The Epideictic Speaking of Robert Love Taylor Between 1891 and 1906.

Raymond Wright Buchanan Jr

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/1829
BUCHANAN, Jr., Raymond Wright, 1937-
THE EPIDEICTIC SPEAKING OF ROBERT LOVE TAYLOR
BETWEEN 1891 AND 1906.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural
and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1970
Speech

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan
THE EPIDEICTIC SPEAKING OF ROBERT LOVE TAYLOR
BETWEEN 1891 and 1906

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanicai College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

Raymond W. Buchanan, Jr.
B. A., David Lipscomb College, 1959
M. A., Louisiana State University, 1967
August, 1970
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. Waldo W. Braden, director of the study, for his patience, encouragement, and guidance. He wishes also to thank the other members of his committee, Dr. John L. Loos, Dr. Harold Mixon, Dr. John Pennybacker, and Dr. Claude Shaver, for their helpful suggestions. He is also deeply indebted to Dr. Robert H. White, Dr. Daniel Merritt Robison, and the entire staff of the Tennessee State Library, for their assistance in procuring information necessary for this study. He expresses gratitude to Judge Robert Love Taylor and his mother, Mrs. Hillsman Taylor, for their cooperation in making materials available.

The author also owes a debt of gratitude to his many friends in Middle Tennessee: to Dr. Carroll B. Ellis, Chairman, Department of Speech, David Lipscomb College, who first suggested the study; to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Delk, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Pardue, and Mr. Henry Winkler, for their encouragement and assistance.

Finally the writer expresses grateful appreciation to his wife, Irma, and his two sons, Michael and Steven, without whose patience, kindness, encouragement, and understanding this study could not have been completed.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS.</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER

I. The Introduction
   - Significance of the Study: 3
   - Purpose: 4
   - Methodology: 5
   - Contributory Studies: 15

II. Robert Taylor's Oratorical Development
   - Family Background and Influence: 17
   - Formal Speech Education: 25
   - Method of Speech Preparation: 29
   - Method of Delivery: 31
   - Taylor's Emerging Southern Image: 33
   - Taylor's Political Career and Methods: 41
   - Taylor's Lecture Career: 61
   - The Bob Taylor Magazine: 72

III. Analysis of Taylor's Popular Lecture, "Dixie"
   - The Formal Lecture as a Speaking Occasion: 86
   - Audiences and Occasions: 93
   - Description of Text: 96
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of Magnification</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Analysis of Two Confederate Addresses</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Historical Context</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasion and Audience:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee Centennial Address</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Text</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of Magnification</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Analysis of the Address at the Memorial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service of Isham G. Harris</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasion and Audience</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Text</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy of Magnification</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. The Nature of Robert Taylor's Ceremonial Speaking</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe, analyze, and evaluate representative ceremonial speeches that Robert Love Taylor delivered between 1891 and 1906 in order to determine the source of his effectiveness as a speaker and how his speaking contributed to his total impact.

This study first identifies the image of Taylor, including an examination of his background, influences, and professional career, with special emphasis on the development of his southern identity. Secondly, it embraces a rhetorical study of four representative speeches: (1) the popular lecture "Dixie"; (2) address to ex-Confederates on Confederate Day at the Tennessee Centennial celebration; (3) address to ex-Confederates at the Confederate reunion in Brownsville, Tennessee; (4) the Isham G. Harris eulogy. Materials for this study were gathered from personal interviews, newspaper accounts, unpublished materials including private letters, diaries, and papers, and secondary sources.

In contrast to the typical rhetorical study based upon the Aristotelian method, this study focuses upon intensive analysis of the language symbols and forms of the epideictic speech. Instead of looking at logical elements, its goal is to reveal the devices used to achieve impressiveness including: (1) appeals to things magnificent;
(2) appeals to things memorable; (3) appeals to things
magnanimous; (4) appeals to sectional loyalty and pride;
(5) appeals through humor, folktales, and illustrations.
These elements are discussed in light of the factors of
identification evident in each speaking occasion.

This study reveals that Taylor was probably effec-
tive in attaining the ends of epideictic speaking. Tech-
nically, the speeches appear to have grace and beauty. In
addition, Taylor seemingly had a knack for saying the right
thing at the right moment. He pleased his audiences by
identifying with their commonly held beliefs and myths, both
the universal myths of rural living and the aristocratic
romanticism of the antebellum South, including the myths of
the Lost Cause and Confederate soldier.

This study further reveals that Taylor realized the
impact of the myths, folktales, anecdotes, and illustrations
he employed through frequent use of analogy. In fact, his
ceremonial speeches move through force of analogy. Images,
myths, anecdotes, and illustrations, drawn from the commonly
held beliefs of the audiences, were portrayed graphically
by Taylor and made analogous to the objects of his praise.

In the final analysis, Taylor emerges not as an
original thinker, but an effective popularizer of the think-
ing of others. He adapted what he heard and read so that
his listeners could understand and appreciate it.
This study reveals, however, that Taylor was more than a professional speaker of special occasion. In addition, he loved the power and prestige of political office. He won popularity in Tennessee primarily because he repeatedly expressed what the people wanted to hear in language they could appreciate. His ceremonial speeches aided his political ambitions in two ways: first, they kept him in the public eye, and secondly, they afforded him frequent opportunities to express the myths of the Lost Cause, the Confederate soldier, and the New South. Not only did this frequent repetition intensify these images, but it also surrounded Taylor with the aura of a southern hero. When Taylor ran for political office the voters did not forget this "defender of all we hold dear." This observation leads to the recognition that ceremonial situations may be used both directly and indirectly, through expression of myth and stereotype, to exert influence in social and political matters.
CHAPTER ONE

THE INTRODUCTION

The latter part of the nineteenth century presented fertile ground in the South for perpetuation of illusions, myths, and pretentions relative to the Lost Cause. The southern populace seemed to be afflicted with a "prevailing sense of inferiority and the constant need for justifying a position."¹ Consequently, there arose those who found advantage in idealizing the romanticism and sentimentality of the Old South. Politicians used the myths of this bygone era to establish an identity with their frustrated constituents. In both North and South popular lecturers found considerable profit in delivering speeches on southern themes. For example, the H. F. Smith Company, of Richmond, Virginia, "a southern agency for the best southern talent," listed two professional speakers: Polk Miller and his lecture, "Old Times Down South," and Judge F. R. Farrar, and his lecture, "Old Johnny Reb."² Speaking for profit, these men and countless others like them, helped keep alive


²From a letterhead, found in the Robert L. Taylor Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville Tennessee, box 1, folder 12.
the myths of the Lost Cause.

This study concerns the speaking of one such man, both politician and popular lecturer, Robert Love Taylor, who, caught in the web of the southern past, found profit and public acceptance in promoting an image of which he had little part. He spoke from coast to coast, as a political power in his own state of Tennessee, and as a professional lecturer, whose lectures on southern themes were heard by tens of thousands. Delong Rice, who for some twenty years was Taylor's lecture manager, while probably exaggerating his estimate, indicated Taylor's popularity as a lecturer when he said: "If all his audiences could be gathered they would make a multitude of millions of people."3

A survey of Taylor's career indicates that he was an important political figure in his state for more than thirty years. In addition, he lectured professionally on southern themes, delivered dozens of commencement addresses, eulogies, and other speeches of special occasion all over the United States. He identified himself with the New South and its ideals. Yet, while being an active propagandist of this "New Order," he clung to and identified with the Old South

in his speeches. For the most part, he built his speeches around traditional southern themes, folk stories, humor, and myths, all apparently designed to keep alive the glories of the Lost Cause. Wherever he traveled and whenever he spoke, on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line, he eulogized and lauded the South. In apology he was not militant, using instead humor, good will, mythology, ideology, and graphic descriptions. Like several other orators, writers, and educators between 1890 and 1910, Taylor attempted to emphasize the respectability of the region and to promote the image of the New South, as well as the salvageable virtues of the Old South.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study rests on the one basic premise that Robert Love Taylor was a significant orator who served to perpetuate the myths and symbols of the South. His oratory, which has been extensively praised, has not often been carefully analyzed and evaluated. Typical of the commendation is this statement of Judge Baxter Taylor of Oklahoma, who accompanied Robert Taylor on many of his lecture tours throughout the United States: "Whatever may be written of the unusual and varied gifts of Robert Love Taylor, it possibly can be asserted with perfect truth that
his one supreme talent was that of an orator."4

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to describe, analyze, and evaluate representative ceremonial speeches that Robert Love Taylor delivered between 1891 and 1906, in order to determine the source of his effectiveness and the contributions, if any, that he made to public address.

The fifteen year period between 1891 and 1906 represents the most active years in Taylor's speaking career. Not only was he engaged in lecturing, but he served as Governor of Tennessee during the Centennial Celebration and Industrial Exposition of 1897, thus presenting him with numerous opportunities for ceremonial speaking.

The four representative speeches chosen for analysis and evaluation are: the popular lecture "Dixie;" address to ex-Confederates on Ex-Confederate Day at the Tennessee Centennial Celebration in 1897; address to ex-Confederates at a reunion in Brownsville, Tennessee, August, 1902; and a eulogy delivered in honor of Isham G. Harris, November, 1897.

These speeches are representative for two reasons. First, they are typical of three types of ceremonial

4Taylor Brothers, p. 330.
speeches delivered by Taylor: (1) the popular lecture; (2) memorial or dedicatory addresses; (3) the eulogy.  
Secondly, of the more than thirty speeches examined, these best present Taylor's southern posture and thus provide an insight into the nature of this type of speaking and the attitudes of the speaker toward the context in which he functioned.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study under consideration contains at least three major elements. First, the image of the orator is identified, including an examination of his background, influences, and professional career, with special emphasis on the development of his southern identity and association with the cult of the Lost Cause. Secondly, a rhetorical study is made of each of the selected speeches. Thirdly, final conclusions and evaluations are offered based on certain observations from earlier investigations. The chapter divisions are as follows:

Chapter one: The Introduction.

A. Brief description of the background of the study.

---

B. Significance of the study.
C. Purpose of the study.
D. Methodology employed.
E. Contributory studies.

Chapter two: Development of Taylor's Oratorical Image.
A. Family background and speech training.
B. Taylor's emerging southern image.
C. Taylor's political career and methods.
D. Taylor's lecture career.
E. The Bob Taylor Magazine.

Chapter three: Rhetorical Study of the Lecture "Dixie."

Chapter four: Rhetorical Study of Two Confederate Addresses.

Chapter five: Rhetorical Study of the Isham G. Harris Eulogy.

Chapter six: The Nature of Taylor's Ceremonial Speaking.

The Process of Criticism. The process of rhetorical criticism for chapters three, four, and five follows three basic steps. First, consideration is given to the speaking occasion, including the audience and the over-all strategy employed. Secondly, a textual analysis of the internal
aspects of the speech is made. This inquiry involves consideration of the arrangement of ideas and the specific inner strategies employed by the orator. These inner linguistic strategies include consideration of the various strategies of magnification as enhanced by the concept of identification. The third step includes an evaluation concerning the quality and worth of the speech, both in the immediate situation, as well as long range effects.

It is necessary in understanding the methodology of this study to define further the linguistic strategy of magnification and the concept of identification. These two terms have been adapted, respectively, from Aristotle's Rhetoric and Kenneth Burke's writings, including specifically A Rhetoric of Motives.

In The Rhetoric, Aristotle classifies oratory into three divisions: deliberative, forensic, and epideictic. Since his concept of magnification is associated principally with the epideictic, and since the speeches under consideration fall generally into this category, it is necessary to discuss this classification in some detail.

---


While Aristotle does not attempt to give a working definition of epideictic speaking, he does describe it thoroughly. He says that the elements of an epideictic speech are praise and blame and that "to the epideictic speaker, above all, belongs the present, for everyone praises or blames with regard to existing conditions, though a speaker often adds to his resources with reminiscences from the past and conjectures about the future." Furthermore, Aristotle contends that the aim or goal of those who praise or blame is to honor and dishonor. Moreover, the epideictic speaker "will need propositions regarding magnitude and smallness and the greater and the less." He later explains why magnifying is best suited to epideictic oratory: "Considered generally, of the devices common to all speeches, magnifying is best suited to the epideictic, since the actions to be praised are taken for granted and it only remains to invest them with magnitude and beauty." It is this statement that renders the clearest distinction between epideictic speaking, with the accompanying concept of magnification, and the other types of oratory.

The deliberative speaker "gives advice about things to come, exhorting or dissuading." Thus, he deals with material which may not be generally accepted by the
audience and is advancing arguments (enthymemes) to prove his proposition in order to gain acceptance of his point of view. The key word in reference to deliberative oratory is "expediency:" "for the one who exhorts recommends a course of action as better, and the one who dissuades deters us from it as worse. . . ."

On the other hand, the aim of forensic oratory or judicial speaking concerns "justice and injustice," "accusation and defense." The forensic speaker is attempting to convince and persuade the judges to follow a course of justice. Thus, he advances arguments and presents evidence to the end of getting his judge "into the right state of mind."

In Aristotle's scheme, epideictic oratory differs from the two previously mentioned in that the actions to be praised are already admitted and accepted by the audience and the speaker needs only to magnify them and clothe them in language so impressive that the audience will have their feelings intensified toward the object of the praise. In effect, the epideictic speaker reveals that which is held to be honorable and worthy by the audience, usually using impressive language as his vehicle of expression. This

---

8 Coopera, op. cit., pp. 16-19, 54-55.
explanation suggests the following definition of epideictic oratory: "The act of pointing out and exhibiting...what needs only to be seen in order to be admitted..."9

It is apparent from the previous discussion that ceremonial speaking cannot be critically studied according to the same method and standards as forensic and deliberative. Their primary ends and methods are different. Any analysis, therefore, as Sears suggests, requires "methods distinct, definite, and appropriate to the undertaking." For example, deliberative speaking, in Aristotle's view, involves "discovering the available means of persuasion in a given case." Obviously, the strategy is to affect a change of thinking and consequent action using whatever ethical means are available to the orator, including incorporation of logical forms and motive appeals. However, when the strategy involves a ceremonial situation or speech of special occasion the primary goal may not be a change in behavior, but rather impressiveness. Impressiveness, as used in this study, refers to the immediate, conscious effect produced when the senses or emotions are so aroused as to cause the listeners to translate into experience what

they hear in the speech. As already suggested, impressiveness in use of language may be a means to an end when persuasion is the chief goal, but it often is an end in itself in the ceremonial situation. Impressiveness is realized when the speaker magnifies or minifies, as the case may be, using clear, vivid language, that which the audience already accepts. It follows then, that a critical evaluation of a speech whose over-all strategy is impressiveness must place much emphasis on the inner strategies of magnification and the use of language. This statement naturally leads to the question, "what is the strategy of magnification?"

The strategy of magnification is to the speaker of special occasion what logical form is to the deliberative speaker, except the purposes are different. For example, the speaker whose strategy involves a change in attitude may make strong motive appeals to justice, courage, and wisdom in order to affect a change in the thinking of the audience. The appeal used with this goal in mind is a support or proof. However, the speaker of special

---


11 See Aristotle's discussion of proofs in Cooper, op. cit., pp. 7-16.
occasion may use the same virtues, not necessarily to affect a change of belief and behavior in his audience, since the audience is already in agreement with him, but rather to amplify—meaning to increase the hearers' opinion of a subject—the object of his praise so that the audience may better understand and appreciate that which they believe to be worthy of praise. The strategy of magnification, then, involves those artistic means employed to invest the object of his praise with magnitude or distinction, already admitted, but not clearly realized by the audience.

The concept of identification, as has already been suggested, is borrowed and adapted from Kenneth Burke. Burke believes that the term identification is especially suited to describe the efforts of a speaker who would persuade those who are "at odds" with him:

Why 'at odds,' you may ask, when the titular term is identification? Because, to begin with 'identification' is, by the same token, though roundabout, to confront the implications of division... Identification is affirmed with earnest precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not apart from one another, there

---

would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity. If men were wholly and truly of one substance, absolute communication would be of man's very essence.\textsuperscript{13}

In Burke's view, identification and persuasion are basically one and the same. He explains:

As for the relation between 'identification' and 'persuasion': we might well keep in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identification; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. So there is no chance of our keeping apart the meanings of persuasion, identification ("consubstantiality") and communication (the nature of rhetoric as 'addressed').\textsuperscript{14}

Further, Burke indicates that one can persuade a man "only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your way with his."\textsuperscript{15}

Burke, then, clearly correlates identification to persuasion. Realizing this relationship, the question is naturally raised, "how does identification relate to the speech of special occasion when persuasion may not be the

\textsuperscript{13}Burke, \textit{A Rhetoric of Motives}, p. 22.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid}, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid}, p. 55.
primary goal?" How are magnification and identification related?

The answer to these questions, of course, lie in the nature of the epideictic discourse. The epideictic occasion brings together an audience and a speaker who, due to past, common experiences, are held together--identified--by a common bond. Symbols, like flags and heroes, serve as a cohesive force, points of contact, common ground, by which a speaker can magnify the object of praise. For example, a speaker may assert that "General Gordon is a great patriot because he served the glorious Stars and Bars." A southern audience in the mid 1890's probably responded with thunderous approval because the speaker touched a common symbol of identification--"General Gordon and the Stars and Bars"--linking them both with the virtue of patriotism, thus stimulating the audience and causing them to feel pleasure. Magnification, then, is accomplished to a great extent through mention of the points of identification and really becomes a "special case of persuasion in general."16

In truth, when one examines the typical epideictic speech which is designed to please an audience, he is usually viewing the end result of an extended process of identifi-

16 See Burke's ideas on persuasion by Flattery, op. cit., p. 55.
cation, a process which has brought people together through common causes and symbols; the orator then uses this symbolic identification to intensify further the feelings of his audience toward the object or cause he is praising. In the process of studying the speeches under consideration, special attention is given to such stylistic identification as it enhances the process of magnification.

**CONTRIBUTORY STUDIES**

The most important and comprehensive study completed on Taylor is a Ph.D. thesis entitled, "Robert L. Taylor and Tennessees Politics, 1886-1896," written by Daniel Merritt Robison at Vanderbilt University in 1932. This study, later published under the title, *Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee*, touches Taylor's public speaking only incidentally.

There are two Taylor biographies of significance. The most comprehensive, yet least objective, compiled by his three brothers, James, Alf, and Hugh Taylor, is entitled, *Life and Career of Senator Robert Love Taylor (Our Bob)*. The second, entitled, *Bob and Alf Taylor, Their Lives and Lectures*, was written by Paul Deresco Augsburg. Delong Rice, long time friend and lecture manager of Taylor, wrote an interesting, but nostalgic, account of the Taylor brothers entitled, *Old Limber or*
Tales of the Taylors, which contains many of the folk stories surrounding Bob and Alf Taylor's careers.

In the historical novel, The Fiddle and the Bow, Sara Pett Fain relates the story of Bob and Alf's careers, especially giving insights into their lecture careers. While this book mixes fact and fiction, it does have value because Miss Fain knew the Taylor brothers personally and listened many times to their stories and speeches.

While many have commented on Robert Taylor's oratory, few have been as comprehensive as Lane L. Boutwell in his article, "The Oratory of Robert Love Taylor," which appeared in the Tennessee Historical Quarterly, March, 1950. While this article demonstrates rather extensive research and reveals considerable knowledge of speech criticism, it does not consider Taylor as "Southern apologist," and touches his ceremonial speaking only lightly.
CHAPTER TWO

ROBERT TAYLOR'S ORATORICAL DEVELOPMENT

A full appreciation and understanding of the speaking of Robert Taylor is better accomplished after an investigation of his oratorical development. Therefore, an overview of his immediate family surroundings, his informal and formal speech education, with his consequent method of speech preparation and delivery, should contribute certain details which should clarify and enlighten later speech criticism.

TAYLOR'S FAMILY BACKGROUND AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HIS ORATORICAL CAREER

Robert Love Taylor, affectionally known to thousands of Tennesseans as "Our Bob," was born at Happy Valley, Carter County, Tennessee, on July 31, 1850, on "the spot where the soldiers of John Sevier rendezvoused for their descent upon King's Mountain." The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: James T. White and Company, 1900), Vol. III, p. 366. He was reportedly, and probably believed himself to be, "descended from a long line of soldiers, statesmen, and orators." The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: James T. White and Company, 1900), Vol. III, p. 366. His paternal

great grandfather was General Nathaniel Taylor, who, it is thought, participated in the Battle of King's Mountain and in many Indian wars. James P. Taylor I, a lawyer and the first Attorney General of the First Judicial Circuit of Tennessee, was his paternal grandfather. His father was Nathaniel Green Taylor, a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church and a "prominent politician."

