campaigns of Torrey, Sunday, Chapman and others, become an established feature of American Christianity.

Complete figures as to the spread of the Movement are not obtainable. In the effort to obtain these I wrote to a number of publishing houses, but found that in many cases records had been destroyed or publishing houses had gone out of business. From information received, however, it is safe to say that many hundreds of Gospel Song Books have been published, their circulation as reported to me varying from 5,000 to 1,000,000 copies.

Hardly a Denomination exists that does not use Gospel Songs to a considerable extent, either including them in its regular Hymnals or providing separate Gospel Song Books for use in Sunday School, Young People's Meetings, Prayer Meetings, Revival Meetings and the like. Their use is nation-wide, and other countries have felt their influence until today there is hardly a country in the world which American Christianity has touched, where the Gospel Song is not known.

Chapter V.

The Contribution of the Movement to American Christianity.

It is obvious that a movement which has its roots in the very nature of our American people, which traces its beginnings back to the early days of American Christianity, and which has been so largely used in our Churches, must have had a very considerable influence upon American Christianity. To discuss this influence will be our task in this chapter.

1. Its place in modern Revivals.

Whether for good or evil the Revival meeting has come to be an inseparable part of our American Christianity. Bacon speaks of "the exaggerated revivalism ever since so prevalent in the American Church -- the tendency to consider religion as consisting mainly in scenes and periods of special fervor, and the intervals between them as so much void space and waste time."* And again of "those alternations of exaltation and subsidence which seem, whether for evil or for good, to have become a fixed characteristic of American church history."** It seems to be a general condition of our American churches that we live on the fervor and energy generated by the "Revival." In most churches this "Revival" has come to be an annual event, and during its continuance there is a marked difference in the attitude of peo-

* Bacon, History of American Christianity, p.155.

** " " " " " " p.244.

ple toward the Church. New zeal and interest appear in members who during the rest of the year are cold and indifferent; whose faces are rarely seen at the regular preaching services of the Church and never at Prayer Meeting; who undertake no definite Christian work, and who are the despair of their pastors' hearts; Nothing keeps them from attending the "Meeting," and if the visiting evangelist proves popular and interesting they are loud in his praises; their voices ring out in the singing, and they are loth to leave when the benediction is pronounced. But when the Evangelist leaves and the Pastor takes up his work again; when the excitement incident to the "Meeting" has died down; their own interest somehow suffers a relapse, and pretty soon the business or the dance or some other thing is occupying all the attention again.

Nor is this peculiar to the Church members. Those who make no profession of Christianity, who cannot be prevailed upon at other times to enter the Church at all, are during the meeting to be found in their places every night, enjoying the singing and the preaching.

Such a condition in our Church life is not a healthy one, and were this the place for it much could be written on the subject, but at the same time quickening does often come to a Church in the course of the meeting, and genuine conversions do take place.

Now the Gospel Song and the Meeting are almost inseparable. I have heard and known of Meetings being conducted where the singing was done from the regular church hymnal, but such cases are exceptions and not always successful. It appears as though the emotion-stirring strains of the Gospel Song are necessary in

order to create the proper feeling in the Meeting. I do not know of one modern Revivalist who uses the Church Hymnal in his meetings. Dr. Chapman, Gypsy Smith, Dr. Torrey, "Billy" Sunday and others use special Song Books published by the evangelist or by the singer who accompanies him.

Turning to the meetings themselves, we find them almost invariably opening with a Song Service, in which a number of the newer songs in the book are sung and practised and during which one or more solos, duets or quartettes are sung. Fully half of the time of the meeting is given over to the singing, and the effectiveness of the sermon which follows is largely dependent upon the song service.

In my judgment the songs used in our Revival Meetings are largely responsible for the results of the meetings. In the hands of a man of consecrated talent the song is a mighty factor in touching and softening the heart of the sinner. Many are the stories told of conversions that have taken place while some Gospel Song was being sung by a man of God; Mr. Sankey's solos were particularly fruitful in this respect. And even where conversion has not resulted from the singing of the song, there has resulted a softening of the heart that ^{has} made it more susceptible to the Word which has followed. But in the hands of an incompetent or worldly-minded man the harm done is incalculable.

It would be too much to say that a "Meeting" could not be held without the Gospel Song, but it is not too much to say that very few of them are, and that the Song shares with the meeting in its effect upon American Christianity.

2. Its Effect on Congregational Singing.

After the meeting is over the influence of the Gospel Songs used continues to be a factor in the life of the community. The average Church adopts permanently the Song Book used in the Meeting. The larger City Churches generally confine its use to the Prayer Meeting, Sunday School and similar services, reserving the Denominational Hymn Book for use in the Sunday services; the smaller Churches, and especially the Country Churches, usually adopt it altogether. As a consequence the singing of our Churches is becoming more and more of a Gospel Song character, and in some of our smaller Churches the older Hymns of the Church are almost if not wholly unknown.

Congregational singing generally, however, has been improved by the use of this class of song. The catchy air, the refrain, the simple melody, all make for better singing among a people whose musical talents are not very highly developed, and who find it hard to sing the Standard Hymns. To enter a Mission Church, where the people use a Gospel Song Book, hear the fervor of the singing, and see the shining faces of the singers, is sufficient to show how fully they are taking hold of the singing. Under such conditions good singing from the standard Hymnals is almost an impossibility. And such an experience is only heightened by a visit to one of our larger Churches where the Hymnal is used, and where, only too often, the singing is almost wholly confined to a paid, and more or less expert, choir.

While in some places hymns are doubtless sung heartily, and while in the other places Gospel Songs are poorly sung, still in the main the opposite conditions prevail, and are inevitable as

long as our people are not better educated along musical lines. Lorenz indeed says, "It is a mistaken notion that good tunes are more difficult to learn than poor tunes; that the congregation will enter more heartily and readily into the singing of trashy tunes than worthy ones,"* but I think Humphreys is nearer to the actual facts in the case when he says, "The compositions known as 'Moody and Sankey Hymns' appear to lie very close to the heart of a large class of people..... The character of piety they encourage is somewhat superficial, not to say hysterical; they are full of extravagant and often foolish statements; but it cannot be denied that they stir the hearts of the common throng. The refrains which are generally attached to them are readily caught by the ear, and that wave of emotional sympathy, easily started in large audiences, soon sweeps over the meeting, and choir and congregation are at once drawn into close accord."**

To the coldly critical observer this fervent congregational singing may seem of slight importance, but, to the Christian worker who is seeking for the development of Christian people, it is welcome, as affording an opportunity for the expression and the strengthening of the life within. While no doubt a higher standard of musical expression would be preferable, yet unquestionably this is better than cold, unmoved silence. The value of congregational singing is not to be lightly estimated. I quote two extracts from Pratt which give the right place to it.

