

If you think that this little congregation stands alone in the world; if you think that there is no other congregation of Christians like it in its teaching, and in the administration of the divinely appointed ordinances, you are in great error. If you please we will give attention to the following statistical statement, based on the last United States census report. The Disciples of Christ have in the United States 4,861 congregations, 3,658 ordained ministers, and 567,448 communicants. That you may have a more definite idea of their numerical strength, I will give the statistics of seven or eight leading Protestant bodies in this country—the Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Disciples, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians. In this list where do the Disciples stand? Counting the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South as one, the Methodists easily lead in point of numbers. The Baptists stand next. But here are the exact figures.

	Congregations.	Ministers.	Communicants.
Baptists.....	24,794	15,401	2,133,044
Methodist Episcopal.....	16,721	9,261	1,680,779
M. E. Church South.....		3,593	828,013
Lutheran.....	5,556	3,102	684,570
Presbyterian.....	5,338	4,020	573,337
Disciples.....	4,861	3,658	567,448
Congregationalists.....	3,689	3,589	383,685
Episcopal.....	3,049	3,242	323,876

The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South have 2,508,792 members. In the report from which these figures are taken, the number of congregations belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church is not given. Hence the blank in the above table.

In the number of congregations the Disciples of Christ stand fifth; in the number of ordained ministers fourth; and in the number of members fifth. In the number of congregations, ministers, and members, the Disciples are stronger than either the Congregationalists or Episcopalians.

When you consider these figures and consider the comparatively brief period of time which has passed since the beginning of this movement, I think that you will agree with me in saying that in the rapidity of its growth, this is one of the marvels of the nineteenth century. What religious enterprise since the establishment of Christianity on the earth has had such a rapid development?

The first Presbyterian church in the United States was organized in Philadelphia in 1703—183 years ago. John Wesley was invited to come to this country in 1735. He came and worked in Georgia about two years and a half. In 1766 there lived in New York, in Barrack Street, near where the present City Hall stands, a man named Philip Embury, a carpenter by trade, who had heard Wesley preach in Ireland, and who was also a local preacher in the "Connection." His first meeting was attended by six persons, and that was the beginning of what we now call Old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, the cradle of American Methodism. The beginning, therefore, of Methodism, on Manhattan Island, was in 1766—120 years ago. The gospel was preached in this Island in 1712—174 years ago—by a Baptist preacher, and a number of persons were baptized. A congregation was organized in 1724, which, at the commencement of the Revolutionary War, numbered two hundred communicants. The Lutherans began work in this country in 1621. Episcopalians from the settlement of Virginia, in 1607, have been at work in America. King Charles II. granted permission to build what is now known as King's Chapel, in Boston, just across the street from the Parker House, in 1697. Of course the Congregationalists have had a foot-hold on

American soil since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620—266 years ago. When was this religious movement on behalf of Christian union by a return to the simple religion of Jesus as He gave it to the world in the beginning—"its faith in its purity—its practice without change"—when, I say, was this enterprise inaugurated?

The first published document in its behalf is dated in 1809—only seventy-seven years ago. This was an appeal by Thomas Campbell, a Presbyterian minister, to evangelical Christians to unite in preaching the gospel to the people. The initial Number of the first periodical, the *Christian Baptist*, bears date August 3, 1823, a publication conducted for seven years by Alexander Campbell, a son of the Thomas Campbell whom I have just mentioned. This periodical was followed by a monthly publication called the *Millennial Harbinger*, which continued to appear month by month until there were forty annual volumes. With these facts before me, if I were to indulge in what some would call denominational boasting, I do not think that you would accuse me of committing the unpardonable sin. It is certainly so small a matter when men ask, "Who are the Disciples? What do they amount to any way?" To be able to reply that in the number of organized churches we stand fifth; in the number of ordained ministers fourth; and in the number of members fifth. I do not, however, place these facts before you in a spirit of party pride. I am asked continually for information concerning the numerical strength of the people with whom I am pleased to be identified, and I reply as above. God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For all good, dear brethren, let us humbly and reverently thank God.

As to the periodical literature of the Disciples I find in the *Year Book* the name of twenty-three papers—nine weekly papers, eight monthly, five semi-monthly, and one quarterly. Of Sunday-School papers there are eleven—four weekly, three monthly, one monthly and quarterly, two quarterly, and one quarterly and weekly. These papers are published in the interest of the Disciples of Christ in the United States. We have also papers published in Australia, in Canada, in Scotland, in England, in Jamaica, in Denmark, and in France. The aggregate circulation of each issue of the papers published in this country is estimated at 405,000. I cannot take time to speak of the books which have been written and published by the Disciples. They are numerous, and treat of every phase of the effort which we are making to unite Christians in the simple faith and practice of the Apostolic Era of the Christian Church. Concerning the educational enterprises of the Disciples, I find in the *Year Book* the names of forty-two colleges with 6,595 matriculates for the year 1884-'85.

Our mission work in foreign lands began only about ten years ago. From the first, however, the Disciples have possessed a missionary spirit. We began work years ago in Africa; and established also a mission in the City of Jerusalem, one outcome of which was the publication, by our missionary, Dr. James T. Barclay, of a volume entitled *The City of the Great King*, which is an authority on the subject of which it treats. But we were premature in entering on these missionary enterprises, as up to ten years ago we had all that we could do to preach the gospel to the people of our own land, to organize churches, to build houses of worship, to found schools, and to endow colleges. But since the commencement of foreign missionary work ten years ago God has so blessed us that now we support evangelists in England, France, Denmark, Japan, Jamaica, India, Turkey, and Asia Minor. A worker is now

en route to China, and the way seems to be opening in the providence of God for a participation on our part in the spiritual enlightenment of the Dark Continent. The number of missionaries enrolled is thirty-four, and considering the brief time in which we have been engaged in the work, we are not ashamed of the result. There are twenty-five State organizations for home mission work. And besides these, the General Christian Missionary Convention gives exclusive attention to home missions. It does not, however, establish missions in States where there is a sufficient force to maintain efficient State organizations. The new States and Territories of the rapidly growing West, the States of the reviving South, and the Atlantic Coast, are the fields in which the General Christian Missionary Convention is expected to establish and support missions.

I desire to make emphatic the statement that the Disciples of Christ originated in a feeling of dissatisfaction with the divisions and discords, and hence the comparative inefficiency of Protestantism in the evangelization of the world. It was remembered by pious men in various denominations, chiefly, however, among the Presbyterians, that Jesus prayed that all who believe on Him, through the teachings of the Apostles, might be one as He and the Father are one, that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him. Believers in the days of the holy Apostles were very closely united, and they were wonderfully successful in turning men to the Lord. It was when Christ's disciples were of one heart and one soul that the gospel gained some of its most splendid victories. It was at this time that a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith. In union is strength. Not only did Jesus pray for such a union of His disciples as would impress the world in His favor, but His heaven inspired representatives exhorted believers to live together in unity. The Apostle Paul, for instance, addressing the saints who were in Rome, said: "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." And, "Now I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." \* \* \* "And I brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." \* \* \* "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" And unto the saints in Ephesus: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Thus Jesus prayed, and thus His disciples taught and exhorted. It is not, therefore, a thing to occasion surprise that godly men in the early part of the nineteenth century were impressed with the evils of division among Christians and earnestly and prayerfully sought a remedy. But the question was: *What is the remedy? How can divided Christendom be united?* In answer to these questions the leaders in this effort in behalf of Christian unity and union, said: "Nothing ought to be required as a term of union, communion, and co-operation that is not as