Taylor's mother was a Haynes which, "in Eastern Tennessee is equivalent to being a Van Somebody in New York." Her grandfather, George Haynes, left Germany as a young man and settled in America, "not long before the Revolution." David Haynes, her father, was believed to be a man "endowed by nature with the gift of originality."

Apparently, Robert Taylor did not develop as an

---

3 The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, op. cit.


5 Ibid., pp. 27-28.


7 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 35.

8 Ibid., p. 36.
orator by mere accident. There were positive influences on both sides of the family which undoubtedly pushed him in that direction.

On the paternal side, his father, Nathaniel Taylor, characterized by attorney Chris C. Collins as "the ablest pulpit orator he ever heard," was interested not only in religion, but politics as well. However, like many people in East Tennessee in 1860, he chose not to stand for the South, but for the preservation of the Union. He often spoke with "great eloquence" against the secessionist movement and predicted the woes that would fall upon the South if she seceded. When East Tennessee was subjected to the clashes and movements of the two opposing armies, those hostile to the Southern cause, like Taylor, found themselves in dire circumstances and under extreme pressure. As the suffering increased to the point of starvation and despair, Nathaniel Taylor conceived the idea of appealing to Northern interest for assistance. Consequently, a relief association was formed and Taylor was commissioned to go into the Northern cities and appeal for help. He reportedly made speeches in Maine, New York, Connecticut, and many other

\[9\text{Augsburg, op. cit., p. 18.}\]
areas, raising a total of $252,205.51 for the relief of Union sympathizers in East Tennessee. As the war intensified, Taylor, fearful for the safety of his family, fled behind federal lines and rented a small country home near Haddenfield, New Jersey. At the end of the war, Nathaniel moved his family back to Happy Valley, Tennessee.¹⁰

Without question, Robert Taylor probably heard his father speak many times, both as minister and politician, and while the influence of these repeated experiences cannot be measured, it can be reasonably assumed that Robert, like most boys, was impressed with his father's skills. Nathaniel certainly seemed to be interested in the intellectual development of his sons. Besides insisting that they receive a formal education, he made available to them reading materials to enhance their education and encouraged them to develop their speaking talents. Among the more prominent publications received in the Taylor home was the Washington Intelligencer, a newspaper which contained congressional speeches and debates. It is commonly believed that Bob and his brother Alf loved to read the speeches found in the Intelligencer from "Worthy Senator from

¹⁰Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 28, and ff.
Massachusetts' and all, right on down to the last flight of the star-spangled eagle. They digested the phraseology, contents and fervor, and then they set out to debate the question at issue where the worthies of Washington had left off.\footnote{Augsburg, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.} Reportedly, there were times when their father accompanied them into the family library and listened to them debate.\footnote{Delong Rice, \textit{Old Limber or Tales of the Taylors} (Nashville: McQuiddy Printing Co., 1921), p. 36.} It is reasonable to assume that on these occasions he offered the boys suggestions and constructive criticism.

Robert Taylor's mother, Emily Haynes Taylor, was a strong influence upon his career. She is described as "a highly intellectual and cultured woman," who was extremely proud of her boys.\footnote{Ibid., p. 113.} She apparently approved of the debates in which her sons engaged, but insisted that they not display ill temper. On one occasion when Alf and Bob were locked in one of their heated debates, they lost their tempers and began to shout insults at each other. Upon hearing this outburst, Mrs. Taylor immediately confronted the boys and reprimanded them. This scolding supposedly
developed into a speech which profoundly affected her sons. Taylor's biographers report:

The boys were old enough and cultured enough to know that they were getting just what was due them, with compound interest, and so impressed and charmed were they with her impassioned effort—realizing for the first time the full strength of her character and intellect and power of oratory, one of them, who was rapid with the pencil, managed to take notes of what she was saying. From these notes and from memory, and afterward by the aid of her dictation, the entire deliverance was reduced to writing with a view to its preservation as a chart to their future guidance, and as a model of extemporaneous oratory.\textsuperscript{14}

While this account is likely myth-encrusted, it does suggest that Mrs. Taylor's sons, on later reflection, credited her with significant influence in their lives.

With a father who shunned the secessionist movement, even becoming a vocal defender of the Unionist cause, and a mother who seemed to be inclined in the same direction, it may appear strange to some that Robert Taylor should develop into the personification of Southernism. To enhance further the contradiction, Alf Taylor, Robert's older brother and his political opponent in the War of Roses campaign in 1886, followed his father's political philosophy and ultimately became a Republican. In view of these influences from his immediate family, why did Robert choose the

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 114.
course he ultimately followed? During the War of Roses campaign when a newspaper reporter questioned this schism in his family, Taylor replied as follows:

Uncle Landon C. Haynes converted me from the family faith. I was a mere lad when he was at the zenith of his fame. His eloquence, which made even his conversation wonderfully attractive, his fascinating person and perhaps a certain fondness which he manifested for me gave him a powerful hold upon me. My youthful imagination pictured him as a hero. He became an ideal man to me. In my wild admiration I deemed him incapable of mistake. Naturally, when I became old enough to think upon public questions I adopted his opinions, and with unwavering faith I followed this brother of my mother. The principles which Landon Haynes impressed on me have been more deeply engrained on my maturer judgment. They came to the boy as by accident or a degree of fate, but the man has adopted them as a firm conviction. My father and brothers combatted my ideas as I grew older, but they never made me waver.15

Probably Landon C. Haynes strongly influenced his nephew, Robert Taylor. Haynes, who served as a Confederate Senator, a vocal proponent of the Southern cause, was reputed to be "one of the most eloquent orators the South has ever produced."16 John Trotwood Moore comments

15 Interview by Tom Neal, October 7, 1886, Dyersberg, Tennessee, in a newspaper clipping contained in the Taylor family scrapbook, now held in the private collection of Judge Robert Love Taylor, Memphis, Tennessee.

concerning Haynes: "His reputation was distinctly that of a brilliant speaker. He possessed unlimited command of language, a fine voice, and graceful delivery. He had also humor and sarcasm, both of which he made effective before juries and before popular audiences." From all indications, Robert chose Haynes to be his oratorical idol. Delong Rice, long time friend and lecture manager of Taylor, observed that while Alf embraced his father's faith, "Bob was an ardent disciple of his uncle Landon." Judge Baxter Taylor once remarked that of all the men who influenced Robert Taylor, "his prototype, guide, and star idol was his own maternal uncle, Landon C. Haynes."^19

One other factor, however, probably had a strong influence in developing Taylor's thinking, and especially his southern image. While being a vocal defender of Unionism, Taylor's father held to many southern ideals which created a typically Southern environment. For example, he owned a large farm in East Tennessee, "with a great many Negroes. He had twenty or thirty hired hands,

17 John Trotwood Moore and Austin P. Foster, op. cit., p. 147.
18 Rice, op. cit., p. 334.
19 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 334.
white men, besides." Since Bob Taylor had frequent contact with the Negroes on his father's plantation, it is not surprising that he should use them as the objects of his illustrations, folk stories, and anecdotes, both in his political and ceremonial speeches. In fact, he drew his favorite and most repeated illustrations from the folklore of the Negroes and from the experiences in his relationships with them. Undoubtedly, then, the images of plantation life, including Robert's paternal attitude toward the Negro race, were developed under his father's roof, and were nurtured and embellished by his uncle Landon C. Haynes.

**TAYLOR'S FORMAL SPEECH EDUCATION**

Robert Taylor began his formal education in an old "field school located about one and one-half miles from his home." Reportedly, he studied Webster's spelling book, Smith's *English Grammar*, Mitchell's *Geography and Atlas*, Davie's *Arithmetic*, and a "reader." The teacher in this

---


22 Taylor brothers, *op. cit.*, p. 76. See chapters five and six for more complete information on Taylor's education.
school was an elderly gentleman who believed in "training his boys and girls in the art of speaking well before a public audience." Consequently, the students were frequently required to give "exhibitions" as a means of demonstrating what they had learned. At the end of the school term, public exhibitions were held, with the family and friends present. Robert Taylor's exhibition speech at the end of the term was, reportedly, prepared by his father, but Robert spent many hours memorizing and practicing it. This experience may well have been his first formal instruction in oratory.

Having completed the entire curriculum offered by the old field school, Robert entered a higher school. However, early in 1861 the Civil War erupted and his education had to be temporarily suspended. For a brief period Robert and his brothers managed to attend a small school at Elizabethton, Tennessee, under the direction of Professor Thomas P. Summers, who was described as a "finished Latin and Greek scholar." After their move to New Jersey, the Taylor boys, anxious to continue their education, entered Pennington Seminary, located about fifteen miles north of Trenton. Robert, who was apparently popular among his fellow students, became "a decided favorite as a serious school orator." In addition, he demonstrated "a remarkable
ability at humorous recitation." He remained at Pennington for about two years, during which time he was given many opportunities to practice oratory.

After the Taylor family moved back to Happy Valley, Robert resumed his education at Buffalo Institute, later called Milligan College. Here he manifested an interest in forensic efforts and soon "became quite expert in argument and public speaking." He became a member of the Philomathean Society, "a most excellent forum wherein its members could freely exercise their forensic powers in debate on all legitimate subjects and questions, academic, theoretical, practical, serious, and humorous." These society debates, as well as the frequent public debates, sharpened Robert's rhetorical abilities.

As already indicated, the Taylor boys did not confine their debating to the Philomathean Society or the classroom. Later, at home, frequently interrupting their work schedules, they engaged in serious, and sometimes


24 White, op. cit., p. 222.

25 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 91.
heated debates on some question. During these debates they rarely ever lacked an audience, for frequently the farm hands would gather around, along with other members of the family and any neighbors who happened to pass by, and listen with delight. Robison observed that such "discussion may not have increased production on the Taylor farm, but they did stimulate the boys to study and research in all newspapers and political speeches that came their way."28

After Robert completed his studies at Buffalo Institute, the family moved, in 1871, to Athens, Tennessee, where he attended East Tennessee Wesleyan University for the greater part of three years. However, in 1874, when the family was forced to leave Athens, Robert ended his formal schooling. He managed to read law with Judge Kirkpatrick at Jonesboro, Tennessee, sometime prior to 1878, and was licensed to practice law in 1878.30

26 Rice, op. cit., p. 35.
27 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 112.
28 Robison, op. cit., p. 53.
29 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 99.
It has been observed, thus far, that Robert Taylor did not develop into an orator by mere accident, for whatever natural abilities he inherited, he increased "by assiduous cultivation and training."31

TAYLOR'S METHOD OF SPEECH PREPARATION

Over a period of years, perhaps beginning in his college days, Robert Taylor seems to have developed a basic method of speech preparation involving at least three steps: first, he reduced to writing what he intended to deliver, apparently including anecdotes, illustrations, everything. Secondly, he committed the speech to memory: "He would beat a path in the woods walking to and fro, oblivious to the world about him, repeating sentence after sentence..."32 Mrs. Hillsman Taylor, Robert Taylor’s daughter, recalled his memorizing speeches at home. She described how he paced from room to room, mumbling to himself, beating his fist in his hand, totally unaware of those around him. Sometimes he would explode aloud, testing how a certain passage sounded.33 This ability to memorize, probably

31 Moore and Foster, op. cit., p. 570.
33 Statement by Mrs. Hillsman Taylor, personal inter-view, August 9, 1968.
developed during his early school years as a matter of course, made a lasting impression upon Dr. O. S. Hauk, who knew Taylor well. In a personal interview Hauk commented that Taylor had the most remarkable memory of any man he had ever known. As a third step in speech preparation, Taylor practiced the finished oration "on any friend who chanced to be a good listener." Often, according to Mrs. Hillsman Taylor, that "good listener" was his wife, Sarah Loretta Baird Taylor, who not only listened with a critical ear— and offered oral criticism— but frequently looked up references for him, aiding him in his preparation.

At this point, it should be understood that Taylor's mode of preparation was not "iron clad." One suspects that often a lack of time, especially later in his career, hindered him from such thorough preparation. In addition, his stump speaking frequently appeared to be rather impromptu. However, it does seem that most of his more serious, polished oratory, especially his ceremonial addresses, including his lectures, were carefully prepared.

---

34 Statement by Dr. O. S. Hauk, Director of Forensic Psychiatry, Tennessee State Penitentiary, personal interview, January 25, 1967.

35 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 331.
DEVELOPMENT OF A METHOD OF DELIVERY

Over the years, Taylor developed a style of delivery which played an important role in his public speaking. In an effort to determine the nature and impact of his delivery, personal interviews were held with three men who had heard him speak: Dr. Robert H. White, Tennessee State Historian; Dr. O. S. Hauk, Director of Forensic Psychiatry, Tennessee State Penitentiary; Henry C. Winkler, retired, Nashville, Tennessee. While the shadow of myth and fading memories may cast restrictions on the veracity of such interviews, nevertheless, they are valuable in indicating the impact of Taylor's delivery on his audience.

Voice. Dr. White recalled that Taylor had "a strong easy voice," which carried so well that the person farthest from him could easily hear. Both Winkler and Hauk agreed that the voice was strong and clear, with deep, mellow tones. These evaluations agree with Baxter Taylor who said: "The thousands, yea, the tens of thousands, who have heard him will never forget that voice of peculiar melody and sweetness. It was neither harsh nor shrill. It was heavy enough to carry well, but not too coarse to be pleasant to the ear."36

36Ibid., p. 333.
Gestures and Movements. According to Dr. White, Taylor was "rather restrained" in his gestures "until he really wanted to make a main point; then he could be quite forceful." His primary method of indicating force was to "clench his fists and wave them toward the audience." Hauk indicates that Taylor's gestures were "perfectly timed."

Among the more striking characteristics of Taylor's delivery were his platform movements. However, before this aspect is discussed, a physical description of the orator should be given. From his photograph, Taylor appeared to be stockily built, perhaps a little on the heavy side, with a shiny bald head. He had a round, full face, accented with a large "handle-bar" moustache. Frequently he wore a long-tailed coat with a vest.

As he enthusiastically entered his speech, Taylor would expand his chest, throw his head back, and, in the words of Mr. Winkler, "really look like a dandy." He habitually pulled his long-tailed coat back, hooked his thumbs under his vest, and moved up and down, backward and forward on the platform. At times, as Dr. White recalled, he swayed gently from side to side. Sometimes he twirled

---

37 White, op. cit., p. 220.
38 Winkler interview.
and pulled at his moustache, and occasionally patted his stomach to emphasize a particular point. These movements were described as being, at all times, "meaningful and graceful."

In conclusion, Taylor's delivery, as it evolved from his earliest speaking experiences, was forceful, animated, meaningful, and impressive, serving a very important role in his particular mode of communication. In fact, so impressive was his delivery that after more than fifty years, the three men interviewed recalled many of the intricacies of his platform manner.

TAYLOR'S EMERGING SOUTHERN IMAGE

There has been considerable disagreement in recent years as to what constitutes a "true Southern orator." Interestingly enough, almost any criteria suggested by

---

39 For an analysis of this problem, see the following articles:


either the literary historians, Southern historians, or speech critics, as to what constitutes a Southern orator, is applicable to Robert Love Taylor; his image is distinctly that of a "true Southern orator," any way one chooses to look at it. For example, if one chooses to use place of birth as criteria, then, of course, Taylor easily qualifies, since he was born in Tennessee and spent most of his life there. If, on the other hand, one chooses to add Braden's definition—"one who flourished in the region"—then he qualifies on this count also, since even a casual acquaintance with Taylor's career indicates that he was an important political figure in Tennessee for more than thirty years, serving as congressman, Governor for three terms, and United States Senator. During this period he won fame as an orator, first in Tennessee, and later, nationally as a professional lecturer. He is even now something of a legend in his state, and has become firmly entrenched as a part of Tennessee's folklore.

If one wishes to select "manner of delivery" as identifying criteria, then Taylor suits this image also, for, as discovered earlier, he was typically forceful and animated in his delivery, which tends to conform to a popular description of Southern orators.

---

If one decides that florid, grand style is the determining criteria for regional distinctions, then Taylor aptly fits this image also. Often his oratory mounted the highest flights, especially in his ceremonial addresses. He would speak of "palace cars swifter than the swiftest wing. . . . Modern reapers sweeping like phantom ships through seas of sunset gold. . . . 41 He would recall the "cotton fields (that) wave their white banners of peace and the wheat fields (that) wave back their banners of gold. . . . Where the mocking birds flutter and sing in the shadowy coves and bright waters ripple in eternal melody. . . . 42 Even in his political addresses he frequently indulged in stylistic hyperbole. For example, on May 12, 1906, during his campaign for United States Senator, speaking in Nashville, he attempted, with this florid outburst, to answer the charge that he was too sentimental to be a United States Senator:

My only plea to this charge is that I was born that way and that I was reared in a land of sentiment. For up among the blue mountains of Tennessee, where the morning first smiles on the hills, and where the rivers are born, I first opened my

41 Robert Love Taylor, "Opening Address," Tennessee Centennial Exposition, May 1, 1897.

42 Taylor, "Address of Welcome to Ex-Confederates," Tennessee Centennial Celebration, June 22, 1897.
eyes to the light of day and heard the first songs of sentiment from lips that are now dust. 

If, however, one chooses to settle on the more accurate "conscious choice" of the orator as reflected in his cultural outlook and demonstrated in his oratorical themes and motives as the primary determining factor in arriving at regional distinction, then Taylor's image again emerges as distinctly Southern. When he spoke at the Ex-Confederate Reunion during the Tennessee Centennial Celebration, June 24, 1897—and he spoke at many such gatherings—he exposed his southern bias: "I love to live in the land of Dixie, under the soft Southern skies. . . . I love to live on Southern soil. . . and. . . breathe the Southern air that comes filtered through the jungles of roses, whispering the story of Southern deeds of bravery." In his lecture entitled "Dixie," in which a nostalgic plea for the South is made, Taylor declared: "I believe in sectional lines. I believe they are the very safeguard of the Republic." After describing the North and the East, with their "glittering, spired cities," and the West, "around whose base there lies another vast empire of territory," he added: "But fairer than the land of Yankee Doodle, and richer than the prairied West is the empire of my own sweet sunny South, the land of flowers and tears, of beauty and sorrows, the land of griefs and broken columns." Taylor frequently "consciously chose"
to allude to such southern sentiment, not only in his speaking, but in his writing in the *Bob Taylor Magazine* as well. He readily identified with Southern thinking and the southern culture in general and, consequently, became widely known as a "representative Southerner."

An examination of Taylor's private papers further supports the concept of his emerging southern image. For example, in October, 1887, the Ohio Democratic Party found themselves involved in a heated campaign in which sectionalism became a major issue. Apparently the candidate, opposing the Democratic stand, attempted to provoke Southerners in the state by arousing their sectional biases. The Democrats countered this attack by "inviting a good many prominent gentlemen from the South" to speak in Ohio on behalf of the Democratic ticket. Taylor's selection as one of the "Southern gentlemen" to make this appeal, clearly indicates that as early as 1887 his reputation as a representative of southern culture had transcended state boundaries. A further indication of his rapidly expanding reputation as a southern orator is revealed in a letter from New York, January 9, 1889, in which the Southern Society of

---

43 Irvine Dungan, chairman, Ohio State Democratic Committee, in a letter to Robert L. Taylor, October 27, 1887, Taylor papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, box 1, folder 7, hereafter called "Taylor papers."
New York City invited Taylor to attend their annual dinner and respond to the toast of "Southern campaigning."^4^4

At a period of time when the cult of the Lost Cause was near its peak, with dozens of Confederate reunions being held and numerous Confederate monuments needing to be dedicated, speakers with a clear southern identity, especially those who easily identified with the Old South, were in great demand.^4^5 An indication of the southern image of Taylor is readily seen in the number of invitations he received to speak at southern conventions, reunions, and dedications. It appears when a group wanted a speaker with a southern flair, then Taylor was the man in demand, as indicated by this letter from Mansfield, Louisiana:

"We want you to give us a lecture at the Confederate Reunion to be held here on the 8th of April. I am anxious to give the old soldiers a treat. Won't you come? If you knew how much our people admire you and love you, I think you would try to come. . . ."^4^6

^4^4Taylor papers, box 5, folder 7.


When, in 1888, the Confederate veterans of Georgia staged a massive "grand reunion," with a number of "distinguished southerners" in attendance--Jefferson Davis and General Longstreet among them--Taylor received a special invitation endorsed by Henry W. Grady.47 The year before, when Atlanta hosted the great Piedmont Exposition, under the leadership of C. A. Collier and Henry W. Grady, Taylor not only received a special invitation, but had a special railroad car made available "for benefit of yourself and friends there, and that car will be at your disposal while you remain in Atlanta." In addition, according to Grady who wrote the invitation, Taylor was to have the honor of escorting President Cleveland from Nashville to Atlanta. As an added incentive for Taylor to accept the invitation, Grady added: "I shall look after you myself while you are in Atlanta, and promise you the best there is in Georgia." In a later letter Grady said: "We are going to show you a sight that will make your heart glad for the South and for the Union."48 As already indicated, when something southern was in the air, Taylor was in demand, apparently because his image was widely known as distinctly southern.