"It is often supposed that the practical center of the church music problem is the choir and the organist. It is thought that if you can afford to spend much money on these, develop their

* Lorenz, Practical Church Music. p.89.

**Humphreys, Evolution of Church Music. p.123.

adhered strictly to the Regular Hymnal there would have been no encouragement at all to the man or woman in whose mind a song had formed, to give it to the world. If of unusual talent he might, of course, have turned to the composition of secular songs, and it is worthy of note that some of our most prolific Gospel Song writers first used their talents in the production of such songs, notably Fanny Crosby among the authors, and Dr. D. B. Towner among the composers. But the Gospel Song movement gives encouragement to any one with musical talent to use that talent in religious work. The effect of this has of course been the flooding of the market with a mass of musical material, much, perhaps most, of which is of poor quality, and some positively bad, but at the same time it has been the means of producing at least some songs, perhaps many, which are likely in the coming years to take rank with the average church hymn, if not with the best Church Hymns. One of the best comments I have seen in this connection is that of Lorenz, who points out that even Watts and Wesley, whose work the Church esteems so highly, were guilty of composing verses of such poor quality that we would hardly class them with even our poorest Gospel Songs. In support of his contention he quotes, among others, the following, by Charles Wesley:

"How wretched are the boys at school,
 Who wickedly delight
 To mock and call each other fool,
 And with each other fight;
 Who soon their innocency lose,
 And learn to curse and swear;
 Or, if they do no harm, suppose
 That good enough they are."

Perhaps the claim that among the Gospel Songs are some which in coming years may take rank with our best Church Hymns may ap-



Chapter VI.

Some Bad Features of the Movement.

In the last chapter we saw that the Gospel Song Movement had made a considerable contribution to American Christianity, but it must not be assumed that its contribution has been all good. On the contrary there are many and serious defects in the movement, so many and so grievous, indeed, that in the eyes of many earnest and consecrated Christian workers they are sufficient to discredit the movement altogether.

1. The Prevalence of Poor Songs and Song Books.

As we have seen, the very scope of the movement has rendered it inevitable that very many poor compositions should be given birth. This in itself would not be a bad feature, but unfortunately there has been far too little discrimination used in the publication and use of the songs which have been composed, and it is decidedly a weakness of the movement when we find the poor productions published, and their sale and use urged, along with the sale and use of the better ones. Personal judgment, of course, plays a large part in deciding on the merits of a song, but even that consideration fails to justify the publication of some of the songs that are published. The evils of such prolific production and indiscriminate publication are only too apparent. This indiscriminate publication takes two forms:

(1) The Publication of Inferior Books.

The extent of this evil is hard to estimate, nor is it possible on account of the mass of material to go into detail in our discussion of it, but it can be stated without much fear of contradiction that a large number of these books should never have been published, the general character of the songs included being so poor that the few good songs they contain have been unable to justify their publication. In negative proof of this let it be said that out of the hundreds of Gospel Songs Books that have been published, comparatively few have had at all general acceptance or approval.

(2) The Inclusion of Inferior Songs in Books
of Higher Quality.

Perhaps this is hard to avoid, being as suggested above a matter of personal judgment, but it is disappointing to turn to some of the most recent books of better quality put out by recognized leaders in the realm of Gospel Song, and find such songs included as:

"A little while, and then the summer day
When I go Home;
'Tis lonesome winter now, but t'will be May
When I go Home;
Beyond the gloom of moor and fen I see
The welcome warm of those who wait for me
When I go Home, When I go Home."

the likeness of which to Newman's "Lead Kindly Light," does not save it from being poor and untrue to the facts of the Christian's experience, for the Christian life is not a "lonesome winter;" or

"There's a church in the valley by the wildwood,
No lovelier spot in the dale.
No place is so dear to my childhood,
As the little brown church in the vale,"

which, however it may express a sweet and precious memory, and however its words and refrain may appeal to one's taste, is certainly lacking in any Gospel element. Both of these songs are included in a collection published in 1915 by one of our leading evangelistic singers.

I turn to another book published by one whose name is known all over the country, and find the following:

"There's an old-fashioned home over yonder,
Just across the sea I know;
And when Jesus the Savior shall call me,
To that old-fashioned home I will go.

"There's an old-fashioned home in that city,
Joy and peace eternally,
And an old-fashioned mother is waiting
In that old-fashioned home for me.

"When the summons shall come I will enter
The bright home prepared for me;
And the face of my Lord and Redeemer
In that old-fashioned home I will see."

It is surely bordering on the ridiculous, if not on the sacriligious, to describe the "New Jerusalem" as "that old-fashioned home."

I turn to still another recent book with a large circulation, and find under "Children's Songs" the following among others:

"Once a trap was baited with a dainty bit of cheese;
It tickled so a little mouse, it almost made him sneeze.
An old mouse said 'there's danger; be careful where you go.'
'Oh, nonsense,' said the mousey, 'I don't think you know.'
So he walked in boldly--nobody was in sight;
First he took a nibble, then he took a bite;
Close the trap together snapped as quick as you could
wink,
Catching mousey fast there 'because he didn't think.'"

And again:

"A downy little duckling
Went waddling off one day;
He didn't like the other ducks;
With them he would not play;
He was too independent, too,
To stay with them, he said;

He tho't it vastly pleasanter
To go alone instead.

Chorus:

O silly little duckling!
To pout will never pay;
I wonder if small boys and girls
Would ever act that way?"

With such songs taught to our children as "Revival Songs" we can hardly expect a very high grade of Christianity.

Space will not permit more examples, but enough have been given to show the need of greater discrimination, and to justify our contention that one of the evils of the movement is the prevalence of poor songs.

2. The Short Life of the Gospel Songs.

Lorenz contends that this is one of the advantageous features of the Gospel Song.* He ascribes its short life to its intense emotion, and counts in its favor that it is thereby suited to the changing religious feelings of different ages. Before considering his position let us remember that not all of our Gospel Songs are necessarily short-lived. It is my conviction that the best of them will live long and be long popular. But it is to be conceded that the greatest number of them will soon pass out of use, and die "unloved, unhonored and unsung." This however is rather a bad than a good feature of the Song.

In the first place, it is a great question whether the intensity of a song is a good quality. Too great intensity is apt to defeat its aim. An intense emotion is necessarily short-lived, and we are not striving for short-lived but for permanent qualities in our Christian work. Moreover the intense emotion, after it has burned out, leaves one in a state of nervous debilitation

* Lorenz, Practical Church Music. p. 108.

from which it takes time to recover. After such an experience it takes a stronger stimulus to awaken the emotion the second time, and a still stronger one the third time. Apply this psychological truth to the case under discussion, and it will be found that the practical effect of the intense religious emotion engendered is an after-period of spiritual depression, which in fact is generally to be found after our present-day Revival campaigns. Moreover a stronger stimulus is needed another time if like fervor is to be aroused. This is not a healthy religious condition, and it is leading to a time when the stimulus cannot be longer increased, and when, as a consequence, the religious emotions cannot be quickened. Songs which make their appeal more to the heart and conscience, and less to the emotions, would appear to be of more permanent value than these which so powerfully effect the emotions.

In the second place, I disagree with Lorenz on the function of the song. The purpose in our singing is not merely to create or express an emotion, tho' of course song will do this; we must also seek to leave some permanent benefit. A class of song therefore which for a while expresses an emotion but which leaves no permanent benefit is to be deprecated. This weakness is discussed more in detail under:

3. The Purely "Gospel" Character of the Movement.

No sincere Christian will deny the importance of preaching the Gospel to lost men and women; we cannot forget that our great mission is to "make disciples of all nations," but no thinking Christian would commend a Church or Denomination that spent all its energy on preaching for conversions and none on edifying

Christians.

The same truth holds for the singing of our Churches. It would probably not be too much to say that in the measure in which the life of our people is affected by the character of the preaching to which they listen, in the same measure is it affected by the class of song that they habitually sing. The children in our public schools learn patriotism just as truly from the songs they sing as from the direct teaching of patriotism which they receive; the leaders in temperance work make use of the temperance song as an asset in their campaigns; in times of national unrest and division, when a country is face to face with some momentous decision (as for instance when the question of secession arose in this country), singing is largely used to mould public opinion; and finally our great revivalists have made use of it in their "campaign" songs, through which they generate feeling and sympathy for their campaigns. And all this rests upon the fact that man is largely the creature of his emotions; that the average man is moved far more by his emotions than by his power of reasoning, especially when he is in a crowd, as happens in our religious gatherings.

All this becomes of supreme importance when, in the light of it, we come to consider the fact that in great measure the songs sung by American Christians are of a "Gospel Song" character. Is it any wonder then that American Christianity is largely of an emotional, ephemeral character, warmly enthusiastic in periods of religious excitement, but cold and careless in seasons of religious dearth and difficulty; or entering with relish into the Sunday services, but laying off religion with the day: a matter

of emotion rather than of deep conviction. The claim is not made that this is wholly due to the use of the Gospel Song, but only that this has been largely responsible for it.

The Gospel Song is a very valuable addition to our Church Hymnody, since it provides a channel for the expression of the emotions and of the appeal to the unsaved, but its sole use is to be deprecated as aiding in the development of a one-sided Christian character. We need it, but we need it in conjunction with songs and hymns which will edify and strengthen Christians. I close this part of our discussion with two quotations:

"Religious experience constantly tries to realize itself in words, seeks to bring to utterance what it knows and feels and desires; and on the other hand, religious experience is largely evoked and shaped by suggestions received through words."*

"Forms of song which, to the musician, lie outside the pale of art, may have a legitimate place in seasons of special religious quickening. No one who is acquainted with the history of religious propagation in America will despise the revival hymn, or deny the necessity of the part it has played. But these seasons of spiritual upheaval are temporary and exceptional; they are properly the beginning, not the end, of the Church's effort. The revival hymn may be effective in soul-winning, it is inadequate when treated as an element in the larger work of spiritual development."**

4. The Misuse of the Great Hymns of the Church.

It must be apparent to any one that the Christianity of past ages has produced very many examples of the finest quality of

* Pratt, Musical Ministries in the Church. p.38.

**Dickinson, Music in the History of the Western Church. p.404.

church music. This is amply illustrated by the very size of our Standard Denominational Hymnals, where the effort is made not to include all possible hymns, but to exclude as many as can well be excluded, and to include only such as the compilers feel ought not to be left out. Without suggesting that all the hymns included are of the highest type, none would deny that very many of them are, and that any movement which makes for ignorance of them, is, to that extent, having a bad effect. Granting the good points of the Gospel Song, it would be far better that it should be abandoned than that we should abandon the great hymns of the Church. The following quotation is worthy of thoughtful consideration:

"From the standpoint of general culture it is clear that the exclusive use of ephemeral hymns and tunes is harmful because it has prevented the knowledge of others that are too precious inheritances from the past to be discarded. Even our more intelligent young people are singularly ignorant of standard and historic examples of hymnody. I will give but a single instance. John Newman's splendid hymn on the Church beginning

'Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God.'