47 Ibid., box 4, folder 1.
48 Ibid., box 1, folder 10.
This southern aura surrounding Taylor's oratorical image seems to have been recognized by the senior class at DePauw University, who wrote the following letter requesting Taylor to speak:

The Senior class of DePauw University, by unanimous vote, has selected you as its choice as Commencement Orator and, by the undersigned committee, begs leave to invite you to address the University body on Wednesday, June 9th, at 10 o'clock.

You must be aware that of late years a most kindly feeling has grown up between the parts of the nation once separated by sectional differences; and, inspired by that kindly spirit, the class has, upon the suggestion of the Professor of Oratory, a former resident of Tennessee, chosen you as the highest representative of Southern oratory, and we are most anxious that you accept this invitation. We feel that by coming here to this center of influence in this state, midway between its largest cities and but an hour's ride from the state capital, you will be doing a patriotic service, as well as conferring a favor upon sixty or seventy earnest young men and women.

We wish to emphasize the earnestness of this invitation. We are personally very anxious that you accept and moreover feel that you would have a great opportunity for doing good—probably than any other speaker we might select.

Thus far, an examination has been made of Taylor's family background, formal speech education, methods of speech preparation, mode of delivery, and finally his

49Letter from senior class, DePauw University, to Robert Love Taylor, February 22, 1897, Ibid., box 1, folder 10.
emerging image as a "Southern orator." In order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of this image, it is now necessary to examine his political career as it relates to his oratorical image and development.

TAYLOR'S POLITICAL CAREER AND METHODS

Robert Love Taylor, a Democrat to the end of his career, enjoyed a long and relatively successful political career in Tennessee, having exerted a strong political influence for more than thirty years. The following chronological breakdown reveals some of his political activities:

1878—Admitted to Tennessee bar; elected to Congress from Tennessee's First District, a strong Republican stronghold.

1880—Defeated for re-election to Congress.

1882—Defeated again in a bid for Congress.

1884—Presidential Elector.

1885—Appointed United States Pension Agent, Knoxville, Tennessee.

1886—Elected Governor of Tennessee in the famous War of Roses campaign in which he defeated his own brother, Alf Taylor.

1888—Re-elected Governor of Tennessee.

1892—Presidential Elector.

1896—Elected Governor of Tennessee.

1907—Elected United States Senator by legislature after defeating Senator E. W. Carmack in primary.
1910—While serving as Senator, returned to Tennessee and was defeated as candidate for Governor of Tennessee.

1912—March 31, died in Washington while serving as Senator.

It is not within the scope of this study to make a complete analysis of Taylor's political activities and contributions, since this area has already been the subject of considerable research. The purpose of this investigation is to determine his political image, on one hand, and his campaign methods or strategies on the other in an effort to determine their influence in developing his oratorical image.

**Political Image.** The first aspect of the Taylor political image, which was perhaps the most significant in terms of public impact, was the "common-man image." Apparently Taylor desired to disassociate himself completely, in the minds of the people, at least, from all appearance of "political-machine" politics. He deliberately identified himself with the farmer-laborer element, from his campaign in 1878, to that last one in 1910. For example, in the 1878 race, when he ran against the firmly entrenched Republican and veteran campaigner Pettibone in the Republican stronghold of the First District, Taylor adopted the

---

50 See Robison, op. cit.
homely, personal touch, by traveling from community to com-
munity, making stump speeches and personal contacts. By
his good humor, folk stories, and jokes, back-slapping,
hand-shaking, and laughing, combined with a severe split
in the Republican ranks, Taylor overwhelmed Pettibone and
was elected in his first canvass. While he lost the next
two campaigns against Pettibone, he, nevertheless, earned
"a name and standing all over the state as a campaigner."\textsuperscript{51}
Will T. Hale explains:

\begin{quote}
His methods were original; his canvass was conducted much like that of Davy Crockett. He did not really know much about the political questions of the day, but he knew his constituents. Riley, singing one of his wonderful Indiana creations, says that 'his clothes don't fit, but he fits me—old John Henry.' Taylor fitted his constituents with his fiddling, his humor, his occasional bits of oratory, his good common sense.\textsuperscript{52}
\end{quote}

Having established himself, Taylor increased his reputation as a "man of the people." By 1886, the demand arose for him to run for Governor on the Democratic ticket, even though his brother Alf was a top candidate on the Republican slate. The Nashville Banner reflected this


rising public pressure:.

The whole people want him for Governor. He is already nominated by the people. They have made their nominee by acclamation, and you can hear his name echoing from the mountains to the river. Everybody is for him. He is not a candidate, he is not seeking it, but the office is seeking him.\(^5\)

The Republicans nominated Alf Taylor as their gubernatorial candidate some seven weeks before the Democrats held their convention. "The selection of Alf seems to have been based largely on the hope that it would prevent the nomination of his brother by the Democrats."\(^5\) The Republicans declared that it would be "unnatural" for two brothers to oppose each other in a campaign of this nature. Several of the newspapers, especially those in the larger cities, charged that a race between brothers would be a "contemptible farce. . .unnatural and disgusting."\(^5\)

However, the tide was not to be turned, for Bob's popular "common-man image" had certainly caught on and a move was made by the Democrats, especially in the rural areas, to draft him in spite of the opposition of a large percentage of the newspapers and of Bob's own apparent indifference. In face of strong opposition, Robert Taylor continued to

\(^{53}\)The Nashville Banner, March 1, 1886, p. 2.

\(^{54}\)Robison, op. cit., p. 40

\(^{55}\)Ibid.
increase his strength, much to the surprise of the old politicians. Robison convincingly explains Taylor's strong charge on the basis of his tremendous influence in the rural areas of Tennessee:

The Democracy of Jackson and Johnson had found a leader who spoke its language. Small farmers in the rural areas of Tennessee had sensed the agrarian revolution that was impending. They did not wait for a Ben Tillman, a Tom Watson, or a "Sockless Jerry" Simpson to lead them in strange paths. They preferred that Bob Taylor guide them back to the agrarianism with which they were familiar.  

Robert Taylor was ultimately nominated and given the responsibility of facing his own brother, Alfred Taylor. In his acceptance speech, Robert confirmed his dependence upon the common man: "...It is not my triumph, fellow citizens, it is the triumph of the man who works between the plows and those who handle the hammer, in the country and in the machine shops. It is the triumph of the hard-working and of the common people of Tennessee." Even many of Robert's critics were able to realize the source of his popularity. Robert H. Cartmell, a farmer in Madison County, Tennessee, who kept an extensive diary from 1828-1915, frequently expressed his intense dislike for the Taylors.

56 Ibid., p. 43.
57 Nashville Banner, August 16, 1886, p. 2.
as follows: "Bob Taylor is rather a weak brother for such a position as governor; is good on an anecdote and will draw a big crowd. Suits just such folks as went for him and they are a majority of this world."\textsuperscript{58}

The War of Roses, as the campaign between the Taylor brothers was called, gained national attention. The two men met forty-one times in joint debate, covering nearly the entire state of Tennessee. Really fringing on entertainment, the debates were not profound in any sense of the word, being almost "devoid of serious discussion of state issues."\textsuperscript{59} However, during the campaign Robert Taylor had an additional opportunity to spread his common-man image, not only throughout the state, but in the entire nation. He laughed and joked his way right into the heart of a state and a nation; as the \textit{Banner} commented: "Bob is a joker. He not only laughs at them but tells them with gusto. He is fond of the boys and the boys are fond of him. One of his chief reasons for wanting a joint discussion is that it gives him a better opportunity to spin his

\textsuperscript{58}Robert H. Cartmell Diary, Vol. VI, July 24, 1886, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

\textsuperscript{59}See Robison, \textit{op. cit.}, chapter three, for an analysis and description of the campaign.
yarns. His forte is fun." One city editor, who opposed Taylor in the beginning, conceded that he had "a capacity for striking the popular instincts" and a certain understanding of the "burdened masses." The masses elected Robert Taylor Governor in 1886, rejecting his more sedate and serious brother, Alfred. In rejecting Alf, they created "Our Bob", the man of the people. Robert Gates explains, to some extent, the magnatism of his "common man" image:

There was an intimate note of appeal in his speeches that caused his listeners to feel that he should be elected as a personal triumph. Political convictions often gave way to admiration for the man. Partisan prejudice melted in the warmth of his words. His eloquence, his personality were never dwarfed by a campaign issue. He stood for certain intangibles the people liked. He was the embodiment of something that appealed to them. He incarnated the spirit that had eluded them.

Taylor never abandoned this common man image during his more than thirty years in politics. When William Jennings Bryan became the champion of the people, Taylor was his most ardent disciple. Like Bryan, his forte was the ability to identify with the "men behind the plow," and the man caught in the web of industrial servitude—

60 Nashville Banner, August 21, 1886, p. 6.
61 Memphis Avalanche, September 7, 1886.
62 Nashville Banner, September 2, 1948, p. 5.
"the common people," as Taylor called them. Because there were so many of these common people, Taylor became immensely popular, perhaps ranking among the most popular men in Tennessee history. Writing in September, 1892, an editor commented:

If a vote were taken to determine who is the most popular man in Tennessee, there is probably little doubt that the distinction would be awarded to ex-gov. "Bob Taylor"--actor, orator, and statesman. Quick-witted, genial and handsome. ...the very name of "Our Bob" is sufficient to set a Tennessee audience wild, be it mentioned on the rostrum or lecture platform. Nor is the fame of Tennessee's favorite son confined wholly to his native state, as the enthusiasm that his name evoked in the Wigwam at Chicago during the Democratic convention forcibly demonstrated.63

As indicated then, Taylor found his most potent political force in the common man image. However, his political image had another important facet which was associated directly with the popularity of his common man approach. Taylor fancied, and the people and party leaders apparently believed, that he was the great unifier and healer of party strife and wounds. He conveyed the impression that when the party is in trouble, "Call on me and I will draw us together." In a period when the Democratic party was torn by factions and strife, when the Populists were competing

---

63 From a scrapbook in the collection of the Tennessee Historical Society, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
for support, Taylor found it to his advantage to "walk softly and talk peace," or to "laugh loudly and drown out differences." Perhaps Taylor's political philosophy is best expressed in a confidential letter he wrote to Hillsman Taylor, his son-in-law, who was Speaker of the House in Tennessee in 1909. He urged his son-in-law to "put on the brakes and slow up," indicating that the General Assembly had accomplished as much as it was going to do. In the matter of prohibition, an explosive issue, he advised, "Tennessee is dry as punk, amen! Don't let the boys go too far on other lines," indicating a strategy of not stirring up any more trouble than necessary. While he urged Hillsman Taylor to be firm in what he believed was right, Robert, nevertheless, insisted that "the spirit of moderation prevail in all political legislation." He quickly added his perpetual theme of unity, maintained since his first race for Congress: "Begin to look forward to the pacification of the rank and file who are not now in accord with your policies and purposes—I mean the minority in our party." Apparently, one of Taylor's real strengths was his ability to unite the various factions in his party. Because of

---

this image, party leaders quickly turned to him when factions and disputes threatened. Writing in 1886, prior to the War of Roses Campaign, one attorney in East Tennessee expressed this feeling; "I have heard but one opinion expressed and that is that you are the man to make the race and that you can do more to unite the party than any other public man in the state."^65

Daniel Robison, who carefully analyzed Taylor's political activities from 1886 to 1896, concluded that

...it was probably in the role of conciliator or harmonizer that Robert L. Taylor played his most significant part in Tennessee politics, and there can be little doubt that he was preeminently fitted for such a role. ...[To him] the party was above faction and above the individual. ...When a decided stand on an irrelevant issue would have divided the party, he "straddled." When it was necessary to take a stand, he did so with a tolerance that was calculated to mollify the opposition. ...It would do violence to sound historical or political judgment to ascribe to Robert L. Taylor those qualities which distinguish a statesman of the first order, for no great program is associated with his name. He did, however, save his party from disunion and, if North Carolina be an example, he saved his state from bitter experiences.66


Two images then, are clearly associated with Taylor's political identity; first, he generally spoke the language and reflected the attitudes of the common man; secondly, he assumed the mantle of the conciliator, always searching for the "middle of the road," a course to stir the least antagonism. In his campaign methods, he demonstrated how he constructed and maintained these images.

Campaign Strategy. For campaign strategy, Taylor simply rallied the man behind the plow and in the work shop and won their confidence and esteem, then unified them into a voting block strong enough to overpower the votes in the larger cities. He had but one essential weapon in his arsenal—the power of his oratory, which he loaded with humor, folk tales, and myths. Taylor seemingly believed that the people were not nearly as interested in the complicated political issues of the day as they were in diversion from the drudgery of their every-day routine. Rather than "bore them with the facts," or "confuse them with the issues," he entertained them with the stories they all wanted to hear. If there is any one factor which characterizes Taylor's public image, it is his great ability to relate an anecdote or folk story. Nearly every writer who comments on Taylor eventually makes this observation. John Trotwood Moore, who knew Taylor well, is perhaps typical:
In all the world there has never lived a man who could tell a story like him; his voice, his facial expressions, his mannerisms, his dialect, the solemn, owl look when he told his funniest yarns, and the hidden humor that came even with those that made you weep—all these, and his own irresistible drawl—of a tone never heard on land or sea—made the most commonplace of them classics.

And they made him. They carried him from a mountain boy—lawyer, briefless and moneyless and with nothing but a fiddle and his humor as an asset, to the highest offices of his state... He spoke in parables, the language of the plain, common people, and they understood.

Taylor’s use of humor was no accident. He apparently realized that when he could divert the people from their misery, keep them from dwelling on the hard-core issues, in short, make them laugh and enjoy themselves, he could win their approval, for laughter has universal appeal. Time after time he swept aside his opponent’s attempts to discuss the issues with an amusing story or even a "back-slapping" joke. For example, in the War of Roses Campaign in 1886, when his brother was attempting to discuss the controversial Blair Educational Bill, Bob Taylor replied:

My brother is infatuated with the Blair Bill. I think he is going a little too deep into the question. He reminds me of the old man who lived in the mountains and had never seen a

---

wagon. He had been used to sleds all his life. His boys bought a new wagon and took it home, geared up the oxen and drove the wagon on top of the hill for a load of wood. The wagon ran away with the steers and at the bottom of the hill mired in a swamp up to the hubs. The old man ran out and after an examination said: 'Boys you will have to set the back-bands back just a leetle; she is running too deep.' Alfred you must set your back-banks back just a leetle you are running too deep on the educational question.68

A newspaper reporter for the Nashville Banner, who interviewed Robert Taylor commented:

...Mr. Taylor certainly sustained his reputation as a story-teller. In fact, his proneness to story-telling is the only obstacle in the way of an interview on political questions. But then, his stories are so entertaining one is glad to give politics the g.b.69

When he became a United States Senator, Taylor immediately established his reputation as a story-teller. After his death in 1912, the Nashville Banner commented that he was "almost as well known in Washington as in Nashville." Not only was he popular with the "masses of the people," but was loved alike in official and social circles." This popularity was attributed primarily to his stories:

68 The Dickson Democrat, September 16, 1886, p. 2.
69 Nashville Banner, August 25, 1886, p. 4.
His Tennessee Stories in the Senate cloak rooms whiled happily away many weary hours for members of the Senate while someone was making a dry speech on the floor. The Senior Senator was a great favorite with President Taft. The jovial Chief Executive liked nothing better than to listen to Senator Taylor's yarns. . . . On the trip of the Mayflower last summer from Baltimore down Chesapeake Bay and up the Potomac to Washington, Senator Taylor was the guest of the President and was the life of the party. They sat out on the deck most of the time listening to Bob Taylor's stories.70

Taylor's stories and anecdotes, as to nature and type, usually related to southern rural images, most often drawn from his own experiences. He once said: "There is no music like the music of the fiddle and the bow. There is no humor that can compare with the country humor. I never shall forget the happy days of my boyhood down on the farm; I shall never forget the rich, old characters I used to know."71 Never forgetting "country humor," he sprinkled it freely in his political and ceremonial addresses. His use of homely illustrations is evident when one examines the few remaining original manuscripts and sentence outlines.72

These notes reveal his utter dependence on anecdotes and

70 Ibid., April 1, 1912, p. 1.
71 Moore in Sweetwater News, op. cit.
72 These manuscripts are currently in the hands of Robert Taylor's grandson, Judge Robert Love Taylor, Memphis, Tennessee.
illustrations. For example, in one set of speech notes, containing something more than a full content outline, Taylor jotted down this observation:

    We must teach the financial gamblers of wall street etc. We must do like the old darkey's mule. . . .

At the end of this particular speech, Taylor evidently used a series of illustrations, as indicated in his notes:

"Fighting preacher. . . .Uncle Rastus and the Bear. . . .
The rabbit."

At times, Taylor used notes containing only the titles of the stories. One such outline was roughly constructed as follows:

    Two old darkies bought cow. . . .When I was a boy I knew an old glutton. . . .Uncle Nichodemus and mules. . . .Streets paved with gold. . . .
    Telephone. . . .Telegraph dog--"

Another helter-skelter outline, rough and cluttered, contained these items:

    The plates went up. . . .The old Baptists. . . .
    Prisons. . . .Fraud. . . .The price of quinine.
    . . .Fair ball. . . .If I will follow Blain etc.
    . . .Five hundred millions. . . .Every time the speeches were made tariff was reduced. . . .Raw sides. . . .The fellow at the revival. . . .
    Have told you that one for protection. . . .
    Snugger than a bug. . . .We have had the lower house for twelve years, why didn't we reduce the tariff--? Nobody trying to keep up prejudices but me. . . .Interest on debt no authority--

These brief comments were listed on a page in no particular order, some of them appearing in the margin. They were
evidently hastily jotted down, roughly in the order that they were to appear in the speech.

Taylor frequently used the Negro as the object of his stories. The following is an example of the type:

An old darky was closing his sermon one night in Paradise Valley, and Uncle Rastus, who had been playing cards before, was seated in the amen corner sound asleep, dreaming of his favorite game. The old preacher said, "We will now close dis meetin' wid pray'r, an we will ax Bre'r Rastus to lead." Uncle Rastus suddenly roused himself from the slumber and shouted: "It ain't my lead. I jist dealt."73

Taylor developed the Negro dialect to such an extent that he could imitate it nearly flawlessly. His biographers commented that even in his early school days at Pennington Seminary he demonstrated his genius for mimicry:

His forte was humor, and he was able to produce convulsive laughter among his fellow students, and even his teachers, by his quaint, original and perfect acting and his funny impersonations.

In his comic role he had the power to imitate completely any assumed character in voice, gesture, movement, expression, facial contortion, and acting of every sort in the minutest detail, bringing to light with accuracy every phase and feature of fun or pathos that belonged to that character. This made him exceedingly popular and much sought after as an entertainer, and brought his impersonations into immediate notice and frequent demand.74

---

73Moore in Sweetwater News, op. cit.
74Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 83.
A second type story Taylor used extensively was the "country yarn," involving the farmer. The following illustrates:

A shrewd and willy horse trader asked an old farmer one day down in Paradise Valley the price of his sorrel horse. The farmer told him and warned him that the horse had two grievous faults. "One of them is this," said the old man; "when you turn him loose in the pasture you can't catch him." "What is the other?" "I musn't tell you," said the old farmer "until after you paid for him." The trade was made quickly. "Well," said the old farmer, "he ain't worth a durn after you catch him."75

In a third type illustration Taylor's nostalgia for the past and his love for nature are revealed. Preceding his stories about the Negroes' "back home on the old plantation," he frequently gave a graphic word picture:

Not long ago I wandered back to the scenes of my boyhood on my Father's farm on the bank of the river in the beautiful land of my native Tennessee mountains. I strayed once more through the pathless woods with my rifle on my shoulder. I sat on the old familiar logs amid the falling leaves of autumn, and heard the squirrels bark and shake the branches as they jumped from tree to tree. I heard the plaintive song of the whip-poor-will and the drumming of a pheasant and the hoot of a wise owl 'way over in Sleepy Hollow. . . A vision of the happy past opened before me. I thought I was a boy again, and played around the cabins of the old plantation and heard the old time darkies laugh and sing and play the fiddle as they used to long ago. I thought I was once more in old Uncle Rufus' cabin and

75Moore in Sweetwater News, op. cit.
listened to the old man's stories again.\textsuperscript{76} Such a sentimental expression would frequently be followed by a folk tale or anecdote, designed to evade an issue, bring a smile, or perhaps a tear, or even convulse in laughter, whatever suited the particular occasion. Undoubtedly, Taylor usually pleased his audiences with his jokes and stories; they seemed to love and appreciate them no matter where he spoke. This report by the Nashville \textit{American} is typical of the response he received: "The speaker, as has been usual heretofore when he visited this city [Obion, Tennessee], and in his happy way, told several laughable jokes, applying them to the Republican Party, which elicited much merriment and hearty applause."\textsuperscript{77} Kenneth McKellar, who also served in the United States Senate, and knew Taylor well, explained the secret of his success as a story-teller:

His jokes were inimitable; his acting was superb; the cast of his eyes, the raising of his hand, the manipulation of his facial muscles, his music, his singing, his raillery, his good nature, his over-flowing fund of good humor, his bouyancy, his hopefulness, his optimism, all taken with his ability as a speaker and as a statesman, made him a favorite with every audience. Those who heard him speak once wanted to hear him

\textsuperscript{76}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{77}Nashville \textit{American}, October 26, 1906, p. 2.
In spite of his tremendous popularity as a storyteller a significant number of people accused him of superfluous use of humor and stories, especially in his abortive campaign effort for Governor in 1910. One Nashville newspaper called him "a galvanized Moses, who is expected to lull the people by a lullaby, turn their wrath into joy by a coon song and turn their fear into side-splitting laughter by a funny tale." The Banner gave this "tongue-in-cheek" description of one of Taylor's speeches in Dyersburg, Tennessee:

Senator R. L. (Bob) Taylor is in his old-time form. It was at Dyersburg and the grandstand well filled. There was no bickering at the post, no jockeying for position. He just moved off into a word picture of the good old days of yore: made Washington cross the Delaware and Jefferson dream the dreams of a sage at Monticello; walked barefoot through the snows of Valley Forge and ate potatoes with the Swamp Fox in Carolina; coached Uncle Sam to swing a right to the jaw of John Bull and watched thrones totter and monarchs quake as the old gentleman of the chin whiskers strode forward and snorted in his bandana handkerchief.

78 McKellar, op. cit., p. 515.
79 The Nashville Tennessean and American, October 16, 1910, p. 4.
80 Nashville Banner, October 29, 1910, p. 6.
Five days later the Banner charged that Taylor "was not the kind of man who does things. He was not made in the executive mold. He is a talker, an entertainer, a recontreur of anecdotes. His constructive record is practically nil."\(^1\)

Taylor's anecdotes and stories, which were almost always directly associated with southern plantation life or southern country living, undoubtedly fostered his national image as a southern orator. After his death in 1912, the Banner observed that the "songs and stories that gladdened the hearts of a nation" had been hushed. "No more will eager ears listen to memories of the Southland, nor hear tales of 'Black Mammy,' the pickaninnies, of Uncle Ephraim, the 'possum and the coon.'"\(^2\)

One friend from New York commented: "He remained to the last the golden-spirited minstrel of the South, capable of translating into song all of its chivalry, heroism, and beauty."\(^3\)

In summary, Taylor carried the aura of the common man with him in his political campaigns and assumed the image of the conciliator. His campaign strategy was to rally the common people behind him, make them forget their troubles

---

\(^1\) I b i d ., November 3, 1910, p. 8.

\(^2\) I b i d ., April 1, 1912, p. 1.

\(^3\) Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 368.
and the issues at stake with a deluge of humor and folktales, which resulted in his identifying with their culture and ideals. While some criticized his methods, charging that he was an "issue-dodger," which was probably true, he nevertheless gained popularity, both among his own people, and nationally as he delivered his lectures. As his southern folklore became more widely known, Taylor increased his image as a southern orator because the people identified him with the images which he created.

**ROBERT TAYLOR'S LECTURE CAREER**

Robert Taylor began his formal lecture career in 1891, soon after he served his second term as Governor of Tennessee, and after an unsuccessful attempt to establish a law practice in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Finding himself without adequate means of support, he plunged deeper and deeper into debt until at last he was in grave danger of losing his household effects to creditors. It was the lecture platform which rescued him from financial disaster.  

In the summer of 1891, Taylor, deeply despondent over his financial plight, contacted Alf at Johnson City,

---

Tennessee, and arranged a meeting. During the course of their discussion, Alf convinced Bob that he was, indeed, "cut out for the stage," and challenged him to write a lecture suitable to his talent. Alf indicated that this was a lucrative field during this period of time. Accepting the advice, Bob soon began the task of writing a suitable speech, which he called "The Fiddle and Bow," his most famous oratorical effort.

Taylor launched his new career at Jobe's Hall, Johnson City, Tennessee, December 29, 1891. The Johnson City Comet reported that the Opera House was "crowded to its utmost capacity" and observed:

That Mr. Taylor is one of nature's most congenial humorists was evinced in the outset of his political career. But in these contests his ability for the lecture field was not fully appreciated. He impressed the people with his clever jokes as a comedian. They saw him as a clown in the political circus, where the ridiculous often counts for more than profound argument.

But in THE FIDDLE AND THE BOW Mr. Taylor is seen in a different light. He shows himself to be master of more than the comedians fun. Every phase of his magnanimous character blazed out in his wonderful picture of human life. Wit, humor, and pathos are blended like so many lights and shadows, coming and going in rhythmical succession across the great arena of human action.

85Taylor brothers, p. 194.

86Johnson City Comet, December 30, 1891, quoted in Taylor brothers, p. 187.
Having proved that he could please an audience, he commenced to receive frequent demands for engagements. Delong Rice, Taylor's private secretary when he was governor, became his permanent manager. With his fame spreading "from ocean to ocean," Taylor could hardly fill his engagements. Even when he served as governor for a third term in 1896, he continued to receive requests for his lectures. He continued his lecture career even while serving as governor, though to a lesser extent in 1897 and 1898. The degree and extent of his popularity is clearly indicated from the many letters requesting his appearance, found in the Governor's papers in Nashville. Typical of the correspondence is this letter from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania:

Will you do any lecturing during the season of '97-98? If you do, we should be pleased to arrange with you for our bureau to make some dates. We have had several calls for you during the last season and have one on hand now for about the middle of November, 1897. . . .

---

87 Taylor brothers, p. 190.
89 Letter from John A. Arnold to Robert Taylor, February 6, 1897, Taylor papers, box 2, folder 3.
The following letter from the Burlington (Iowa) Chautauqua Association indicates the urgency of some of the demands made on Taylor:

I do not know how large a man you are, or how good a fighter you are, but I can tell you. That if you had been up in this country for the last month and had been in my office and seen the pile of correspondence I have received and in which I have been roasted to a finish on account of my partial promise in regard to Gov. Taylor, I should have been tempted to have sailed in to you and given you the best we had in the shop; but after reading your communication of today I have in a measure softened down. . . . But my dear Mr. Rice, we want Gov. Taylor to come up here some time from June 21st to July 6th and give us a lecture and we are willing to pay a good price for it, and if you can possibly arrange it I wish you would do so. If not, we will have to let it go until next season, but we do wish he could come this year. Am exceedingly sorry that he could not find his way clear to arrange for the five dates which I had for him.

Hoping to hear from you if there is anything encouraging for this year. . . .

Taylor's lecture career, actually covering a period from 1891 until his death in 1912, overlapped his service as Governor, 1897-1898, and as Senator, 1908-1912. In addition to his popular "Fiddle and the Bow" lecture, he used the following lectures as the occasion demanded: "Paradise

---

Letter from John A. Minton to DeLong Rice, Taylor's lecture manager, March 24, 1898, Taylor papers, box 3, folder 3.
of Fools;" "Visions and Dreams;" "Dixie;" "Love, Laughter, and Song;" "The Old Plantation;" "Castles in the Air;" and "Sentiment." It is sufficient at this point to observe, as Delong Rice did, that Taylor was, for twenty years,

...the most successful lecturer on the American platform. If all his audiences could be gathered together, they would make a multitude of millions of people. ... A careful estimate shows the gross earnings of Senator Taylor's lectures to have run far into the hundreds of thousands of dollars...

In evaluating Taylor's lecture career, it is significant to note that in the twenty-three memorial addresses delivered on the Life and Character of Robert Love Taylor in the Congress of the United States, most took note of his lecture career and placed high value in his accomplishments on the American platform. The following examples illustrate the consistency of this trait:

From The Address of Mr. Clark, of Missouri:

As a lecturer he was a tremendous success from the first. In fact, those newspapers which denominated him the 'Napoleon of the Platform' and the 'Prince of Entertainers,' did not exaggerate and did not exhibit bad

---

taste. 92

From The Address of Mr. Heflin, of Alabama:

. . . he was the most charming, the most captivating and popular lecturer that ever graced the American platform. 93

From The Address of Mr. Kahn, of California:

He was one of the best reconteurs it has been my good fortune to meet. One never tired of listening to his stories of pathos and humor. His effect on his audience was marvelous. He could sway them at will from laughter to tears and from tears to laughter. 94

From The Address of Mr. Austin, of Tennessee:

Up to the day of his death Bob Taylor was everywhere known and appreciated as a lecturer. His most popular talk was on the "Fiddle and the Bow," which was received always with unfeigned applause, and it is certainly a charming piece of natural oratory. 95

From The Address of Mr. Byrns of Tennessee:

Mr. Speaker, it was as a lecturer and a platform entertainer that Bob Taylor achieved his greatest fame. His splendid eloquence, at one moment full of pathos, at another bubbling


93 Ibid., p. 59

94 Ibid., p. 64.

95 Ibid., p. 81.
over with delicious humor, and then again mounting the highest flights of oratory; his beautiful word pictures and his inimitable stories will live in the annals of his State and his country.96

Taylor's popularity as a lecturer probably indicates that he enjoyed success in this endeavor. His immediate goal was to relieve his financial plight; this goal he realized. However, he was able to achieve this purpose only through pleasing the audiences before whom he lectured. These audiences paid a fee to hear him speak, and they had a right to expect that he deliver something pleasurable. This fact, perhaps, explains why Taylor's lectures appear more entertaining than serious; the audiences demanded humor and nostalgic description, so Taylor merely gave what they wanted. At times he played the part of the mimic, distorting his face, using his hands and body, imitating the Negro dialect, in fact, nearly entering the realm of acting, in order to achieve the desired response. He believed that the audience came to have fun; consequently, he accomplished what was necessary to make them laugh. In a letter to his brother, he once confirmed this viewpoint: "Don't you start with a lecture without plenty of fun in it."

96 Ibid., p. 95.
That's what wins."\(^9\) Thirteen years later, writing in the Bob Taylor Magazine, he humorously expressed his feelings concerning pleasing the "whims of his audience":

The modern lecturer is the alarm clock of civilization wound up to go off with a whiz and a bang at any hour in the evening, according to the whims of his audience. A Northern audience wants to be aroused at 8 P.M. sharp, a Southern audience anywhere between 8:30 P.M. and daylight, A.M. But sometime in the night he is sure to wake the natives, for he is a traveling gesture tied to a bell clapper and

When his hands begin to swing  
And his bell begins to ring  
His waking listeners laugh and weep  
And then, alas! go back to sleep.  
But still he screams and fights the air  
And stamps his feet and pulls his hair  
And growls and roars upon the stage  
Like some fierce lion in a rage,  
Until at last his clock runs down  
And he winds it up for another town.  
Selah!

The impact of Taylor's lecture career relative to his oratorical image is clear; he again emerges with a distinctly southern image which clearly transcends Tennessee and blankets nearly the entire nation. Northern audiences especially enjoyed his Southern stories and themes and welcomed the opportunity to hear Taylor. They found humor in his reminiscence of southern rural living: the country boy with his pantaloon trousers, crude manners, and the

attempts of society to educate him; of the camp meetings and the country preacher who ranted and raved and flayed the air, shouting his damnation; the Negroes, the "ole mammy," their fun and fears, customs and creations; of the old plantation, its life and activity; of the farmer element, their "country manners," awkward mode of expression, and love of politics. However, Taylor expressed affection for these people and their way of life. He left the clear impression, in fact, that he was one of them and happy to admit it and laugh about it. But beyond his humor were expressions of pathos and nostalgia for the Old South, moving passages, graphic description, which seemed to please the audiences as much as his humor. His references to the South and her institutions and traditions were made with such obvious relish and reverence that the audience was never left in doubt as to where his heart lay. He was so southern in sentiment that when he began the "Fiddle and the Bow" with these words, "I once sat on the grassy brink of a southern stream in the gathering twilight of evening and listened to a concert of Nature's musicians," the audience could easily imagine him seated on the bank of

that stream. When he introduced "Castles in the Air" with this admission, "One bright summer morning, when I was a barefooted country boy, I stole my mother's washbowl and my father's new clay pipe out into the back yard and blew soap bubbles into the air,"\(^{100}\) the audience could quickly identify him with the southern rural simplicity and sentiment which followed. When, in "Visions and Dreams" Taylor declared: "There is no land on earth which has produced such quaint and curious characters as the great mountainous regions of the South, and yet no country has produced nobler or brainier,"\(^{101}\) the audience could sense the humor that was to follow, yet at the same time feel the reverence and respect that he held for his own section. When in "The Old Plantation" Taylor asserted: "There was once a civilization in the land of my nativity more brilliant than any that ever flourished in all the tide of time,"\(^{102}\) the audience was not left to guess where his true sentiment lay. As Taylor traveled more widely in his lecturing, his image as a Southern orator became more firmly entrenched. At a

---

\(^{100}\)Ibid., "Castles in the Air," p. 73.

\(^{101}\)Ibid., "Visions and Dreams," p. 190.

period of time when many people were expressing a desire to return to the "simplicity of the soil," he made his stories and descriptions of rural life especially meaningful. This sentiment is clearly expressed in a letter from B. F. Clayton, President of the Farmer's National Congress, who read: "The Fiddle and the Bow," "Paradise of Fools," and "Visions and Dreams":

. . . I want to congratulate you. I have not been so well entertained in three hours reading in a long time. The originality, the brilliant wit, humorous dialect, and . . . the good cheer (sic) and . . . pathos through the entire composition is indeed charming. I most fully appreciate it from the fact that I am a Southern man. It brings back the days of childhood spent beneath the genial rays of a Kentucky sunshine, the old farm, the cool shady spring house, the clear water flowing from the foot of the hill, the cream on the milk so thick that a spider could cross it without making a track, and the old black mama, God bless her memory. 103

It is evident that in Taylor's lectures, Clayton found a link with the past which he held to fondly, a past to which he would like to return. It is probable that similar reactions were common with those who heard Taylor deliver speeches, especially among those who felt an affinity for rural living and southern themes. It is not surprising that Taylor became easily identified with that "Kentucky

103 B. F. Clayton, in a letter to Robert Love Taylor; Indianola, Iowa, January 15, 1897, Taylor papers, op. cit., box 1, folder 5.
sunshine," "the old farm," "the cool shady springhouse," and the old black mama." He constantly expressed these themes realizing that hundreds of people, both North and South, aspired to identify with them. Thus, Taylor became their symbolic link with a South and a way of life that was gone, but certainly not forgotten.

THE BOB TAYLOR MAGAZINE

The first issue of the Bob Taylor Magazine came off the press in April, 1905. Attractive and colorful in appearance, printed on excellent paper with numerous high-gloss photographs and illustrations, this monthly publication attracted a large reading audience, initially, at least. Reportedly, Robert Taylor, editor and chief, originally intended to print 10,000 copies, but an early advertising campaign indicated that there was a demand for as many as 15,000 initial copies. The original plans for the first issue called for 116 pages, but because of the large number of advertisers, it was enlarged to 164 pages. The sale of the first 15,000 copies in one week indicates that the demand may have exceeded the supply. The 25,000 copies printed of the May issue were sold within ten days. The editor predicted that soon the number of subscriptions

would reach 100,000. However, strangely enough, few reports beyond the June, 1905, issue deal with increased demand for the publication.

The Bob Taylor Magazine, with Robert Taylor as sole editor, continued publication from April, 1905, through December, 1906, the same year in which Taylor defeated Edward W. Carmack in a primary contest for the senatorship. In January, 1907, the magazine merged with the Trotwood Monthly, edited by John Trotwood Moore, to become known as the Taylor-Trotwood Magazine, with Taylor and Moore as co-editors. The publication continued the original Taylor Magazine format from January, 1907, until it lost its identity and ceased circulation in October, 1910.

PURPOSE AND IMAGE. Robert Love Taylor seems to have had a three-fold purpose in publishing his magazine. First, he wished to establish a medium through which Southern writers might channel their work, and to prove that there was a true Southern literature. Secondly, as a nostalgic purpose, he wished to preserve the "old time Southern ideals," meaning the myths and legends of the ante-bellum South. Thirdly, he proposed to promote Southern sectionalism or pride, while at the same time promoting sectional unity in

---

105 Ibid., June, 1905, p. 314.
the spirit of the New South, designed, of course, to win the confidence and commerce of the other sections of the country. In the first issue, Taylor clearly set forth these purposes:

For many years has Governor Taylor desired to establish a magazine that should be not only a medium by which to reach an audience as widespread as the country itself, but which should also be a vehicle of Southern expression, for the exploitation and advancement of Southern literature, for the preservation of old-time Southern ideals, and for the dissemination of knowledge concerning the material resources and advantages of this section of our country—this primarily. And secondly, to breathe abroad a catholic spirit of patriotism, uncramped by a scintilla of sectionalism (opprobiously so termed), of envy or of ill will to any one; but to carry to every home and to each individual therein personally a message of peace, of harmony, and of happiness.

Bob Taylor's Magazine, like its editor, stands for the South... What the past holds in precious memory, great achievement and pure ideals shall be cherished and held. But in a special sense Bob Taylor's Magazine is working in the present and for the future... It is therefore, the purpose of Bob Taylor's Magazine to offer each month, stories, poems, and articles mined from the rich vein of Southern sentiment and of Southern life... 106

It is, perhaps, significant to note that in the first article to appear in the magazine Robert L. Taylor depicted the glory of "The Old South." This nostalgic essay pictured

106 Ibid., April, 1905, pp. 92-93.
the antebellum South as "the most brilliant civilization that ever flourished in the history of the world." The graphic description included "...the white-columned mansions...the palm where southern beauty was wooed and won by southern chivalry, and life was an endless chain of pleasure...the snowy cotton fields and rice fields...the music of the old South...its matchless orators...the old black mammy..." Having given this description, Taylor firmly established the Southern image of both the publication and its editor:

It is one of the purposes of this magazine to aid in keeping ever fresh and green the history and traditions of the Old South; to keep alive its chivalrous spirit, and to tell the pathetic story of the lion-hearted men around whose names are woven some of the greatest events of history. It has been beautifully said that 'literature loves a lost cause.' If this is true, the South will yet be a flower garden of the most enchanting literature that ever blossomed in any age or in any land. . . .

Having established from the beginning the image of the magazine as being "Southern after the Old Order," Taylor adhered to this viewpoint tenaciously. While the publication aspired to cover a wide range of subject matter, it nevertheless rarely departed the role of southern apologist. Article after article lauded the South and praised

\[\text{Ibid., p. 3.}\]
her heroes. Fiction stories, run in lengthy series, usually had a Southern background. Poems like "The Old Order Passeth,"\textsuperscript{108} and "Jackets of Gray,"\textsuperscript{109} were frequent. Nostalgic articles recalling the glory of the Old South were perhaps the most of all. For example, in one article, Rose Naomi Scott lamented the passing of the Old Negro.\textsuperscript{110} Robert Taylor probably brought mist to the eyes of the "old soldiers of the Lost Cause," with his essay, "A Memory of the Old South."\textsuperscript{111} Carl Holliday, perhaps more scholarly than Taylor, nevertheless probably stirred happy memories with his "Plantation Melodies," an article dealing with the songs of the old plantation era.\textsuperscript{112} T. C. Karnes appeared wistful and sentimental in his commentary on "The Good Old Times,"\textsuperscript{113} while Isaac Motes fondly recalled "The Old Country Play Parties in the South."\textsuperscript{114} In his treatise on "The Old-Time Tennessee Orator," Philip Lindsley caused the editor to "sign and wonder if we 'e'er shall look upon their

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p. 61.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., September, 1905, p. 637.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., July, 1905, p. 405.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p. 458.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., August, 1905, p. 594.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 597.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., January, 1906, p. 435.
like again," because their "eloquence being spoken is all but lost save in tradition."\textsuperscript{115} While Lindsley recalled the "Old Tennessee Orator," Margaret Gaines Grace reflected on "The Camp Meeting of the South,"\textsuperscript{116} and others, too numerous to mention, continued the parade of Southern nostalgia and apology.