I have often found to be totally unknown, even to college graduates, though it is not far away, in class, from the best of the 'Gospel Hymns.' That it is now about a century and a quarter old and has been in continuous use all that time is not necessarily to its discredit. I have become somewhat wary about asking people what they know of many of our standard tunes. Our churches have practically turned their backs on nearly all of the German

chorales except for purposes of literary allusion. And even many of the standard chorales of the last century in England, like 'St. Thomas' (about 1760) or the original 'Rockingham' (1790), with many from a later time, like 'Lancashire' (1836), are too often not known to exist. The same is true of many scores of fine tunes from the last forty years, the fruits of a most notable and influential new school of tune-writing, which has won distinction and honor. These latter, it is true, do not have quite the jingle of college glees or such songs as are sung at minstrel shows and on the streets, yet many of them have truly popular qualities of form. Sullivan's 'St. Gertrude' and Dykes' 'Lux Benigna' and Monk's 'Eventide' have secured some recognition among those devoted to 'popular' hymnody; but where are their companions and equals and superiors? This evil--the exclusion of standard and fine hymns and tunes by those of less value but not more practicability--is real and deplorable. Different observers, with varying experience and with varying opinions about what is most worthy of presentation, would put the matter in different ways and cite different examples, but all would unite in saying that the rage for new hymns and tunes written by the yard for wide sale among churches in search of what is cheap and easy, has been and is a serious evil."*

5. The "Personal" Character of the Books.

By this I mean that the man who compiles a Gospel Song Book, while invariably and doubtless honestly putting it forward as a first-class selection, also invariably includes in it a large proportion of his own work or the work of those immediately con-

* Pratt, Musical Ministries in the Church. pp. 61-63.

nected with him. Out of five books which I have examined in this regard, all of which have a large sale, and are I believe still being published, I find the following:

In one, 79 tunes by the compiler and 53 by the man who assisted him are included out of a total of 303. In the other four books I find this compiler has 8 in one, 4 in one, 2 in one, and in one none at all, while his assistant has one each in two of the books, two in another and none in the fourth.

In the next book the compiler has 72 of his own and 19 of his assistant's songs, while in the other four books he has 11 in one, 1 in one, and none in the two others.

The third book has 31 by the compiler and 51 by his associates, while in only one of the other books is he represented at all, that book having one of his pieces.

The fourth book has 14 by the compiler and 38 each by two other men, while he does not appear in the other books at all.

The fifth book has 57 pieces by those associated with the compiler, who is not himself a composer, but his musician appears in only one of the other books, that having 3 of his pieces.

This summary will show the "personal" character of the song books, and, whatever may be the reason for such a condition, it appears to the outside observer as though the element of self-advertisement entered largely into the question, and however much this may be defended on other grounds, it certainly is a bad feature of our Gospel Song Movement. Under such conditions we do not get in these Books the best songs, but rather the best songs of the compilers and their friends.

6. The Commercializing of the Movement.

And now we come to a feature of the movement which in the general opinion is its chief fault.

It is a serious charge to bring against our musical leaders, but one that with few exceptions could be easily sustained, that the main motive in the publication of their books is personal profit. This may be a subconscious motive, but it is there.

It is a common thing to see at our great Revival Meetings the sale of song-books pushed by ushers, just as the sale of programs is pushed at a Fair-ground, or the sale of score-cards at a ball-game. Indeed it is sometimes the case that books cannot be obtained for use at the meetings without their being bought. It may be argued that the publication of the books costs money and the publisher must live, but remember that the publisher is in many cases the singer himself, who gets² paid for his work, and usually well paid. Other ways in which the sale of books is pushed are by notices through the mails, the donation of sample copies to those who are in a position to induce congregations to purchase, and the buttonholing of pastors and other delegates at religious conventions. There can in my opinion be no doubt that the general opinion is correct; that this is one of the most serious faults in the whole movement.

The Gospel Song Book is peculiarly open to this fault of commercialism because of its unique position. Only two books are used in our religious services: the Bible, and the Hymnal or Song Book. (In the case of the Episcopal Church the Prayer Book must be added). Of these the Bible is fixed and offers practically no

field for commercialism. Our Denominational Hymnals moreover are generally under some sort of Denominational control and freed very largely from the danger. But in the Gospel Song Book the commercially-spirited man has an open field, and the result is that the chief motive in the publication of such Books is a commercial one, the desire for increased sales.

The argument may be advanced that a man has as much right to publish his own songs for profit as an author to publish books for profit. At first sight this seems reasonable, but against it the following facts are adduced:

(1) The cases are not parallel. In the case of the composer or author who publishes secular works for profit, his works go into private houses where they take their place along with many other works of a similar nature, and have no special place in the esteem of the owner unless their special merit gives them such a place. Under such circumstances the influence of a poor book is largely offset by the good books around it.

In the case of the Gospel Song Book, on the contrary, there is no rival. Once it is put into a Church it displaces all other books and becomes for some time the only book used. Its influence, therefore, if good, is all the more definite, and if bad, is unmitigated.

(2) In the case of the Gospel Song Book we are dealing with a distinctly religious force. Bearing in mind the place that the Song Book occupies in public worship, the only purpose in putting it before the churches should be that of helping the churches to a higher plane of experience.

The singer has no more right to publish his books for profit

merely, than the preacher has to use his talents for personal gain. In each case the talent is God-given and intended for use in God's service, and a day of reckoning is bound to come for the man, whether singer or preacher, who allows the element of personal profit to influence his decisions and actions. Far better that a singer should lose money in attempting to put before the people that which is good, than that in order to gain money; in order to increase his bank balance; he should cater to a questionable taste and condition. The example of Moody and Sankey, before referred to, is one that our modern Gospel Song writers and compilers would do well to follow.

The whole question of commercialism in our Revival Meetings and campaigns comes up here. The laborer truly must be fed, but he is bringing very serious reproach upon the cause he represents when he prostitutes his talents in order to make money for himself.

The bold and vicious modification of standard hymns should also be rechecked here.

Chapter VII.

Passing Judgment upon the Movement.

At the very outset it will be well to recall to our minds the fact that the Gospel Song is not an exotic, but grows out of the very root and fibre of our American temperament. We must take this into account, for it is not a movement that can be opposed and prevented. All thro' the years musicians have ridiculed and opposed the tendency toward it, but without effect. The growing desire for freedom has overcome all obstacles and exists today as something which must be taken into account.

In taking up this discussion it is necessary to free ourselves as far as possible from personal bias. The Gospel Song Movement is so new, and so different from all that has preceded it, that it is exceedingly difficult to pass an unbiassed opinion upon it. The conservative man is apt to look upon it with very great suspicion; the radical is apt to consider it the greatest thing that ever existed. Breed says: "There has been much debate concerning the character and place of these Gospel Songs. Some hold that they have done great mischief in vitiating the taste and corrupting the manners of worshipping congregations. Others insist as strenuously that they have been mightily influential in promoting true praise and positive devotion. The best judges seem to take a middle ground."*

* Breed. History and Use of Hymns and Hymn Tunes, p 333.