Not content to dwell solely in the past, Robert Taylor appeared to be practical enough to realize that the South could not exist without the understanding and backing of the rest of the nation. Therefore, he linked the New South with the Old South, making of them one entity, having more national appeal, yet appeasing the strong sectional feelings which arose out of the Confederate South. In this editorial comment, Taylor unfolds his strategy:

\begin{quote}
With the commercial awakening of the South and the increased importance of the section as a factor in the national life, has developed a new citizenship—a sub-structure of the Old South with a modernized superstructure—in which with the sterling and standard traits of the old regime is strongly blended the nervous activity of the New.\textsuperscript{117}
\end{quote}

This strategy obviously involved two aspects; first, the creation of those "sterling traits of the old regime," as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid., July, 1908, p. 359.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Ibid., November, 1905, p. 234.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Ibid., April, 1905, p. 151.
\end{itemize}
revealed through those heroes of the Old South and through the "Myth of the Confederate Soldier," as revealed through the men and women, agencies and institutions, then in existence.

One begins to suspect the first aspect of Taylor's strategy when he realizes the "Southern-Hero-Complex" which permeates the magazine. For example, in his article, "Antithesis in the Lives of Four Men," Joe Eagle contrasts the careers of Robert Toombs, Benjamin H. Hill, Alexander H. Stephens, and Henry W. Grady, all of Georgia.\(^{118}\) In the same issue there appears a eulogy "On the Life and Character of Zebulon B. Vance."\(^{119}\) In the next month, November, 1905, Lucy L. Berleson, wrote "Sidney Lanier: A Recalling,"\(^{120}\) while with his article on "Davy Crockett," Carl Holliday continued the parade of hero worship.\(^{121}\) W. P. Brownlow investigated the actions of Andrew Johnson during his period as President and consequently wrote a "Defense and Vindication of Andrew Johnson."\(^{122}\) Taylor

\(^{118}\) Ibid., October, 1905, p. 19.
\(^{119}\) Ibid., p. 16.
\(^{120}\) Ibid., November, 1905, p. 143.
\(^{121}\) Ibid., September, 1906, p. 606.
\(^{122}\) Ibid., September, 1908, p. 491.
wrote at least eight articles on "Southern" heroes, including: Robert E. Lee, General Joseph E. Johnston, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Jefferson Davis, David Glasgow Farragut, Davy Crockett, and Zachary Taylor.  

The second aspect of Taylor's strategy—the linking of the Old with the New is seen in the numerous "regular" features depicting current Southern life and featuring their moder-day"heroes." For example, in one regular feature called "Men of Affairs," brief biographical accounts of important southern leaders—business men, educators, lawyers, and politicians were presented. These articles were usually illustrated with high-gloss prints, impressive in appearance. As one reads these articles, he easily gets the impression that these men are being depicted as the counterparts of the heroes of the Old Regime. Other "regular" features were called "Little Citizens of the South,"—illustrated stories about southern children, and "Beautiful Women of the South," which enhanced the "cult of Southern womanhood."

In addition to this carry-over of hero worship in the New South, there was an obvious attempt to establish an

---

123Ibid. These biographical accounts appear in sequence, starting in January, 1907, and continuing through September, 1907.
intellectual climate for the South. The lyceum movement for example, received extensive coverage in a regular feature called "The Southern Platform" which was "Conducted in the interests of the Lyceums of the South."\textsuperscript{124} Large, glossy photographs of well-known performers and lecturers, along with biographical data and information as to when and where they would appear, were included in this section and conveyed the impression that the lyceum was quite active in the South. Enhancing this image, James Hedley, wrote an essay called "The Lyceum Platform,"\textsuperscript{125} and Ira Landrith, wrote "The Lyceum as a Moral Influence."\textsuperscript{126}

There was also an attempt to promote the educational status of the South by including such articles as "Training Schools in Tennessee and the South," by James H. Kirkland,\textsuperscript{127} and "Popular Education in the South," by Henry N. Snyder.\textsuperscript{128} Articles like "Some Writers of the South," by Kate Alma Orgain,\textsuperscript{129} created the impression of a true southern litera-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{124}Ibid., April, 1905, p. 107.
\item \textsuperscript{125}Ibid., May, 1905, p. 235.
\item \textsuperscript{126}Ibid., June, 1905, p. 362.
\item \textsuperscript{127}Ibid., May, 1905, p. 184.
\item \textsuperscript{128}Ibid., April, 1905, p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{129}Ibid., November, 1906, p. 214.
\end{itemize}
ture, which contributed to the intellectual atmosphere of the South.

The End of the Publication. The Taylor-Trotwood Magazine continued publication until October, 1910, when it began to experience extreme financial difficulty, having literally drained Taylor's financial resources. McKellar reports that he understood "that Senator Taylor lost in this magazine all the money he had made by lecturing."130 While this statement cannot be really proven, legal documents found in the John Trotwood Moore papers readily confirm that by February, 1910, the Taylor-Trotwood Publishing Company was on the verge of bankruptcy.131 An effort was made in February and March, 1910, to rejuvenate the struggling and rapidly failing magazine,132 but from this point until it ultimately failed in October, the publication apparently declined.

130 McKellar, op. cit., p. 518.
131 John Trotwood Moore papers, manuscript division, Tennessee State Library and Archives, box 69, folder 9.
The reasons behind the failure of the Taylor-Trotwood Magazine are not easily determined. It is common knowledge that Taylor was a poor business man and had difficulty managing money. It is entirely possible that the publication failed simply because of mis-management. However, since John Trotwood Moore was actively involved in its management for the last three years of its existence, it is doubtful that this supplies the entire answer. A better answer, perhaps, involves the timing of the appearance of the publication. By 1905, when the magazine started, the "Cult of the Confederacy" was on the decline. The Populist movement had already run its course and taken its toll of the Old South advocates, turning their attention to more pressing, vital issues of the day. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Populism waned and Progressivism took command, proclaiming the doctrine of social improvement, believing that they could make this a better world in which to live. This movement cut further inroads into the ranks of those who would look backward to the spirit of the Lost Cause, indeed giving them a new cause for which to fight. By 1905, a magazine which spent too

much time looking backward, instead of forward, as did the Bob Taylor, Taylor-Trotwood publication, was bound for trouble. Combine with this problem the fact that only top quality paper, glossy prints, and illustrations were used, thus making the magazine too costly to produce, an especially troublesome point in view of the declining interest in the subject material published. This cost and declining demand amounted to total failure. If the publication had appeared fifteen years earlier, when the "Cult of the Lost Cause" was at its peak, it might have survived longer; unfortunately, it appeared at a time when "The Cause" was finally lost and replaced by numerous other causes.

INFLUENCE OF THE MAGAZINE ON TAYLOR'S ORATORICAL IMAGE

The Bob Taylor Magazine enhanced Taylor's image as a Southern orator in at least two ways. First, the publication carried with it an aura of "Southerness." Since Taylor served as the editor, and the publication carried his name, it is only natural that he should become more easily identified with the southern purpose and intent of the magazine. Secondly, and more importantly, this periodical gave Taylor a forum where he could express his Southern themes, through the articles which he contributed, and through the publication of his speeches. Reference has already been made to some of his articles on Southern
themes, but it should be noted here that some of his most famous speeches found their way into the Bob Taylor-Taylor-Trotwood Magazine. For example, his most famous lecture, "The Fiddle and the Bow," was run in a serial form in the first several issues of the magazine. In addition, several of his ceremonial speeches were included, especially those associated with the heroes of "The Lost Cause": for example, his eulogy on the "Life and Character of Zebulen B. Vance," as well as his eulogy delivered at the "Tomb of Isham G. Harris" were published. It is significant to note that his "Address to Old Confederates," delivered at the Confederate Reunion in Brownsville, Tennessee, August, 1902, was later published in the magazine, again associating him with "The Cult of the Lost Cause." Other memorial addresses, and even some of his political speaking, was also included, all of which helped to enhance his image as a "Southern Orator."

CONCLUSION

Three aspects of Taylor's career have now been

---

134 Bob Taylor Magazine, October, 1905, p. 16.
135 Ibid., July, 1905, p. 466.
136 Ibid., May, 1905, p. 124.
reviewed: political, lecture, and literary. It was discovered that two images are associated with his political identity: the common man image, and the conciliator image. In addition, his campaign strategy was to rally the "common people" behind him, make them forget their troubles and the issues with humor and folk tales, which resulted with his identifying with their culture and ideals, and their forming a voting block on his behalf. As he used more and more southern folklore and humor, he increased his image as a southern orator, because the people identified him with the images which he created.

Through his lecture career, Taylor enhanced further his southern image, first because he gained a wider audience to whom he could reveal his southern themes, and secondly, because he seemed to form a visible link with a South and a culture which was in reality gone, but not forgotten.

Through his literary career, as revealed in the Bob Taylor Magazine, Taylor put into print some of the themes and ideas he had before only spoken, thus giving them a degree of permanence and more association with the cult of the Lost Cause.
CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF TAYLOR'S POPULAR LECTURE, "DIXIE"

In the preceding chapter, four important facets of this study were presented. First, Taylor's background and formal speech education was examined to determine its influence on his oratorical career. Secondly, consideration was given to the development of his oratorical image, in an effort to determine both how the orator evaluated himself, and how people in general who knew him and heard him speak appraised his image. Thirdly, an inquiry was made into Taylor's political career as it related to his emerging southern image. Fourthly, an investigation of Taylor's literary efforts in the Bob Taylor Magazine revealed the influence on the development of Taylor's oratorical image.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe, analyze, and evaluate Taylor's popular lecture, "Dixie." This speech, as well as the others analyzed in this study, has been selected because it is typical of Taylor's southern viewpoint.

THE FORMAL LECTURE AS A SPEAKING OCCASION

The popular lecture presents the speech critic a special problem since speeches of this nature, for the most
part, were not designed for a specific audience or occasion. Consequently, one might, for purposes of analysis, put them into a special class of public address, as Parrish and Hochmuth recognized:

Many speeches... do not have an immediate specific purpose or a sharply defined audience. A public lecture may be intended for repeated delivery to many audiences... And such speeches may not be directed to any specific occasion but may aim generally at winning good will, creating confidence, allaying fears, strengthening loyalties and beliefs, warning of impending dangers, preparing the public mind for measures to come, or building more tolerant or favorable attitude toward some person or proposal or institution.  

It is evident that the criticism of a speech of this type is less concerned with specific audience analysis than one designed to meet a specific situation or to affect a given audience. However, it will be helpful, in fully understanding Taylor's approach in his lectures, to discuss the typical lecture audience that he might have encountered. In order to accomplish this task, a brief survey of the lecture movement and the historical context surrounding the nineteenth century is in order.

It has been asserted that the lecture platform was in existence in America "long before the colonies won their independence." However, it was probably not until 1826 that

it assumed a "well-defined status." The year 1867 saw the establishment of the Associated Literary Societies, an organization of 110 lyceums, which "marked the beginning of lecturing as a business." The lecture business continued to increase under the leadership of James Clark Redpath and George L. Fall, who founded the Boston Lyceum Bureau. From 1875 to 1900, which includes the period that Taylor lectured, there was witnessed "a phenomenal growth in the number of lecture bureaus, in the number of registered lecturers, and in the demand for their talents."^2

Perhaps the best clue to the nature of the audiences who thronged the lecture halls around the country between 1890 and 1900, is the word business. Lecture bureaus were indeed big business and lecturers were professionals in every sense of the word. They have a service for which the public was willing to pay hard earned cash. The American system of supply and demand gave to the lecturer his prominence and his living.

Identification. Having now established the popularity of the lecture movement between 1875 and 1900, these questions are raised: "What forces in society brought these

---

large audiences together, week after week, month after month, to hear the professional lecturer?" "What common experiences did they share?" The answers to these questions are largely observed in the circumstances of the times.

Rural America, as well as the blue collar workers in the cities, was restless, especially after 1875. The farmer element was, perhaps, the most adamant. In the South and in the West, they began to organize their frustration and anger into impatient pressure groups—the Granges, the Greenbacks, the Colored Farmer's Alliance, a People's Party. By 1892, this frustration had rushed together and fused into the Populist Party. Shrewd politicians capitalized on the frustrations of the people, filling their minds with hatred against such nebulous myths as "the Monopoly," "the Trusts," "Big Business," and "Wall Street" demanding that the rural and small town folk receive a fairer share of the national wealth. The rhetoric of the politicians of this era, who addressed themselves to the common man, appealed to the Agrarian Myth that the American tradition of democracy was born and nurtured on the farms and small villages of the country. It was stressed that rural life and farming as a vocation were sacred, and indeed, since the farmers supplied the country with its food, they were the "backbone of the nation." Even many city dwellers, who
perhaps had roots in the rural areas, subscribed to this myth and longed for the open spaces of the countryside and the "better life" it offered. The Populist orators took this myth and exploded it into a national creed.3

This era, then, was the "Age of Reform," a period of time when rural and small town people were loudly making their demands known, venting their frustrations and rousing their nerves and emotions. Often they were an isolated folk, living far from major railheads, and cut off in mud-road, backwoods communities. They had little to do for entertainment or diversion from their everyday drudgery, except to read the few newspapers that came their way or listen to an occasional orator. They needed and demanded diversion from drudgery, and it was the popular lecturer who met that need and gave these people an occasional escape from reality. Harrison and Detzer express this sentiment well when they write of the typical lecture audience:

Weary of mud-road isolation, they thirsted for knowledge, for the exposition of new ideas not accessible to them in the ordinary course of their reading— in the daily or weekly newspapers. And, above all, they were hungry for escape from

their own flat horizons into the fascinating world that lay beyond. If they could not see it with their own eyes, they could perhaps behold it with that "inner eye" of the imagination of which the poet speaks. Lecturers who "had been there" could evoke these exotic scenes for their enjoyment.4

The professional lecturer, then, more often than not, spoke to a lonely, frustrated, and hard working people who sought escape and enjoyment in the lecture movement, and who were willing to pay their "quarters and half dollars" to receive it. Perhaps this circumstance explains why most popular lecturers, with a few notable exceptions, "stuck to safe subjects." The reason seems obvious: "Most sponsors, in their serious quest for the Better Life, slammed their doors with equal finality on both the controversial and the frivolous." For this reason, lecturers selected subjects such as: "Friendship," "The Family," "Social Life," "New England Authors," and "Health and Beauty." Such titles caused Harrison and Detzer to comment: "In each, no doubt, he stood resolutely on the side of the angels."5 Later, Harrison and Detzer referred to these orators as "God, home, and mother" speakers, who rarely

5Ibid., pp. ix-x.
"descended to the muddy level of crass partisanship," but left "the earthly struggles of political forces to other men and from their cloudy eminences dispensed good cheer." These "merchants of perpetual sunshine" were quick to use the "ready-taylored-myths" accepted by the audience to weave their "verbal tapestries that depicted Pollyyanna, Horatio Alger, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, and the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dyke, all with beautific smiles and rainbows 'round their shoulders,'" to the delight and inspiration of a "culture-hungry rural America," who "devoured their cheerful words."

Wheat growers in the Dakotas, Western cattle men, corn and hog farmers in Iowa, dairymen in Wisconsin, cotton planters in Tennessee, one or all might disagree violently with a political lecturer, or dispute business facts, but none was crass enough to object to 'mother, home, and heaven.' None sold virtue and honesty short.6

It can now be readily observed that the typical lecture audience, having paid an admission to hear a speaker, generally expected to be diverted from the usual, entertained with lofty thoughts or good humor, and soothed with comforting ideas, either resurrected from the mythical past, or projected into the equally mythical future. Having made these general observations concerning the consubstantial

6Ibid., pp. 134-136.
nature of the typical lecture audience, one may now consider
Robert Taylor's lecture, "Dixie."

ROBERT TAYLOR'S "DIXIE:" AUDIENCES AND OCCASIONS

As indicated earlier, Robert Taylor used several
different lectures on his various lecture tours. His first,
and perhaps most famous and successful lecture, was "The
Fiddle and the Bow." However, he likewise enjoyed success
with "Visions and Dreams," "Dixie," "Love, Laughter and
Song," "The Old Plantation," "Castles in the Air," and
"Sentiment." From these titles, and from an examination
of their content, it is apparent that Taylor fits the image,
as described by Harrison and Detzer, of a "God, mother, and
home" lecturer, including "perpetual sunshine," "verbal
tapestries" and all. Concerning Taylor, Harrison and
Detzer reported:

He was a poet at heart, with a happy knack of
dialect, a wealth of flowery words, a belief
that a 'hearty laugh is a hallelujah.' A
reporter on the old New York World, after hear­
ing Taylor deliver his famous Fiddle and the
Bow, called him 'the Paganini among politicians
and the Patrick Henry among fiddlers.' Like
Opie Read, Fiddlin' Bob was a masterly story­
teller; and if their paths crossed on the road,
they often sat up all night swapping yarns.7

7Ibid., p. 134.
Taylor's lecture entitled "Dixie" was originally constructed as the companion of his brother, Alf Taylor's lecture, "Yankee Doodle." The brothers frequently traveled together, participating in a duo-lecture called, "Yankee Doodle and Dixie." This combination, of course, was a natural attraction in view of the interest that the famous "War of Roses" campaign for Governor of Tennessee in 1886 had stirred. Alf Taylor, who had represented the Republican party in the race, thus could be easily associated with Yankee Doodle. Robert Taylor, on the other hand, who represented the Democrats, was easily associated with Dixie.

The two brothers began their first tour, probably in the fall of 1895 or 1896, though the specific date is uncertain. Reportedly, a large number of appearances had been arranged, "covering every section of the Union," with the majority of the engagements being in the South, Northwest, and Southwest.\(^8\) Apparently, large audiences were in attendance everywhere they went. In fact, "at many points the crowds were so large that many could not be accommodated even with standing room." The lecture tour extended over a period of seven months, ending when Robert Taylor received

---

\(^8\)Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 194.
an urgent request from his party that he run for Governor of Tennessee for a third term.9

The duo-lecture was reportedly always introduced by the brothers' lecture manager. The introductory comments set the mood for the verbal encounter by explaining how the two brothers "crossed swords and clashed shields on many a political stump" during the War of Roses Campaign in 1886. However, the manager stressed the non-controversial nature of the encounter: "Their thrusts of wit are keen and their intellectual parryings are spirited, but nevertheless, fraternal and free from political coloring." The manager then explained the of the program. "Honorable Alf Taylor," he would announce, "assumes the first half of the program. . .[and] under the skill of his touch the land of 'Yankee Doodle' is made to blossom as the rose, and 'Uncle Jonathan,' the representative American, is the acknowledged exponent of all things great and good." Having explained Alf's part, the manager then introduced Robert's speech in these words:

Ex-Governor Taylor presents the last act of this peculiar drama, and his theme is interwoven with the music of a superb male quartette, in which he himself sings second tenor.

9Ibid., pp. 194-196, 201.
Clothing philosophy in the gentle garb of humor and song, he reaches the tenderest sentiments of every heart, and moves the audience to tears or laughter at his will. As an impersonator of Southern character he has no equal. With the versatility of his genius he portrays the customs and oddities of the people of "Dixie," "the home of beauty and of sorrow, the land of flowers and of tears." He carries you back to the days of her wealth and her glory, when the darkies sang in the cotton fields, and the lords and the ladies of the plantation mounted their thoroughbreds, mingled their shouts with the music of the running hounds in the joyous chase, and as he pauses before the door of old "Uncle Ephraim's" cabin, in the splendid refrain of the quartette, you hear the same lody you heard there long ago.  

It is especially interesting to note that Taylor heightened the entertainment value of his presentation by interspersing vocal music at various points in the speech. Note also that in his introduction Taylor's manager alerted the audience to the nature of the speech, thus setting the proper mood for the occasion.

DESCRIPTION OF TEXT

The printed version of "Dixie" contains between five and six thousand words. Considering the length of the text, it is estimated that the speech took at least forty-

10Ibid., pp. 194-195.

11A copy of this lecture may be found in Bob Taylor, Lectures and Best Literary Productions (Nashville: The Bob Taylor Publishing Co., 1913), pp. 159-174.
five minutes to an hour in delivery. While Taylor undoubtedly varied the speech from audience to audience, depending on the situation, the available text probably contains the essential elements of what was delivered on most of the speaking occasions. It is believed, as previously established, that Taylor prepared written versions of all his lectures, committing them to memory. This being true, it is safe to assume that "Dixie" remained basically stable in content from situation to situation, though there may have been slight changes in adapting to a specific audience.

ARRANGEMENT

Thematic Emergence. According to Thonssen and Baird, a speech "possesses a clearly defined and easily determined thesis or purpose." This observation is true even in the case of the popular lecture, for it too must commence at a given point and move toward a goal, unfolding the theme of the speech as it progresses. The central theme of "Dixie" is perhaps suggested in the title itself. Obviously Taylor was interested in presenting the South in a favorable light; therefore, his theme centers around the myths that cause the South to appear superior to the other sections of the

---

country. Stated simply, the theme asserts that "God made the South the best." In the course of the lecture, Taylor stated and restated this thesis many times:

But fairer than the land of Yankee Doodle, and richer than the prairied West is the empire of my own sweet sunny South, the land of flowers and of tears, of beauty and of sorrows, the land of griefs and broken columns. With all its sufferings it is still the garden of the gods, where all the verdure and bloom of 'Paradise Lost' have found a home.  

Method of Division. A close analysis of "Dixie" reveals that it is bound together by a single image: "the glorious South;" everything else relates in some manner to this one image. From this point the speech assumes a loose narrative form, without clearly defined points, but moving from one verbal image to another by the force of analogy, sometimes using pathos, sometimes using humor, at other times using vivid description and impressive language. What emerges is not a classically organized speech as one might find in deliberative speaking, but a verbal mosaic in which various images are pieced together, resulting in a single, impressionable picture of the land of Dixie. Gray and Braden appear to recognize that some speeches, like the lecture, require a special kind of organization, which

---

13 Lectures and Best Literary Productions, p. 161.
they call "psychological organization." This organization is especially "audience centered," meaning that it is planned with the "interests, attitudes, and information of the listeners," as guides in establishing the speech order. 14 Brigance, one of the few writers who deals specifically with the popular lecture, describes this type of organization when he writes: "The speaker must resort as nowhere else to illustration piled upon illustration, comparisons, contrasts, epigrams—word pictures of every variety." This description of the lecture applies to "Dixie," for Taylor's pattern of development is composed of illustrations and vivid imagery. Brigance explains the benefit of such a method of preparation:

Of course such a method in the hands of a crude speaker will degenerate into a mere string of stories hung together with no unity or end, but that is the fault of the application, not of the method, for in the hands of a skillful speaker a series of illustrations can produce a cumulative effect, and each one can carry a whole moral truth better than a long exposition or a refined argument. . . . The popular audience comes primarily for entertainment but will follow with interest and profit any serious subject so long as it is made pictorial. 15


Taylor's method of organization in "Dixie," therefore, was obviously one of "stringing together" illustrations and humorous folk stories, producing a "cumulative effect," resulting in a "pictorial" presentation of the Southland. This method of development was different, of course, from the structured arguments the people often heard in the political hustings because the goal of the speaking occasion was different. The audience came expecting diversion from their problems. They paid an admission to hear Taylor speak, and they wanted entertainment, something to please the ear and excite the senses. It was not important that the listeners remember specific points in the speech, but it was immensely important that they enjoy themselves and experience emotional stimulation.

Over-all Strategy. Among the key terms in Kenneth Burke's lexicon is the word strategy. Strategy is considered in two lights: first, there is an over-all plan, or "strategy of strategies;" secondly, there are the "lesser" or "inner" strategies within the over-all concept. By strategy, Burke means the maneuvers the speaker makes in a given situation in achieving the desired end of the "act."

---

In understanding Taylor's comprehensive strategy, one must give prime consideration to the reason why the audience came together to hear the lecture in the first place. Obviously, as was observed earlier, the audience paid a fee to receive diversion from the usual, to be entertained, to be stimulated, to be inspired, to have their emotions flexed by being constantly reminded of the attitudes and beliefs which held them together in a consubstantial bond. In explaining that the stimulating speech is emotional in nature rather than intellectual, Gray and Braden comment:

The very occasion is one which stirs loyalty, patriotism, reverence, respect, admiration, and devotion. The listeners come because they want and expect to have their deeper feelings stirred. They may even want to have the opportunity to shed tears and express themselves in other overt ways. In a sense they delight in such an emotional experience.\(^{17}\)

Taylor, of course, was obliged to deliver what the audience desired, since they had paid an admission fee with the advanced understanding of the nature of the lecture. His goal, then, was to stimulate and please the audience--make them laugh, perhaps even make them cry. He wanted to replicate圣地 held memories of past glory, to re-affirm and intensify the beliefs and symbols which were common bonds

\(^{17}\)Gray and Braden, op. cit., pp. 390-391.
of identity. Gray and Braden explain that a speaker who would achieve this objective "must take advantage of the old and new:"

Obviously he wants to utilize the old: old customs, old stereotypes, old heroes, old loyalties, cherished memories. He gives due recognition to revered symbols: flags, crosses, tokens, and emblems. But he must also utilize the new; that is, he must express his ideas in fresh form, he must give new interpretations to the old and represent its influence in new relationships. The listener must be made to think of the old in a new way.

Taylor followed this pattern in "Dixie." In achieving his goal, Taylor's strategy was to deliver a series of verbal images, some humorous, some nostalgic in nature, all directed toward eliciting an overt response of pleasure and delight from the audience, through the magnification of myths and dreams, both of a by-gone era, and of a happy era to come. He espoused the theme, "the South is the best;" he amplified this concept in at least four ways: first, through magnification of sectional lines as a manifestation of sectional pride; secondly, through magnification of the intrinsic beauty of the South; thirdly, through magnification of the old South; and fourthly, through magnification of the South of the future.

---

18 Gray and Braden, op. cit., p. 391.
STRATEGY OF MAGNIFICATION

MAGNIFICATION OF EXISTING SECTIONAL LINES

It should be recalled that Taylor delivered this lecture principally to audiences in the South and in the West. At this historical moment, both these sections were predominantly rural and many of them opposed the "large business interests" of the Northeast. Consequently, many of the political orators of the period used a rhetoric which re-enforced a kind of social dualism. Though many classes might be depicted in American society, orators like Sockless Jerry Simpson simplified them into two: "It is a struggle between the robbers and the robbed." A populist manifesto declared: "On the one side are the allied hosts of the monopolies, the money power, great trusts and railroad corporations, who seek the enactment of laws to benefit them and impoverish the people. On the other are the farmers, laborers, merchants, and all the people who produce wealth and bear the burden of taxation. . . . Between these two there is no middle ground."19

In the South the feeling prevailed that the Northern victory during the Civil War "resulted in the triumph of

commerce and industry over agriculture. . . Farmers, landlords, and tenants alike, became ever poorer while city people grew increasingly richer." This economic inferiority was compounded by the Lost Cause complex. Many Southerners were so captivated by the Confederate hero myth that they continued to look longingly backward to the alleged glory of the old regime. Consequently, in state after state throughout the South, demagogues aroused the people and filled them with hate of the "money power," the "trusts," the "railroads," "Wall Street," and "Yankee carpetbaggers." Race lines, class lines, and sectional lines were clearly drawn, as the rural South and West revolted against the big business interests centered largely in the Northeast.

It is not surprising, then, to find Taylor alluding to sectional lines early in his lecture and attempting to magnify their significance and meaning. This approach undoubtedly found a responsive chord in the predominantly rural West and South who were attempting in the mid 1890's to meet what they considered to be a threat from the industrial Northeast. Meanwhile the Southerners were not only farmers, but either ex-Confederates or, at least, in

---

sympathy with the Lost Cause. Therefore, any justification for their feelings which Taylor might suggest would not only lend them pleasure and enjoyment, but would strengthen the bonds of identification between them.

Having first asserted that every "patriotic American citizen" loves every inch of American soil and would gladly defend against any foreign foe, regardless of sectional bias—thus enhancing his ethos with patriotic fervor—Taylor clearly stated the point to be magnified: "But Mason and Dixon's Line is still there. Law cannot abolish it."

In language charged with high emotion, Taylor expanded this concept, giving it magnitude and distinction, using at least two methods: (1) humor; (2) appeals to sectional loyalty and pride.

**Humor.** As one might expect in a popular lecture designed to draw a response of pleasure and delight from the audience, humor was used extensively to illustrate and magnify points. Concerning sectional lines, Taylor reminded his audience that the line was no longer a "bloody chasm," but was now the dividing line between "cold bread and hot biscuits." Then, stating that "we are still fraternal," he made a sudden turn, which had a politically humorous impact, especially to Southern audiences: ". . . who will prophesy an end to our fraternity as long as 'Yankee Doodle'
fattens from the hopper of high protective tariff and 'Dixie' generously fills the hopper—as long as 'Yankee Doodle' gets the fat and 'Dixie' gets the fraternity." This statement was immediately followed with an anecdote, using two characters with appropriately symbolic names, "Uncle Yank" and "Uncle Dick," in which "Yank" took an advantage over "Dick," in much the same way, according to Taylor at least, as the North took advantage over the South. Then, with seemingly guarded expressions, and perhaps to the delight of both the South and the West, Taylor concluded his humorous cut toward "Yankee Doodle" with this caustic warning, reminiscent of another era, yet prophetic of what many in the South and West would like to accomplish: "But let me whisper a secret in the ear of 'Yankee Doodle.' 'Dixie' is smiling on the West, and the West is squeezing 'Dixie's' hand, and we may yet have the equilbrium of government which will give to each section a fair division of the milk."

It is, perhaps, significant to note that Taylor was really dealing with a serious and potentially explosive subject, but he dealt with it in a very light vein, using humor to "mask" the point and give the audience pleasure—especially the Southern and Western audience.

Appeals to Sectional Loyalty and Pride. Taylor further expanded the concept of sectionalism by appealing
to loyalty and sectional pride, resulting in patriotic fervor for one's own home. This feeling was introduced with an amusing anecdote, which probably brought thunderous response from the audience: "An old politician once shouted from the stump: 'Fellow citizens: I know no North, I know no South, I know no East, I know no West,' and a barefooted boy yelled from the gallery, 'you'd better go an' study gog-er-fey.'" Taylor quickly asserted that he believed the boy was right: "I believe in sectional lines. I believe that they are the very safeguards of the Republic." This sentiment accomplished two purposes. First, it offered a rationalization for the intense sectionalism evident in the South. According to Taylor, sectional lines were a positive good, since they were the "safeguards of the Republic;" therefore, those who expressed pride in sectional bias were, in effect, good citizens. This is an example of an act of magnification being intensified and enlivened through analogy; sectional lines are made analogous to patriotic virtue. Secondly, Taylor's clear, forceful affirmation of belief in sectional lines demonstrated his identity with the audience. Thus, speaker and audience come to feel, in Burke's term, consubstantiality, a common unity.

Taylor continues to amplify sectional loyalty by expanding the discussion into glittering verbal pictures
of the various sections of the country. The Northeast he pictured as "crowded with busy millions, singing the songs of progress with the spindle and the loom, and groaning with wealth and politics; the emporium of universities [which] flourishes a civilization whose triumphs are the triumphs of cultured brain and cunning hand. . . " The West was presented as a "mighty pillar. . . around whose base lies another vast empire of territory, and under whose shadow has leaped into life a new and marvelous civilization, gold-crowned and silver-sandaled. . . ." Then, by comparison, Taylor introduces, in language which suggests loyalty and pride, his own "sweet Sunny South. . . the Garden of the gods." Having described this "imperial triumvirate of the Western Hemisphere—this mighty trinity of empires, unfettered by tyrants, undaunted by kings," he defiantly declares that "wherever the eagles lead them with forces joined the planet will tremble and the Nations of the earth must quail." Yet, declares he, this great American Union is still divided into three great sections, and that is the way it should be, for "sectional lines are the landmarks of diversity, and diversity is the law of the universe." Having established the "law of diversity," Taylor then made perhaps his strongest appeal to loyalty and pride in the interest of sectional patriotism, by attaching sectionalism to the highly emotional
overtones of home, which would tend to justify his lecture lauding "Dixie:"

Diversity has given to the land of 'Yankee Doodle' the heaviest purse and to the West the broadest territory. But who will chide me for loving the Land of Dixie best. I love it because it is my native land. I believe not in sectional lines, but in sectional patriotism which loves home better than any other spot on earth. I would despise the Yankee who does not love the rock and hills of New England better than all the roses and palms and dreamy landscapes of the whole South. I would loathe the Westerner who does not believe that sixteen pounds of silver is as good as one pound of gold, especially if he owns a silver mine.21

Having thus magnified, by justifying, sectional diversity, Taylor then was prepared to present his "Dixie" in most magnificent terms.

MAGNIFICATION OF THE INTRINSIC BEAUTY OF THE SOUTH

Taylor aggrandized the South through three principal methods: first, through use of humor; secondly, through appeals to "things magnificent;" thirdly, through use of grandiloquent language.

Humor. As already indicated, humor was used as a basic tool to maintain interest throughout the lecture. In aggrandizing the South, Taylor made humorous comparisons between "Dixie," as a geographical area, and "Yankee Doodle."

21Taylor, Lectures and Best Literary Productions, p. 162.
For example, he facetiously surmised that if Columbus had dropped anchor "in sight of the frozen shores of 'Yankee Doodle,'" he would have immediately lifted sails and made a bee line for Spain, and there, on bended knee, declared to the astonished Isabella that he had discovered the North Pole, and that it wore sidewiskers and spectacles." Then, jocularly, he added that it was no wonder that when Cortez and De Soto entered the wilderness of America they dreamed of El Dorado, "whose sands were gold and whose pebbles were precious stones," for, after all, they were exploring the beautiful land of Dixie." There followed, probably to the tremendous delight of the Southern audience, an allusion to Ponce de Leon, whom Taylor re-named "Pontha-daily-own," who searched for the fountain of youth "away down South in Dixie." Taylor surmised that he must have found it,

... for down among the bananas and oranges at St. Augustine, in Florida, there is a monument to his memory. It is the Hotel 'Pontha-daily-own,' where the sickly sons and daughters of 'Yankee Doodle' now restore their youth at ten dollars a 'pontha' and fifty dollars a 'daily-own.'

It is obvious, from this example, and the others presented, that Taylor depended heavily on comparisons, sudden turns, and "plays on words" for his humorous impact. The North

---

\[22\] Ibid., p. 163.
was depicted in negative terms: "...frozen shores... North Pole..." The inhabitants of that frozen land were portrayed as "sickly," and in need of the South's bright sunshine. In contrast, the South was pictured in glowing, positive terms, as when it was compared to El Dorado, "whose sands were gold and whose pebbles were precious stones." In contrast to the frozen North, the "beautiful land of Dixie" had sun and health, a real "fountain of youth." The North is presented in a comic light; the South as one taking advantage of the weakness and ineptness of its Northern counterpart. This image, of course, is what the average Southerner wanted to accept. He probably laughed at Taylor's buffoonery, but deep inside his ego was likely bolstered.

**Appeals to Things Magnificent.** Aristotle defines magnificence as "the virtue productive of grandeur in outlay."\(^{23}\) He undoubtedly was referring to that which is characterized by splendor or majestic beauty. A significant portion of Taylor's lecture was spent using this virtue to heighten the aggrandizement of the South. He embodied the South with majestic beauty by linking it with positive symbols of aesthetic value. Thus, Dixie was pictured as

\(^{23}\)Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
the place where "the mocking bird warbles his sweetest song."

The place where "the mocking bird warbles his sweetest song."

Trusting that he was not too "offensively sectional," Taylor excused his strong affirmations of Southern beauty by declaring that "God made the South the best:"

He has poured out his floods of sunshine upon her valleys and dimpled her green hills with shadowy coves, where gay birds flutter and sing and bright waters ripple in eternal melody. The sun rises on Yankee Doodle and sets on the West, but he is at the full meridian of his glory, away down South in Dixie.

Taylor gladly granted Yankee Doodle the mighty Niagara, then by comparison, spoke of a river "whose volume is mightier than a thousand Niagaras and whose waters are as warm as a summer day. . . . It is the wonderous Gulf Stream, the vehicle of the Sun's life-giving power, that rolls out in majesty from the Southern shore of Dixie." It is significant to note that Taylor chose one of the most spectacular sights in the North for his comparison with the Gulf Stream, exhibiting a point where he could demonstrate that the South had something greater and mightier. Thus, he draws upon the beauty of Niagara and the mighty volume of the Gulf Stream to magnify the South. Then, intensifying the power of analogy, Taylor rushes forward and constructs an image of the South as "the garden of the gods, where all verdue and bloom of 'Paradise Lost' have found a home." The analogy is obvious. Taylor recalls the epic poem written by John
Milton called "Paradise Lost." Based on the Bible, this religious poem tells the story of creation, the revolt of Satan, and the temptation of man. It ends as Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden, with the promise that a Messiah will come and redeem mankind. Taylor aggrandizes the South by assuring his listeners that Dixie lays claim to all the peace and beauty that man once enjoyed in "Paradise Lost." It is no wonder, Taylor says, that the invincible armies of the North argued so eloquently with the sword to prevent the divorce of Dixie from the Union. For as unto the crown the jewels are, so unto the Nation is Dixie. She is the red and white of the American flag, and some of the blue. She is the dimple in the cheek of the Goddess of liberty, and most of the cheek. She is the diamond pin in the shirt bosom of Yankee Doodle.

Note especially the symbols of beauty, value, and patriotism in this passage: "...jewels...American flag...liberty...diamond pin..." All these symbols are associated with the South, causing it to appear magnificent.

Having now observed Taylor's aggrandizement of the South through appeals to things magnificent, it is useful to examine more closely his use of language as it relates to the magnification of the intrinsic beauty of the South.

**Use of Impressive Language.** Brigance insists that there are two principal elements in the successful popular lecture: first, a subject of universal interest and
secondly, a pictorial presentation. Obviously, he is referring to word pictures of every type, and the use of vivid imagery and language when he speaks of "pictorial presentation." Gray and Braden recommend that the speaker, in the stimulating speech, "make his language directive, highly figurative, and of course emotionally loaded. . . capable of minute and delicate touches, expressive of all the finer shades of feeling."^5

Taylor indulged in extensive stylistic hyperbole, using emotionally loaded expressions and vivid figures of speech, especially in his descriptions of the beauty of the South. The nouns he chose tended to be specific rather than abstract, as when he would specify kinds of birds and fruits and animals, rather than using the broader class nouns. In addition, his verbs were expressive of action, undoubtedly causing feelings of movement and excitement in the audience. Rather than have the mocking bird sing his sweet song, Taylor chose the more colorful, active verb, "warbles" his sweet song. The hills of the South were not merely adorned with tangling vines, but were "festooned" with them. God did not merely create Southern

---

^5Brigance, *Speech Composition*, p. 325.

sunshine, but, in Taylor's words, "poured out floods of sunshine upon her valleys and dimpled her green hills with shadowy coves. . . ."

However, Taylor's real forte was his use of vivid adjectives and impressive figures. Nearly every important noun was preceded by an adjective, usually positive in nature and rich in connotation. For example, he spoke of the queenly peach, the princely apple, and primeval forests of timber trees that lift their lofty tops among the clouds. The South was rarely just "the South." It was usually the "sweet sunny South," or the "beautiful land of Dixie."

Throughout the lecture Taylor carefully selected slanted terms, positive words, emotionally loaded adjectives, all shaded in such a way as to convey a pleasant, attractive image of the South, palatable in every respect. Such "positive loading"26 signaled connotatively to the audience that the South was free of negative aspects, which gave the Southern audiences pleasure, since this is what they wanted to believe anyway.

Brembeck and Howell agree that figures of speech present "a wonderfully varied source of connotative communication. . . . Similes, metaphors, and analogies lend

clarification and attention value to communication." They explain that the power of figurative communication "lies in its visual imagery." As might be expected, Taylor used figurative language extensively, especially similes and personification. For example, grapes were described as being so abundant in the Southland that they hung in clusters "like a million crystal globes filled with blushing wine." But even stronger and more abundant was his use of personification. Thus, the "queenly peach" suddenly springs to life and "flushes with crimson," while the sun "doth kiss her cheek." The Gulf Stream becomes a "living water" which sends upon its miraculous current "warmth and health and life to half the world." Such personification could well quicken, enliven, and dramatize a speech, thus enhancing the interest factors and increasing the enjoyment experienced by the audience.

These descriptive devices and figures of speech appear, as read today, to be tawdry. However, it must be remembered that the audience came to be entertained, to hear pleasing words, really, oratory for oratory's sake. They expected to be soothed with beautiful words and charmed with a courtly manner, and Bob Taylor was willing and capable of doing both. Those who lived and worked in the South knew

\[27\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 154.}\]
that it was, in the summer, hot, humid, in places unsightly, and had as many problems and difficulties as any other area of the country. But they liked to imagine that it was a "little bit of heaven," and Taylor merely played upon their imaginations to arouse a response of pleasure.

Thus far, two primary observations have been made concerning Taylor's strategy of magnification: the first involves his glorification and justification of sectional lines, and secondly, his illustrious glorification of the "intrinsic beauty" of the South.