In order to the passing of a reasonably unbiased judgment, let us ask three questions concerning the movement:

1. Is the Gospel Song entitled to rank with the Hymns of the Church?
2. Has the contribution of the Gospel Song Movement to American Christianity outweighed its defects?
3. Has the ultimate spiritual effect of the Movement been good or bad?

One other question that has received a good deal of consideration from both sides is whether or not the Gospel Song is a Hymn. I have omitted discussion of this question because it is not in my judgment of much importance. As pointed out in an earlier chapter the standards of different ages as to the character of a Hymn change materially; moreover the Gospel Song is to be judged on its own merits and not on the question whether it is a Hymn or not. The questions discussed in this chapter will be a better guide as to the character of the Movement.

1. Is the Gospel Song entitled to rank with the Hymns of the Church?

It is at this point that most of the critical opposition to the Movement arises. The claim is made by its opponents that both words and music are of a very low order and therefore should not be used; that we should be seeking to develop the musical tastes of our people instead of catering to them. There is much weight to this argument. It must be admitted that the musical taste of the average Church member, especially in our Country Churches and our smaller City Churches, is very undeveloped, and

it certainly does not conduce to a proper respect for the House and Worship of God in the eyes of better informed people when the music used is of a low order; moreover it is very doubtful if we are doing right by our people when we fail to seek to elevate their tastes, and so to give them a better appreciation of the power of music and of the place that it should have in our worship. But is the claim altogether just? Is it true that the Gospel Song is of a low quality as regards both words and music? Let it not be forgotten that in a movement so modern it is inevitable that a large number of poor songs should be produced. It is hardly fair, however, to judge the whole movement by the poorest of its productions. As has already been pointed out, we are living in the age of production, as far as the Gospel Song is concerned, and have with us the rubbish as well as the gems. In any event, is the artistic test the right one? In my judgment, while it ought not to be ignored, it ought not on the other hand to be too greatly stressed. The Literary Digest quoting from the New York Evening Post in its article on the death of Fanny Crosby, says: "It has come to be the fashion nowadays to sneer at Gospel Hymns, to decry their lack of poetry and their jingling melodies, but if they are judged, not by the strict canons of English versification and the laws of harmony, but by the religious appeal they make to the masses, then they rank high in hymnology." Perhaps this is going too far in the other direction but certainly the artistic standard is not the only one.

There have been many standards for a good Hymn but most if not all of these have been based upon an established taste in Church music and make no allowance for the changing tastes of

different ages. I therefore propose the following test, which I think will hold good for all ages:

(1) The words must contain a distinctive religious truth, expressed in verse that will stand a reasonable literary test; they must moreover correspond to some true religious experience, such as worship, aspiration, evangelism, etc.

I am purposely using the word "religious" rather than "Christian," because others beside Christians have hymns. Christian hymns should of course express Christian truth.

(2) The music must be in itself of some merit and must be a channel for the fullest expression of the words.

(3) The combination of words and music must be such as will make the hymn popular.

It will be generally admitted that the first two requirements are reasonable. I have added the third because after all the Hymn is a religious force, and is not of much use if it is not sung.

This test, of course, will allow of a considerable range of subjects and of quality, but will I think be a true standard by which to judge the worth of a Hymn or Gospel Song.

Apply this test first to the Hymns recognized by all as good. The first three hymns in Benson's "The Best Church Hymns" are

(1) "Rock of ages, cleft for me."

(2) "Jesus, lover of my soul."

(3) "When I survey the wondrous cross."

All of these are true to our test. The words in each case worthily express a religious truth; the tunes ordinarily sung to them are true channels for the words; and the combination has recommended itself to Christians generally.

But apply the same test to some of our Gospel Songs. Take for example:

"I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above;
Of Jesus and His glory;
Of Jesus and His love."

or

"Be not dismayed, whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath His wings of love abide,
God will take care of you."

Both of these will meet the test, and both are among our Gospel Songs. It is futile to say that these have not the popularity of the first named three; that ~~the~~ statement might be challenged, and even if true, does not alter the contention made, for these songs are favorites, wherever they are known. Nor is it a valid argument that we have chosen among the best of our Gospel Songs for the test, for that is still more true of the first three. As earlier pointed out there are among the compositions of men who rank high as Hymn writers, productions of very poor quality. Lorenz rightly claims that our estimates of the two classes have been largely unfair, since we have inherited only the best of the Hymns while we are in the producing age of the Songs.

Judged by a practical test such as this, the best Gospel Songs are entitled to rank with the Hymns of the Church, and bearing in mind that they bring into our Hymnody the note of evangelism, a note which has come to be the dominant note in our American Christianity, our attitude should be not that of condemnation, but that of wise discrimination. Then will our Hymnody be greatly enriched by this new stream.

2. Has the contribution of the Movement to American Christianity outweighed its defects?

We are perhaps still too near the scene of action to pass a true judgment upon this question, but we can form at least a fairly reasonable one by a brief consideration of the contribution and defects as outlined in previous chapters.

(1) As to the contribution of the Movement.

This we saw to be three-fold:

- a. The contribution of the movement to the modern "revival."
- b. The improvement of congregational singing.
- c. The production of songs of merit.

In all of these we have items of great and permanent value to our American Christianity. The modern revival, with all its faults, has been an expression of a sincere and deep-seated desire to win souls for the Kingdom of God, and in so far as the songs have contributed to this end their influence is eternal. In this connection an extract from a letter recently received from Dr. A. C. Dixon, now of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London, will be of interest. He writes: "One of the most effective services in the Moody Church, Chicago, during the last fifteen years has been the Gospel Song Service the last Sunday evening of each month. It has drawn immense crowds, and frequently the largest number of converts during the month at any one service is the result of that meeting."

The improvement of congregational singing has also been of great value in strengthening the "passion for souls" and giving a channel of expression for the joys of the Christian life.

And, finally, in the better Gospel Songs we have a treasure which will some day be a cherished heritage of the Church.

Now it will be noted that all of these are permanent benefits, likely to influence and bless Christianity as long as the world lasts.

(2) As to the defects of the Movement.

These were six:

- a. A large number of poor songs and song books.
- b. The short life of the songs.
- c. The purely "Gospel" character of the movement.
- d. The disuse of the great Hymns of the Church.
- e. The "personal" character of the books.
- f. The commercializing of the movement.