MAGNIFICATION OF THE GLORY OF THE OLD SOUTH

In a period of time when rural and small town people—including those who lived in the large cities but longed for the farm—sought for the glory that lay beyond the ordinary, the myths of the glory of the old South held a special fancy. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that Taylor repeated these myths extensively to captivate his audience and give them pleasure in escape from reality through the dream world of the Lost Cause. Again, Taylor sprinkled humor amid passages expressing pathos and nostalgia, replicating memories which, mythical as they were, magnified the South as a region where brave people demonstrated performance beyond what one might normally expect.
Having graphically presented a verbal impression of the topography of the South, in which it emerged as the "crown of jewels" of the nation, Taylor introduces his favorite theme, the old South, by first rejecting the term "New South:" "Talk not to me of the New South. There is no New South. . . . We are not ashamed of the old South. We are not ashamed of the grandest race of men and women who ever lived on the earth and who were the heart and soul of the old South." With this statement, Taylor is not rejecting that for which the New South stood, but rather, he is rejecting the idea that Dixie was giving up its old South notions. The New South symbolically stood for the economic independence of the South through industrialization. Taylor did not object to this concept, as shall be observed later. Like Henry W. Grady, and many other New South advocates, Taylor felt that the future of the South lay in a rebirth of the old South spirit. Grady sounded this theme in his famous New South speech of 1886, 28 "In speaking to the toast with which you have honored me, I accept the term 'The New South,' as in no sense disparaging to the old. . . . I would not, if I could, dim the glory they won in peace and war, or by word or deed take ought from the splendor and

grace of their civilization—never equaled and, perhaps, never to be equaled in its chivalric strength and grace."

Thus Grady, like Taylor, seems to have been caught up in the myth of the old South and was inclined to present the New South as a reflection of the glory of the old.

Having suggested, then, that the term "New South" was a misnomer, Taylor reverted to the popularly held myths of the old South, appealing to the emotional appreciation one might hold for expressions of courage, honor, loyalty, and cherished memories. Nearly all these elements are represented in this one highly emotional passage: "The blood of chivalry still runs in the veins of its people and may God forbid that there shall ever be a new South. The virtue and honor and courage of the old South are good enough for me."" At this point, Taylor is obviously establishing an identity with the pro-Confederate element. In view of his efforts to this end, the following specific methods of magnification will be analyzed: (1) appeals to things memorable; (2) appeals to courage and honor.

Appeals to Things Memorable. In "Dixie," Taylor resurrected numerous cherished and revered symbols of the Lost Cause, all of which aided in establishing points of identification between orator and audience. For example, in speaking of that "brilliant civilization" which "perished
with the downfall of slavery," he inquired: "Where is the old time Southerner who would banish it from his memory?"

He assured the audience that he was thankful slavery was dead, but hastened to call forth those fanciful memories of the plantation era, encrusted in myth as they were, nevertheless, gloriously suspended in the imagination, dispensing pleasure and pathos, consequently, standing, for the most part, unchallenged.

The plantation myth utilized by Taylor in this lecture appears to relate directly to southern aristocratic notions surrounding the plantation as a home and center of cultural activity in the antebellum South. In the imagination of most Southerners, the plantation was,

A big house on a hill by the riverside or set far back from the road in the midst of great trees, white-framed with big columns or white-columned brick structures. . . .Some distance to the rear of the house, at one side, stands the great white-washed stable with stall for thirty thoroughbred horses; every stall is occupied; a small army of Negro hostlers bustle about it. . . . The manner of building and the interior of the great houses were equally distinctive. Some of the rooms were more than twenty-four feet high, majestic in roominess; many sixteen feet high and paneled to the ceiling. . . .Beautiful furniture and appointments with all the promise of priceless inheritance and antiques the mere listing of which would require great catalogues compiled with rare skill and portraiture. 29

The plantation home described by Odum in the above passage was undoubtedly the most elaborate, maintained by only the richest southern planter, owner of hundreds of slaves, who lived in "feudal splendor." Such a mansion and elaborate surroundings were not at all commonplace in the South, as most Southerners liked to imagine. Simkins points out that

no more than one fourth of Southern white society was directly involved in slavery. Five sevenths of these slaveholders were but yeoman farmers, since each owned less than ten slaves. . . . The holders of more than one hundred slaves numbered less than 1,800. Only eleven persons owned 500 or more slaves.30

In spite of the obvious—that relatively few Southerners enjoyed the "feudal splendor" of the elaborate plantation system—the myth of the expansiveness of the plantation permeated the South. Simkins explains why:

Naturally, planters and those Southerners who wished to be planters accepted this legend of the South. It gave them a satisfying sense of superiority to the low-bred traders and artisans of the North. Yet what was more remarkable, it was accepted as true by the enemies of the plantation system.31

Within the framework of the illusional plantation, the large land owner and planter gathered his family and slaves about him, not wholly unlike the feudal lords of

30Simkins, op. cit., p. 133.
31Ibid., p. 136.
medieval Europe. The southern plantation family was reportedly tightknit and centered around the owner of the estate. The plantation was, in the imagination at least, a world of its own. A firm hierarchy stood, from the owner of the estate, who was always pictured as a "gentleman," raised with proper restraint and under proper influence, who knew how to wield authority, through the overseer, who directed the planting and harvesting, down to the Negro slaves or field hands. The true gentleman planter was not just lord over his manor, but he had the moral responsibility of the welfare of those who lived under his domain. In fact, the Southerner was apt to be sentimental regarding the fraternal interest of the owner toward his slaves. This gentleman of honor might well be pictured riding about his noble estate, dressed in his finest, mounted on a beautiful white horse—could it be any other color—taking personal supervision over the physical well-being of his plantation family.

Such then was the myth of the antebellum plantation, proudly displayed before the war as an aristocratic ideal, and serving as a sentimental, mythical, emotional balm after the war. The following exemplifies the use of this plantation myth by Taylor.

...I never shall forget the visions I have seen of the cotton fields, stretching away to the horizon, alive with toiling Negroes, who sang as they
toiled from early morn till close of day. I never shall forget the white-columned mansions rising in cool, spreading groves. . . . I have seen pomp and pride revel in banquet halls and feast on the luxuries of every zone. . . . There I have seen the Lords and ladies of the plantation, mounted on their thoroughbreds, fleet as the wind, dash away and vanish like phantoms in the forest in pursuit of the fleeting fox. . . . Cotton was king and sat upon the ebony throne of slavery. Every day was a link in the golden chain of pleasure. It was a superb civilization which produced statesmen the peers of Webster and Seward and Sumner, orators more eloquent than Everett or Wendell Phillips, and soldiers as great as ever marched to battle. 32

Falling upon the ears of a frustrated people, who had little left except illusions, fantasies, myths, and pretentions, these words must have replicated latent memories of a glorious by-gone era, glorious, perhaps, only in the imagination, yet a rallying point around which they could gather their hopes and dreams, a common bond of identification.

In presenting the plantation myth, Taylor dwelt extensively on the Negro. He pictured the Negro quarters around the mansion, filled with happy slaves, singing "merry songs," playing the banjo and the fiddle, dancing as they "whiled away the long summer evenings." He enhanced his visual image with stylistic personification as follows:

I have heard them play and sing until the very stars seemed to twinkle to their music. I have seen them dance until the smoke and flame of the

32Taylor, _op. cit._, pp. 165-166.
bonfires swung corners with the moon-beams in
the air. I have heard them laugh till the big
ripe ears of corn grinned through the shuck and
the trees shook with laughter till they shed
their leaves. I have heard them preach till
the earth trembled.\textsuperscript{33}

This passage is an excellent example of language used, not
really functionally, but merely for the sake of stylistic
enjoyment, an enjoyment which might be realized separate
and apart from the rhetorical event. There are many exam­
pies of this type stylistic embroidery in Taylor's lectures,
especially in "Dixie."

Characteristically, Taylor did not depend solely on
verbal tapestry to maintain audience interest and excite
feelings of pleasure. In recalling the memorable plantation
era, he found grounds for using his peculiar talent in
imitating the Negro dialect by relating a series of anec­
dotes concerning the "plantation darkie." In the midst of
these stories of the slave and his master, indicating a
pleasant, but often humorous relationship, Taylor injected
this rather serious thought, in an obvious attempt to dispel
the realities of slavery, and replace it with the myth:

The outside world can never know the true rela­
tion of master and slave. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'
was an indictment of the many for the cruelties
of a few. . . . The master was kind to his slaves,

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 166.
and history does not record such devotion as that which was exhibited by the slave himself when he stood guard at the door by night and worked in the field by day. . . .

An attempt was further made to enhance this myth, and perhaps soften the impact of the word slavery, when Taylor concluded: "Let me whisper again in the ear of Yankee Doodle: The South taught this benighted race faith in the living God, and I believe they will yet bear the gospel of Christ to Africa and wake the dark continent from the slumber of the ages."

In these passages depicting slavery as an institution of blissful happiness resulting in the ultimate good of Christianizing the Negro race, Taylor emerges as a true southern apologist. There is little doubt that the post-war South was defensive about slavery. Few would admit that human servitude was really good; however, many would hasten to defend the institution as providing the Negro an escape from the wilds of Africa into the protective custody of the white man's religion. This attitude explains why much of the rhetoric in the post-war South pictured the Negro slave in positively charged language—always laughing, happily singing, dancing, enjoying life to the fullest. Thus, in this lecture Taylor is merely reflecting a defensive image

---

Ibid., p. 168.
of slavery which many in the South wanted to believe—in spite of its obvious mythical nature.

Taylor did not dwell exclusively on the plantation myth in recalling memorable sentiments from the old South. He turned to the Civil War to reclaim something of the glory of the fallen soldiers. Undoubtedly with strong emotion, he reminded the audience that "time has furled the battle flags and smelted the hostile guns. Time has torn down the forts and leveled the trenches and rifle pits on the bloody field of glory. . . ." He made sure, however, that the audience understood his personal loyalty to the Union by calling for veterans of both the "blue" and the "gray" to clasp hands and with "uncovered heads salute the national flag." But then, recalling the gray army, he inquired: "But who will scorn or frown to see the veterans of her shattered armies, scattered now like solitary oaks in the midst of a fallen harvest, hoary with age and covered with scars, sometimes put on the old, worn and faded gray, and unfurl for a little while that other banner, the riddled and blood-stained stars and bars." In enhancing that "virtue which moves men to perform noble deeds in times of peril," Taylor recalled specifically battles and heroes,
held sacred by many Southerners, as well as the symbol of
the Confederate flag:

They followed it [the Stars and Bars] amid the
earthquake-throes of Shiloh, where Albert Sydney
Johnston died. They followed it amid the floods
of living fire at Chancellorsville, where Stone­
wall Jackson fell. They saw it flutter in the
gloom of the Wilderness, where the angry divisions
and corps rushed upon each other and clinched and
fell and rolled together in the bloody mire. They
rallied around it at Gettysburg, where it waved
above the bayonets, mixed and crossed on those
dread heights of destiny. They saw its faded
colors flout defiance for the last time at
Appomattox, and then go down forever in a flood
of tears.36

In this passage one can clearly observe the intensifying of
a symbol by associating it with the virtues of courage and
honor. The audience is made to feel that here is a symbol
made worthy of remembrance by the blood of the heroes who
followed it. Lost in the enshrinement of the myth was all
the hate and fear and misery of a bloody conflict. In its
place was established shibboleths of southern fantasy,
romantic phantasms, to be sure, but effective in weilding
together a disgruntled mass of seemingly defeated humanity.
Here, in the South, and perhaps in the West, and even among
some romantic souls in the North, Taylor could find the
common ground offering escape to the dissatisfied masses.

In discussing the various means of magnifying a deed, Aristotle explains:

For example, he should make it clear if the man is the only one, or the first, to have done the deed, or if he has done it almost alone, or more than anyone else; for all these things are noble. Then there are the circumstances of time and occasion, when a man's performance exceeds what we might naturally expect.\(^3^7\)

One might normally expect a defeated people, living in a devastated land, to become so discouraged that they despair. Taylor magnified the South by attempting to show that it made progress even in the face of adversity and defeat. In reference to the defeat of the southern armies, he said:

The South lost all, but the purest and proudest type of the Anglo-Saxon race stood erect and defiant amid its charred and blackened ruins... His sword was broken, his country crushed; but without a throne he was no less a ruler... Magnificent in the gloom of defeat, he was still a master. Has he not mastered poverty? Has he not triumphed over adversity and rebuilt the ruined South?\(^3^8\)

Here, again, Taylor echoes a theme popularized by Henry W. Grady: the post-war myth of the Confederate soldier, who, according to the myth-makers, rose from the ashes of defeat to new glory. Having described the desolation of the South

\(^{3^7}\text{Cooper, op. cit., p. 53.}\)

\(^{3^8}\text{Taylor, op. cit., p. 170.}\)
and the pitiful condition of the Confederate soldier after Appomattox, Grady asks: "What does he do, this hero in gray with a heart of gold? Does he sit down in sullenness and despair? Not for a day. . . . The soldier stepped from the trenches into the furrow; horses that had charged Federal guns marched before the plow. . . ." Grady continues his description by showing how the defeated South rose from defeat and challenged the industries of the North.

Taylor accomplished a similar effect when he invited his audience to consider how Atlanta, Nashville, Chattanooga, Birmingham, and Richmond had risen from defeat. Then he added: "But money is mightier than the sword, brains are better than bullets, and we are winning back the prestige and glory of the old South—not with the weapons of war, but with the keen edged implements of peace." Note, Taylor says that they are winning back "the prestige and glory of the old South." It is really the old South which he magnifies with his grand statement of victory in spite of defeat; it was this defensive mechanism which became Taylor's continuing theme, as he declared earlier in his speech, using religious symbolism to intensify the myth: "There is no New South. It is the same old South resurrected from the dead with the prints of the nails still in his hands and the scar of the spear still in its side." This figure of speech
presents an especially compelling analogy. All of the emo-
tionalism and intense feeling associated with the suffering
and death of Jesus Christ is brought to bear on this point;
everything the cross symbolizes is associated with the suf-
fering and defeat of the South. Yet, there is far more,
for the Christ that suffered and died also rose from the
death in ultimate victory. The resurrection of Christ is
the focal point of the Christian faith, and it is associated
with a South which also suffered and died; surely, like
Christ, it is destined to rise again in ultimate victory.
To people with a strong Christian faith, who could be stirred
by the mere mention of the cross, this analogy would have
special meaning and force.

Thus far, three areas have been discussed in reference
to Taylor's strategy of magnification of the South: first,
he justified and explained existing sectional lines; secondly,
he glorified the intrinsic natural beauty of the Southland;
thirdly, he magnified the old South by showing that in spite
of military defeat, they were still really victors. There
yet remains a discussion of Taylor's magnification of the
South of the future.

MAGNIFICATION OF THE SOUTH OF THE FUTURE

As already noted, Gray and Braden insist that the
speaker not only give due recognition to the "old" in a
stimulating speech but that he give "new interpretations to the old and represent its influence in new relationships." Taylor, like Grady, appears to follow this advice closely. In his predictions about economic conditions in the South, Taylor again seems defensive, this time about race relations. His strategy is to hide the obvious racism in the South behind alleged industrial advances. For example, he asserted that the only "race problem which is engaging our thought and energy is the race between Yankee Doodle and Dixie for industrial supremacy." Taylor warned the North that they had better "keep their spurs in the flank and their eyes on the wire, for the rival they despise today will show them a clean pair of heels tomorrow."

Again, Taylor seems to have borrowed Grady's theme. In his New South address, Grady asked: "But in all this what have we accomplished? What is the sum of our work? We have found out that in the general summary the free Negro counts more than he did as a slave. We have planted the schoolhouse on the hilltop and made it free to white and black. . . . We have challenged your spinners in Massachusetts and your iron workers in Pennsylvania. . . ."

In this expression, so often repeated by the advocates of the New South, one can observe the recurring theme of a

---

39 Gray and Braden, op. cit., p. 391.
noble South, redeemed from her suffering and adversity, demonstrating her power and might by emerging as ultimate victors. To a people suffering from the inferiority of defeat and frustration, these words, mythical as they obviously were, could serve as an ego building stimulus.

Summary. A close examination of Robert Taylor's lecture, "Dixie," indicates that his over-all strategy was to use highly impressive language depicting a series of verbal images directed toward revealing southern life and thought, with the ultimate goal of eliciting an overt response of pleasure, inspiration, and reverence for certain symbols, thus uplifting the audience and intensifying their beliefs. In achieving his goal, Taylor used an inner strategy of magnification manifested in four principal ways: (1) glorification of sectional lines as a manifestation of sectional pride; (2) glorification of the intrinsic beauty of the South; (3) glorification of the old South; (4) glorification of the future South.

EVALUATION

An evaluation of Taylor's lecture, "Dixie," involves consideration of two primary questions: first, was the over-all strategy successful in the immediate situation? In effect, as Brigance suggests, "Did it please?" "Did the speaker say the fitting thing for the specific occasion?"
"Did the speech have grace and beauty?" Secondly, did the speech have any long range effects?

The determination of the immediate effects of the lecture is difficult, since no specific occasion is under consideration. However, some general observations are possible from what little information is available and from considerable internal evidence. First of all, Taylor's biographers indicate that the duo-lecture by Alf and Bob Taylor entitled "Yankee Doodle and Dixie" was a tremendous success. Indications are that large crowds greeted the brothers everywhere they spoke. In fact, "so universally popular had this attraction become that there were propositions pending, which, if they could have been accepted, would have kept "Yankee Doodle and Dixie" on the lyceum boards for three consecutive years." This success story was cut short, of course, by Bob's political ambitions. Significantly, Taylor's political popularity continued to soar as he repeated his southern themes, perhaps indicating that he struck a responsive chord.

Beyond this evidence of the lecture's immediate impact are some internal elements which would indicate that the speech could maintain a high level of audience interest,

40 Brigance, Speech, Its Techniques, . . . , p. 503.
41 Taylor brothers, op. cit., p. 194.
serve to inspire them, as well as intensify their beliefs. For example, the lecture is filled with good humor, appropriate to the historical moment, and involves wit, mimicry, and sudden turns of words and phrases. This element would undoubtedly bring a pleasurable response from the audience. In addition, Taylor used a vivid, clear style, involving specific rather than abstract nouns, strong action verbs, and glowing adjectives. Imagery and figures of speech were abundant, from beginning to end. While this kind of embroidered style hardly seems appropriate today, it was considered "good oratory" by many in Taylor's day, especially those who came to hear a lecture, to enjoy "oratory for oratory's sake." Such extravagance in style was considered both graceful and beautiful, which is part of what the audience came to hear. Perhaps Taylor's successful use of language and stylistic devices can be explained by H. A. Overstreet who comments concerning words:

Words are of two kinds, those of common currency, and those of special mintage. The ordinary mind uses the former almost entirely—horse, chair, house, train, river, paper. That is why the ordinary mind, in an effort to express itself, is usually dull. The out-of-the-ordinary mind, on the other hand, has a way of giving a new twist to the old words, or of arrestingly inventing new words.42

Taylor's forte was certainly using the "out-of-the-ordinary" to express what the audience wanted to hear anyway. The speech may have lacked in intellectual substance, but it had those factors which could please and inspire and audience in 1895, and for a man like Taylor, whose living depended on pleasing audiences, day after day, and week after week, this response was enough. Harrison and Detzer summarize the impact of lectures similar to Taylor's in these words:

'Wasn't it wonderful?' women murmured to each other the day after the speech. 'So inspiring!' Possibly by the third day they had forgotten most of what they had heard, but by next season, if chance offered, they hurried again to the gate, with cousins, uncles, and aunts, to hear the same man give the same speech. It was Vawter's opinion, after many years as a booking agent, that an inspirational speech was so full of generalities that little of it, including even Bryan's masterpiece, actually stayed in the listener's mind. Perhaps that is why folks flocked through the entrance gates a second and even a third time. The real reason probably is that America in those years simply liked speeches.43

Concerning possible long range effects, two things must be kept in mind. First, Taylor's image as a southern orator was undoubtedly enhanced by this lecture tour. He came into contact with thousands of people, and each time he emerged as the "defender of Dixie." But beyond the establishment of his own image is the impact he may have

43Harrison and Detzer, op. cit., p. 137.
exerted in terms of southern "myth-making." Taylor did not invent the myths he repeated, since he appears to have borrowed most of them from Henry W. Grady. However, he undoubtedly did help to popularize them. The "plantation myth," "myth of the Lost Cause," "myth of the Confederate soldier," and "myth of the New South," was repeated over and over again, throughout the South, and even into the Northwest, with a brief appearance in the Northeast. This repetition of the southern myth would probably have an effect in firmly entrenching it in the minds of the people who heard it. Taylor emerges, then, not only as a defender of the old South and its dreams and aspirations, but as a perpetuator of the ever-growing myths of the Lost Cause.