Looking over this list it will be found that none of these effects will necessarily be permanent. The poor songs and song-books will die of themselves as the poor songs of the past have done; the songs are not all short-lived, the good ones indeed will in all probability be long-lived, and the short life of the poor ones will be a blessing in that they will all the sooner be removed from use; while it is possible to minimize if not altogether remove the remaining bad effects by the exercise of a wise discrimination and control on the part of our religious leaders.

My conclusion therefore is that the good effects of the movement, being permanent, do outweigh its bad effects, and give promise of a time when American if not world Christianity will be immeasurably richer for this new stream of Hymnody.

3. Has the ultimate spiritual effect of the Movement
been bad or good?

In the long run this, after all, is the real test. A song or hymn may be poor poetry, expressed in poor music, but if its effect upon the spiritual life of people is good then it must in itself be pronounced good.

It is undeniable that the use of the Gospel Song has stimulated the emotions of Christian people, and on this ground its advocates claim for it a high plane of usefulness. Feeling, however, that the persons whose judgment on this question has most weight, are rather pastors than evangelists, because the pastors as a rule have more at heart the permanent benefit of their people, I have discussed this question with pastors of different denominations, and find the ruling opinion to be that the effects of the exclusive use of the Gospel Song have been temporary and superficial; that it tends to develop a light and thoughtless type of Christianity, and to render tasteless and dull the more serious and weighty sides of our Christian life. This is a serious criticism of the Gospel Song, but it must be borne in mind that it has reference to its exclusive use, and that almost without exception the pastors acknowledge that it has supplied a valuable element in our Hymnody which was before lacking. Of itself its tendency is to produce a one-sided and undeveloped form of Christian character, but in conjunction with the more standard Church music, it is valuable.

In the light of all these considerations our judgment of the Movement is:

1. That in its present uncontrolled state it is of very doubtful

value; tending to the development of a superficial and emotional type of Christian character; open to very serious and weighty objections; and contributing more of harm than of good to American Christianity.

3. That there are in the movement elements of great value and possibilities of permanent good, and that the whole matter resolves itself into a question of whether the movement can be controlled and these possibilities developed. Personally I believe this can be done; that the evils are largely those incident to the early stages of all great religious movements; and that the solution of the whole question is to be found in a wise control of the music of the Churches on the part of the leaders of our religious life and work.

Chapter VIII.

Controlling the Movement.

Our study of the Gospel Song Movement has led to the conclusion that its value largely depends upon whether it can be controlled or not. The purpose of this chapter is to put forward two suggestions as to how it may be controlled. The first of these suggestions is not original. I have found it in more than one book on Church music, and I include it because it would undoubtedly go far to give our Churches better music and to control the Gospel Song. The second suggestion is put forward because it seems to me to offer a practical solution of the problem, and at the same time to guarantee to our Churches the highest and best music that the Christianity of all ages has produced or will produce.

The first suggestion is

A Chair of Music in every Theological Seminary.

Curwen in his "Studies in Worship Music," Series II, advocates this, as does Lorenz also in his "Practical Church Music." The point of view in both these cases however is the need of improving our Church Music, and of fitting our Pastors for leadership in the music as well as in the other Departments of Church work.

While too much can hardly be said in favor of this view, such

a chair is advocated in this discussion rather because of the need, under present conditions, of having in every church some person whose heart is in the work, and who will be able to safeguard his people from the evils of the indiscriminate publication of Gospel Song Books. The average Church has no such person, but adopts a song book either because it is cheap, or because it has been recommended by a friend (who may have heard of it from some other friend), or because it was used at a Revival Meeting, or in some other equally satisfactory way. Now in view of the many song-books of all qualities that are on the market, and of the commercial spirit that urges their sale on any and all occasions, such a condition of things is most unsatisfactory, and some provision is imperatively needed to safeguard our Churches from exploitation by music publishers. The choir-master can do this if he is the right kind of man, but often he himself, while educated along the line of classical music, is utterly unable to pass a sound judgment upon the Song Books that come before the church and to make a wise selection when the church is in need of a new supply of books. More often, however, the choir-master, if there be one, is but poorly educated in musical matters himself, and is chosen for his position simply because he is the best man available. A music committee is hardly more satisfactory, for it is seldom composed of persons competent to judge of the quality of music. The Pastor is, of all men, the best man to do this work, partly because he is at the head of the Church and his opinion consequently has most weight, and partly because he is the man upon whose care and judgment the welfare of the work principally depends. Fortunate is that church that

has a Pastor that can wisely choose the Song Book for his Church; and wisely direct the music as well as the other departments of his church. Under existing conditions, however, where can such a Pastor be found? Here and there is one who has received some musical training elsewhere, but to far the greater number the music of the church is more of a foreign language than Greek and Hebrew; and the situation is aggravated by the fact that the ignorant pastor does not try to read and expound from the Greek and Hebrew, while a man equally ignorant of music does feel competent to oversee the music of his church. A start in the right direction has however been made; the Presbyterian Seminary in this City has a music course; the South Western Baptist Seminary put in such a course last fall; and our own Seminary has, for the last three years, made some musical training a part of the curriculum. In addition to these, there is in Chicago, in connection with the Moody Bible Institute, a first class practical musical course, under the able direction of Dr. D. B. Towner, which has done much to give some musical education to ministers of all denominations, besides training men for the evangelistic singing field. Other seminaries doubtless could be found with music courses, but the field is still largely untouched and there is need of more systematic work. In a letter which I recently received from Dr. Towner, he says, "I wish the time might come when every educational institution, that is, seminaries, would have a music course. It would not interfere with our work here-- it would strengthen it, because it would get the people to see that there was something in it that was demanded by those who

are educators, in the best sense, of men and women for Christian work."

Wherever possible I would strongly advocate a course of musical instruction patterned on that of the Moody Institute, both in order to fit our pastors for effective oversight of the music of their churches, and in order that our evangelistic singers may go to their work with their ideals high and pure. But where such a course is not immediately practicable, I would suggest the following as a step in the right direction:

(1) Every Theological Student, before graduation, should be required to pass a reasonably difficult test in reading music from sight.

(2) Every student should be required to take a course in song-conducting.

(3) Provision should be made for studying the correct interpretation of hymns and songs, so that in both reading and singing the best results might be obtained.

(4) Some instruction should be given in the technique of hymns and songs.

Such a course would not call for a detailed knowledge of music, but it would fit the pastor to pass an intelligent judgment on the music of his church and so to save his people from bad song books.

This musical training should be considered fully as important a part of the preacher's preparation as the other branches, and the Professor in charge should be a thoroughly trained and competent man who would take his place as a member of the Faculty of the Institution. As long as the music is given a subordinate

place--an indication that its importance is not fully appreciated --so long will our Churches be ill served on the music side of their work. I hope the day is not far distant when our own Seminary will have a Music Course worthy of the importance which rightly attaches to this branch of ministerial education.

My second suggestion; the one on which I would lay special emphasis; is

A Denominational Music Committee.

In my judgment the best solution of the whole problem lies in the appointment by all the great Denominations of permanent music committees, whose duty it should be to provide satisfactory song books for the use of the Denomination.

The need of some Denominational control must be evident to anyone who looks over our present situation and sees the endless variety of song-books in use by our Churches. Some use the Denominational Hymn Books for their regular services and one or other of the various Gospel Song Books for their other meetings; others have discarded the Denominational Hymn Books altogether and use some Gospel Song Book exclusively. And among the users of the Gospel Song Books there is no Denominational uniformity, with the result that we have a patchwork hymnody whose varying quality is a factor of decidedly questionable value to our church and Denominational life.

The evils resulting from the exclusive use of the Gospel Song have already been discussed, but it is worth while to note here that these evils are aggravated by the fact that in many cases

the song book used is of very poor quality and one whose influence upon the musical taste and spiritual development of our people is decidedly harmful.

Nor must the fact be overlooked that this indiscriminate use makes impossible the growth of a Denominational Hymnody. Denominationalism may be condemned by those who do not approve of it, but its existence must be taken into account, and it should be made to contribute its best to the work of Christianity. As matters now stand we have no distinctive Denominational Hymnody, and this is a decided loss. There will of course always be a vast number of hymns and songs which transcend Denominational lines, but since we live and work within these lines, and do so because we believe in the tenets of our own Denominations; and since we seek to teach our beliefs from the pulpit, in the Sunday School, and through the Denominational press, there is no reason why a force which has so large an influence should be left unused.

The position may be taken that we have our Denominational Hymn Books, and that these have been prepared at great trouble by capable committees, and are sufficient to meet the needs. But a glance at the actual conditions will show that however sufficient they may be theoretically to meet the needs of our people, in practice they fail to do so, and our people have consequently very largely laid them aside, to the great detriment of our Christian standards of life and morals. Nor is the reason for this insufficiency hard to find, for an examination of the average Hymnal will show that it takes little or no account of the needs and

tastes of the people, but it is compiled from the standpoint of literary and artistic merit. To reply that this would elevate the standards of our people is to beg the whole question, for nothing can have much effect on our people which they do not use. But, on the other hand, the exclusive use of the Gospel Song has, as before pointed out, brought about in our Churches a lamentable ignorance of the great Hymns of the Church.

By the appointment of such a Committee as I suggest the situation could be greatly improved. In their work they could take into account the needs of our Churches both for Gospel Songs and for the more conservative Hymnody, and could at the same time save our Churches from a good deal of unnecessary expense in the purchase of books; safeguard our Churches from exploitation by compilers and publishers; and provide for constantly improving collections of hymns which would later on become valued assets of our Denominations. The duty of the Committee should be twofold:

(1) The preparation of a Denominational Hymn Book.

The first duty of the Committee should be the immediate preparation of a satisfactory Hymn Book for the Denomination, one that would meet its varied needs. Three things should enter into their plans:

a. The size of the Hymn Book.

As a general thing our Denominational Hymn Books are far too large. Only a small part of the hymns are sung and the rest are merely ballast. A statement made on the title page of "Christian Praise" published in 1874, is of interest in this connection.

"Books of thrice the bulk and twice the price of Christian Praise abound, rich in didactic poetry; but trial finds two-thirds of their volume made up of hymns which never can, and in point of fact never are, used in public worship; while their dead-weight is a sore burden on the finances of the congregation. For confirmation, the publishers fear not an appeal to the clergy, not doubting their experience in general will coincide with one of seven years of the largest uptown churches in New York, whose music leader's record shows 383 different hymns used in 7 years. Excluding hymns used but once or twice reduced the number to 188, in a book containing 1286." I recognize that the task of making a small selection would be a very difficult one, but I believe it could be done, and even though some of the best hymns were omitted, the fact that it would bring the others into common use would more than offset that loss. The aim of the Committee should be, of course, to include those hymns which both from their own merit, and from their general acceptance, have proved their worth. In my judgment the selection should not number over 500 pieces.

b. The Character of the Book.

In considering the needs of our Churches it will be found that there are three classes of hymns or songs which must have a place: hymns of devotion and worship; gospel songs; and hymns and songs for special occasions. A suggested division of the book among these three classes would be to include 200 Hymns, 200 Gospel Songs, and 100 Songs for special occasions, though this division is purely arbitrary, and it might be found in working out the plan that some changes in it should be made. I think,

however, the proportion of songs should be approximately what I have suggested. Whatever division is made, the different sections of the Book should be clearly marked so that needed songs could be found with the least possible trouble. In this connection also it might be well to call attention to the fact earlier recorded, that the style of printing has much to do with the use of a song book, and to urge that the words be printed between the clefs rather than at the bottom of the page. The greater facility in singing which this would give would help greatly in the effort to have the book used.

c. The Price of the Book.

One reason for the wide use of the Gospel Song Book is its cheapness. The average Hymn Book Committee of a Church is guided in its choice of a book as much by price as by quality. A case recently came under my own notice where a Church had occasion to purchase new books. The pastor strongly urged a change in the Book, as the old one was in his opinion not the best; but the question of expense ruled out our Denominational Books, and eventually an additional supply of the books already in use was purchased in order to save money. I give this as illustrating the statement just made, and have no doubt that other pastors could relate similar experiences.

The price of our Denominational Hymn Books is one great factor working against their more common use, and when it is remembered that a great many of the songs included are not used, the need for some cheaper book is apparent. The Gospel Song Book is uniformly cheap and a church feels that it can afford to purchase

such a book, where it would hesitate to purchase a more expensive one. When the fact is taken into account that the Gospel Song Books are published for profit, while a Denominational Book such as I suggest would not be so published, and when it is remembered also that uniform use by a Denomination would give an enormous circulation, I can see no reason why a Hymn Book of 500 Hymns, well printed and bound, should not be put on the market at least as cheaply as the average Gospel Song Book, and it would then be found possible to use it where now only the Gospel Song Book is used, to the decided advantage of our Churches.

(3) Revision of the Song Book.

This in my judgment is as necessary a part of the duties of the Committee as the preparation of the Book. Indeed it may not be too much to say, that the failure to provide for effective revision has been one of the chief reasons why our Denominational Hymn Books have lost their influence. The tastes of people change with the passing years, and it is useless to expect the people of today to coincide in their taste in Church music with the people of 20 years ago. Moreover, it will be manifestly impossible for any body of men, however gifted and consecrated, to make a selection which should have no flaws; but provision for constant revision should more and more fully eliminate these flaws, and tend towards the production of a growingly satisfactory Book. It is for these reasons that I propose a permanent Committee. In this connection two things have to be considered:

a. The Frequency of the Revision.

This should be guided by the life of the books themselves.

It is useless to urge upon a Church the purchase of new and revised Books when the old books are in good condition. But if a time could be chosen when the books would in any event need renewing, that would be the natural time for issuing an improved book. It will of course be impossible to suit all Churches under this plan, because in some the books will need replacing sooner than in others, but I think if a period of say five years was adopted as the standard, it would about cover the average life of a well-bound book, it not being forgotten that the smaller book suggested would have a longer life than the present large collections. My proposal is therefore that the Committee should issue a revised edition of the Hymn Book every five years, and that as the Churches come to need new books they should purchase the revised books.

b. The basis of Revision.

This should not rest on the decisions of the Committee. Three things must enter into our discussion here: first, the impossibility, already noted, of the Committee producing a faultless selection; second, the changing needs of the people; third, the continued production of songs and hymns worthy of a place in the Hymn Book. In order to meet these conditions the revision must rest upon a wider basis than the judgment of the Committee. I suggest two plans:

First: The co-operation of the Denomination should be sought.

From the very beginning the pastors and evangelists throughout the Denomination should be urged to give full use to the Hymn Book, not confining their singing to the songs already known, but

as far as possible making use of the whole collection, at the same time taking note of what songs in each Department of the book prove most popular and helpful. Then, about a year before the expiration of each 5-year period, letters should be addressed to the pastors and evangelists asking for a list of the 10 or 20 songs in each section that have proved most helpful. From the replies to these letters, by a process of balloting, the 50 songs in each department receiving the smallest number of votes should be dropped out, and their places filled by the best efforts and discrimination of the Committee. This will allow for correction of errors of judgment in previous editions and for suiting the changing tastes of the people, and, in the case of the Gospel Songs and the Songs for special occasions, would give ample opportunity for the inclusion of the best of the new productions.

Second: Inducements should be offered for song production.

The details of this would of necessity have to be worked out by the Committee as their work proceeded, but some general plan of offering prizes or premiums for the best work, in addition to paying the royalties or purchasing the copyrights, should attract the interest of all composers, and in the course of the 5 years bring into the hands of the Committee an ample body of songs from which to make a good selection to replace the songs lost through the ballot.

The Personnel of the Committee.

In general I would say that the Committee should not be composed of musicians. I take this position knowing that musicians

would naturally be the first persons chosen, and because I am satisfied that to appoint such a committee would defeat the plan from the beginning.

The question of personal bias comes in so strongly in a question of this kind that it would be almost impossible for a committee of musicians to choose wisely. Inevitably one of two conditions would result: either, as in the case of the Gospel Song Books, the compositions of the musicians would be in the majority --the most probable result; or, through a false sense of modesty, compositions by members of the committee ^h which are worthy of inclusion would be omitted. In either case the object of the Committee would be defeated. I propose rather a carefully selected Committee of Pastors with musical training and discernment, who should form a permanent Board after the pattern of our Sunday School Boards, and thro' their touch with the tastes and needs of the people, and their own musical knowledge, be able to make a wise choice of hymns and songs, for, after all, while the musical side of the matter must not be lost sight of, we must not forget the fact to which I have elsewhere called attention, that the singing of our people is pre-eminently a religious force, and the Hymns must be chosen from that point of view.

The Committee should be appointed by the Denomination at its annual meeting, and should be given full powers to prepare such a Hymn Book as is here proposed, and to make revisions from time to time. It should be as fully representative as possible.

In size it should be limited; a small Committee would be more

likely to do effective work than a large Committee, and, in view of the proposed co-operation of the Denomination, a large Committee would be unnecessary.

Vacancies in the Committee should be filled by the Denomination at its annual meetings. A self-perpetuating Committee would be likely to become one-sided, and this could best be guarded against by Denominational appointment when vacancies occur. Should occasion arise for the filling of a vacancy under such conditions that to wait for the annual meeting would cause harmful delay, the presiding officer of the Denomination could be empowered to appoint the new member.

Now as to the practical working-out of the plan. The Denomination could go on record at the annual meeting at which the Committee was appointed, accepting their work as the standard Hymn Book of the Denomination, and recommending that as soon as possible after its publication it should be introduced into the Churches. Similar action by the State Conventions and District Associations, or the regular units of the Denomination, would bring the matter before the local churches, and be a big help in the introduction of the Book. At the same time advertisements and editorials in the Denominational papers could urge its acceptance. Our evangelists and their singers could also be urged to use it for the congregational singing in their meetings, and so through one way and another its use would be extended. At first, of course, there would be some, perhaps many, congregations that would cling to their old ways, but I believe that, gradually, practically the whole of our churches would adopt it, and a great step forward

in efficiency would be taken.

Finally, let it be frankly stated that this plan is not put forward as having no drawbacks, but as offering a practical solution of the problem which the Gospel Song Movement has brought to us.

We are passing through a critical time in our religious history, when there is an increasing tendency to ignore the deeper needs of our religious selves, and to cater to the superficial and emotional. Wise and systematic control of the singing of our people would go far toward remedying this condition, and it is with the prayer that such control may result that I bring to a close this discussion of "The Gospel Song Movement."

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