One final word, however, is necessary in considering the importance of this lecture. Taylor's ideas were in no sense of lasting value. In fact, he was attempting to resurrect a cause that would be dead again inside of fifteen years. Truly, the impact of Progressivism in the early part of the twentieth century sounded the death knell of the mythical Confederate South. However, he, along with others with him, did manage to so popularize certain southern myths, that they have remained even to modern times. He who would doubt this need only consider the problems of race that have plagued the South for generation after generation, a problem perpetuated and complicated by deeply ingrained
and long-held myths. Consider Taylor's statement in "Dixie:"
"There is no Negro problem, except as to how we shall
improve his condition and make him a better citizen."
CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF TWO CONFEDERATE ADDRESSES

In the previous chapter consideration was given to Taylor's lecture career, with special emphasis and analysis of his popular lecture, "Dixie." The purpose of this chapter is to examine two addresses of special occasion delivered by Taylor before meetings of Confederate veterans. The two speeches under consideration are as follows: first, the "Address of Welcome" by Governor Taylor to the Ex-Confederates on Confederate Day, June 22, 1897, celebrated as a part of the Tennessee Centennial Exposition; secondly, an address by Robert Taylor to "Old Confederates" at the Confederate reunion in Brownsville, Tennessee, August, 1902.¹

The two speaking occasions under consideration, as well as the content of the speeches, are so similar in nature that they are being analyzed together. Specific information on the immediate speaking occasion at Brownsville has not been located, since the Brownsville newspapers for August, 1902, are not available. However, extensive information is available concerning the Tennessee Centennial Confederate address in 1897, and it is discussed thoroughly

¹For the texts of these speeches see, Robert Taylor, Life Pictures (Nashville: Taylor-Trotwood Publishing Co., 1907), pp. 113-116: 170-176.
in order to come to an understanding of the basic audience structure on occasions of like nature. It is sufficient to note at this point that a Confederate reunion, such as the one in Nashville or Brownsville, is likely to have an audience constituency including, (1) veterans of the Confederate army, and (2) their immediate families and friends. However, beyond this obvious information it is beneficial to make two additional considerations; first, an examination of the historical context enveloping the two speaking occasions; secondly, specific considerations concerning the Tennessee Centennial Confederate address as an example of the attitudes and excitement associated with a meeting of Confederate veterans.

BROAD HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On April 9, 1865, Robert E. Lee surrendered the once proud southern army to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House. The South had fallen, defeated militarily and crushed economically. Humiliated Confederate soldiers, tattered and torn, trudged their ways homeward, viewing the vast destruction, both in cities and on farms. The Yankee seemingly had achieved through force that which he had failed to do through political compromise and debate; he had destroyed the southern threat to disrupt American Democracy.
However, as W. J. Cash comments:

The victory was, in fact, almost entirely illusory. If this war had smashed the Southern world, it had left the essential Southern mind and will—the mind and will arising from, corresponding to, and requiring this world—entirely unshaken.  

For four long, bloody years the South had fought to preserve her world and her heritage. These violent years of struggle, destruction, and death did not weaken the self-conscious distinctions felt by most Southerners but, as Cash observes, made them,

... far more aware of their differences and of the line which divided what was Southern from what was not. And upon that line all their intensified patriotism and love, all their high pride in the knowledge that they fought a good fight and had yielded only to irresistible force, was concentrated, to issue in a determination, immensely more potent than in the past, to hold fast to their own, to maintain their divergences, to remain what they had been and were.

The South had been halted in her "march toward aristocracy," and such defeat and frustration were to her a bitter curse and a heavy burden to endure. She evolved the distinction—a distinction still lingering—of being the only section in America to suffer "large components of

---


3 Ibid., pp. 106-107.
frustration, failure, and defeat.\textsuperscript{4} With her armies prostrate, all that was left were illusions, fantasies, myths, and pretentions. As Robert Taylor said in his Centennial address to Confederate veterans: ". . . there is nothing left of war but graves, and garlands, and monuments, and veterans, and precious memories." It is these "precious memories" mixed with regret and nostalgia, that kept many in the South looking backward with passionate longing.

Cash concludes that it was during this period that the legend of the old South finally emerged and fully took on the form in which we know it today. With the antebellum world removed to the realm of retrospect, the shackles of reality, as so often happens in such cases, fell away from it altogether. Perpetually suspended in the great haze of memory, it hung, as it were, poised, somewhere between earth and sky, colossal, shining, and incomparably lovely. . . .\textsuperscript{5}

Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, the legend of the old South had been deeply engrained into the thought and cultural patterns of the post-war South, creating a region distinct from the rest of the nation. In explaining the distinctiveness of the southern mind as it relates to the other regions of the country and in giving an insight into the phenomena which caused the South to flee backward


\textsuperscript{5}Cash, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 127.
into the shadows of the antebellum world, Henry Ashmore says that one must remember that "pride is involved, and the surprisingly durable memories of a lost war." He stresses that the southern "aristocratic tradition" is a "major element" in pushing the South into its "remarkable capacity for unreality, which enables [it] to hold out against the logic of argument and of events." 6

A century following the Civil War, Robert Penn Warren graphically expressed his thoughts as to the cohesive impact of the "durable memories of a lost war:"

The war claimed the Confederate States for the Union, but at the same time, paradoxically, it made them more Southern. . . . In defeat the Solid South was born—not only the witless automatism of fidelity to the Democratic Party but the mystique of prideful 'difference,' identity, and defensiveness. The citizen of that region. . . . could now think of himself as a 'Southerner' in a way that would have defied the imagination of Barnwell Rhett—or of Robert E. Lee. . . . We may say that only at the moment when Lee handed Grant his sword was the Confederacy born; or to state matters another way, in the moment of death the Confederacy entered its immortality. 7

Louis D. Rubin aptly summarizes the image and mood of the post-war South, isolating the primary point of


distinction between it as a region and the rest of the nation:

The South was beaten in war and occupied by enemy troops; alone of American regions, the South has a Lost Cause. The shock of the Civil War is the paramount historical fact about the South. It is the memory of the Civil War that more than anything else distinguishes the South from other areas of the country.

Having suffered disaster, defeat, and humiliation on the battlefield, the only recourse remaining for the embittered Southerner which would enhance his wounded pride and lift his sagging ego was to sustain the salvable aspects of the Lost Cause and enshrine them in a glorious tower of words, creating myths, stories, and traditions. These phantasms formed the bulwark of the Southern apology leading ultimately to the solidification of the "mind of the South."

Perhaps the most romantic defensive myth rising from the enshrined Lost Cause was the "Cult of the Confederate Soldier," which reached its peak in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Cash indicates that this sentimental cult "reacted on the southern hero-ideal to leave it definitely military, in grand style." Thus, most of the

---


9Cash, op. cit., p. 124.
heroes created in the South after 1875 were directly associated with the military, specifically the Confederate army. Consequently,

Every boy growing up in this land now had continually before his eyes the vision, and heard always in his ears the clamorous hoofbeats, of a glorious swashbuckler, compounded of Jeb Stuart, the golden-locked Pickett, and the sudden and terrible Forrest.

As the myth grew in magnitude and gained in popularity, sentimentality "waxed fat on the theme of the Confederate soldier and the cause for which he had fought and died." All of them bled and died for "God, womanhood, Constitution, and Holy Right," Old Confederate soldiers, who perhaps had done nothing more than drill with the home guard, using wooden sticks as guns, or maybe even watered the horses for the cavalry, suddenly found themselves raised up as living symbols of the glorious Lost Cause. By 1889, this southern military romanticism had reached such proportions that the Old Confederates met in New Orleans and formed the United Confederate Veterans.11 Thereafter, annual reunions were held, like the one in Richmond in 1896, in which "upwards of 10,000 veterans attended."12 State and local units,

---

10 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
called brigades, also held frequent reunions.

Meanwhile, in 1895, the United Daughters of the Confederacy was organized in Atlanta, Georgia, and it was at this point, according to Woodward, "when the movement was taken into custody by Southern Womanhood, [that] the cult of the Lost Cause [assumed] a religious character." These women were responsible for placing monuments to the Confederate soldier in numerous court house squares throughout the South. As the twentieth century approached, the Lost Cause, with its Cult of the Confederate Soldier, rose near its peak, as romanticism and sentimentality ruled the heart of many a Southerner. Woodward suggests the spirit that prevailed in these words: "It is a matter of speculation whether any cause in modern history, from Bonnie Prince Charlie to that of Wilhelm's legions, has received the devotion lavished upon the Stars and Bars."¹³

Such, then, was the nature of the temper of the times in the South, relative to the Cult of the Confederate Soldier, when Taylor addressed the Confederate reunions at Nashville, in 1897, and in Brownsville, in 1902. He made numerous such addresses during his career, both at Confederate reunions and dedication ceremonies at the establishment of Confederate

¹³Ibid., pp. 156-157.
monuments. The ideas and style in these two addresses are not at all unlike the speeches he delivered in the many other occasions of like nature.

Having now observed the nature of the broad historical context surrounding Taylor's Confederate addresses, it is necessary for a thorough understanding of the speeches involved, to examine in detail the immediate speaking situation of the Tennessee Centennial Confederate address, which serves as an example of the attitudes and excitement associated with reunions of Confederate veterans.

THE OCCASION AND THE AUDIENCE OF THE TENNESSEE CENTENNIAL CONFEDERATE ADDRESS

Presently located on West End Avenue in Nashville, Tennessee, is a beautiful one hundred and thirty-four acre park appropriately called Centennial Park. Formally called West Side Park, the name was changed in 1897 when the Tennessee Centennial Celebration was held there.

The Tennessee Centennial was the most elaborate celebration and exposition in the state's history. The New York Times commented: "The exact status of the Tennessee Centennial Exposition may be summed up with the remark that it is far ahead of Atlanta and Philadelphia as they were ahead of the country fairs of fifty years ago." The Times also

---

reported that "the art exhibit is far superior to that of the World's Fair and no finer collection has ever been exhibited in America."

The purpose of the Tennessee Centennial celebration was stated in a speech by Major J. W. Thomas, President of the Tennessee Exposition Company, on opening day, May 1, 1897: "The object of the Centennial Exposition is to commemorate the past, present the advantages of the present, and inspire hope for the future." Observe, then, the sentiments of the New South were being strongly expressed in this Exposition. While Tennesseans were lauding the past, their main objective was to "sell" their state as an industrial haven in order that they might realize the benefits of economic growth in the years to come. President Thomas clearly indicated this dream when he said:

...it is appropriate that we celebrate our Centennial Anniversary by having a great Exposition, showing the world that we have kept pace with our sister states and other nations in the progress of the age—in all the triumphs and glories of civilization.

While the celebration is prompted by reverence for the past, it is also prompted by a desire to so advertise and proclaim our advantages that thousands from other states and other nations will

---

15 This speech is recorded in its entirety in: The Official History of the Tennessee Centennial Exposition (Nashville: Published under the direction of Dr. W. L. Dudley and G. H. Baskett, of the committee on publications, 1893), p. 77.
come to see what we have accomplished and realize the marvelous wealth of our undeveloped resources.  

With these purposes in mind, the people of Tennessee planned to entertain the whole world.

As May 1, 1897, approached, an air of excitement descended upon the Capitol City. Everywhere preparations were being made to impress the dignitaries who would be visiting the exposition. The Nashville Banner reported that "Nashville's pride had been aroused—and citizens were putting their premises in the best of order. . . ." The Nashville American further indicated the enthusiasm of the Centennial City in an article entitled, "The Eyes Turned on Nashville:

Nashville is thoroughly aroused in view of the great Centennial Exposition which is just at hand. Signs of new life and great improvement are being manifest everywhere. During the past year more than 10,000 people have been added to Nashville's population, while the new city directory indicates that there are about 120,000 inhabitants within the limits of Rock City. To this will doubtless be added a large influx of people who will temporarily locate here for business during Centennial season. Already new saloons, restaurants, fakirs and other kinds of shows are opening up along the streets. . . .

16 Ibid.
17 Nashville Banner, March 27, 1897, p. 12
18 Nashville American, April 4, 1897, p. 22.
By April 28, at least four thousand men were employed in putting the finishing touches on "Centennial City."\textsuperscript{22}

The Centennial celebration officially opened May 1, 1897. William M. McCarthy, Mayor of Nashville, issued the following proclamation declaring a public holiday:

The first day of May will be an important day in the history of our city and state, as on this date the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition, an enterprise that will go into history as one of the most successful of its kind, will be inaugurated commemorative of the State's one hundredth birthday, and exhibiting to the world her wonderful resources and the faith and courage of her people. To the end that all our citizens, who we feel will be greatly benefited, may have opportunity to participate in the opening exercises of so important an event, Saturday, May 1, is declared a public holiday, and all are urged to observe the same.\textsuperscript{23}

From the impressive opening day ceremonies on May 1 through the six months that the celebration lasted, the Exposition was a booming success. Over two million people, including dignitaries from all over the world came to see the achievements that Tennessee and the South had made in its century of progress. Perhaps the high point of the Exposition was the visit made by President McKinley on June 11, 1897. Reportedly, "more than fifty thousand persons from all over the state converged upon Nashville to

\textsuperscript{23}Nashville American, April 21, 1897, p. 5.
welcome the presidential party."

During this six-month celebration, several states, cities, and special groups were honored by having a Centennial day dedicated to them. For example, there was Texas Day, Missouri Day, and Vermont Day, along with several other states. There was New Orleans and Louisiana Day, Nebraska and Bryan Day, and Chicago and Illinois Day. Special groups such as the Irish Americans on Irish-American Day and the Daughters of the American Revolution were also honored. On most of these special occasions Governor Robert L. Taylor was the speaker.

In view of the nature of the Tennessee Centennial Celebration and Industrial Exposition, with it obvious emphasis on southern themes and heroes, it is not surprising to find that three days, June 22 through June 24, 1897, were dedicated to the veterans of the Confederate army. For a segment of the population who were disgruntled and defensive, this occasion offered a grand opportunity to parade their "knights in shining armor," with their glorious Lost Cause, before the nation and even the world.

---

Confederate Veterans Reunion. As already indicated, June 22 through June 24 were selected as "Confederate Days" at the Tennessee Centennial. Confederate veterans from all over the South crowded into Nashville for their annual reunion. It was estimated that seventy-five thousand people were drawn to the city by "the great occasion."\(^\text{25}\) Nashville was properly arrayed, with Confederate flags flying and public buildings and business establishments appropriately decorated.

On June 22, the veterans, their families, friends, and well-wishers, gathered in the Union Gospel Tabernacle, later called the Ryman Auditorium, to receive the welcome of the Tennessee Centennial Exposition and to begin officially their three-day reunion. In addition to Governor Taylor's address of welcome, speeches were delivered by Judge John C. Ferriss, Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald, General John B. Gordon, Commander of the United Confederate Veterans, and the principal address by Judge John H. Reagan.\(^\text{26}\)

The Union Gospel Tabernacle, which in more recent years has been popularized by the "Grand Ole Op ery," was a large building measuring, from the outside of the walls, one

\(^{25}\) Nashville *American*, April 18, 1897, p. 23.

\(^{26}\) Nashville *Banner*, June 22, 1897, p. 1.
hundred twenty feet by one hundred seventy-six feet.\textsuperscript{27} Originally, there was only one seating level. However, just prior to the Confederate Reunion, a large gallery was constructed.\textsuperscript{28} According to an official "seat count," the lower level of the auditorium seated 4,527. It was estimated that the gallery seated at least two thousand,\textsuperscript{29} making a total seating capacity of between six and seven thousand. However, under extremely crowded conditions, ten thousand people could be packed into the auditorium, as they reportedly were on one occasion when Sam Jones, the popular evangelist, was holding a revival.\textsuperscript{30}

The tabernacle was lavishly decorated to suit the occasion. The walls were covered with flags, bunting, and pictures, which seems to be highly typical of Confederate reunions during this period. The \textit{Daily Picayune} of New Orleans described the scene in these words:

\begin{quote}
Suspended from the ceiling [were] the stars and bars and the stars and stripes glowing with equal brightness, the one representing the memories and beloved past, the other the solid acceptance of
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 93.

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 47.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 98.
the issue of the sentiment of loyalty to the country. 31

The doors to the auditorium were opened at nine o'clock in the morning and immediately the crowd began to gather. The morning was dreary and rainy, but still they came, and by eleven o'clock every seat in both floors was filled. Many people, unable to secure seats, stood in the aisles. The chairs which had been placed on the platform were occupied by the sponsors, maids of honor, officers of the association, speakers of the day, and distinguished Confederate generals and their staff "in full regalia." In view of the packed and over-flowing house, it is reasonable to assume that between eight and ten thousand people were present.

A carnival atmosphere prevailed among the large crowd, as seems to be typical of Confederate gatherings, no matter how small or large. As they waited for General John B. Gordon to arrive, the First Regiment band "played Southern airs," which, of course, included a rousing rendition of "Dixie." When the General finally arrived, he was greeted with "enthusiastic applause and ringing cheers." He picked up the gavel and rapped for order. Having received the attention of the audience, General Gordon made a few

appropriate remarks, and then the assembly was led in the singing of "Old Hundred." After Cahplain J. Williams Jones led the invocation, the band played "Home Sweet Home." General Gordon then made the following introduction: "The Chair has great pleasure in introducing the distinguished Governor of this Volunteer State, Honorable Robert L. Taylor." As indicated in the Banner, the crowd greeted this introduction with "great applause."32

Consideration has now been given not only to the broad historical context in which the Confederate addresses were delivered, but also to the immediate historical context of the Centennial Confederate address, as an example of what Confederate reunions were like. It is granted that this particular reunion was larger and under more pompous circumstances than the average local Confederate reunion. However, even the smallest reunions contained essentially the same atmosphere as found in the Centennial affair. Irvin S. Cobb, in a humorous commentary on speaking to a southern audience, in spite of his light-hearted approach, perhaps expresses more truth than fiction, in this passage which reflects something of the atmosphere that must have prevailed at Confederate reunions:

32Nashville Banner, June 22, 1897, p. 1.
To make a speech to this audience was not too difficult a thing. You came to attention and said, 'Comrades of my father,' and the crowd would cheer for two minutes, more or less, and the massed bands behind you on the platform would blare forth with bars of 'Maryland, My Maryland,' or 'Swanee River,' or, as in this case, 'My Old Kentucky Home.' You ended a paragraph on the name of Robert E. Lee. (Great and prolonged applause, with appropriate music: 'Old Virginny, Never Tire.') Another paragraph to introduce the name of Wade Hampton and up and down the aisle the South Carolina camps would be putting on an impromptu parade, with stiff jig steps interpolated. An so on and so forth. And when you reached your peroration and topped it off with reference to 'The Lost Cause which could never be lost so long as Americans reverence valor and devotion'—well, you got no further than that because a thousand cracked old voices, wispy but defiant, would give the Rebel yell, and some folks would cry and some would stand up on their chairs and with catches in their throats, try to cheer; and the bands would play 'Dixie' now. Perhaps to an alien it might have been all pretty silly and banal and dripping with saccharin syrups of a vain bathos, but for those tottery old gaffers and the white-haired grannies who sat with them, and to their children and even to their children's children, the clanging years were turned back like a page and the vanished legions marched again and Johnnie was gone for a soger!33

Such, then, was the nature of the speaking situation at the Tennessee Centennial Confederate reunion, which probably was nearly like the speaking situation at the Brownsville reunion. Having now observed the nature of the

two speaking occasions, one may turn to a more specific analysis of the factors of identification involved in these speaking situations.

**IDENTIFICATION**

There were obviously certain bonds of unity which brought Confederate veterans together for their annual reunions. The central focal point, of course, was the myth of the Lost Cause, accompanied by the even more emotional cult of the Confederate soldier. As discovered earlier in this chapter, the Lost Cause provided an emotional balm for both the present and future. In this cause the ex-Confederate could center all his intense patriotism and pride. He could justify an unpleasant past and offer hope for the future. The cult of the Confederate soldier, on the other hand, provided the frustrated veteran with an ego-building device. The soldiers of the gray army represented the "bravest of the brave," with "hearts of gold," and easily furnished the much needed hero image demanded by a South suffering a social, economic, and political inferiority complex.

Another aspect of southern aristocratic romanticism around which the veterans could rally was the myth of chivalry. This myth involves the southern concept of manhood and womanhood.
The myth of southern manhood seems to be an outgrowth of two concepts of antebellum aristocratic romanticism. Perhaps most representative of these fanciful aristocratic notions was the image of chivalry, cherished, lauded, and aspired to by most Southerners. Osterweis points out that their term "appears over and over again in the pages of the southern periodicals." In explaining the word, Osterweis observes: "It was borrowed from Sir Walter, to whom 'the Chivalry' connoted the knightly class, with emphasis on the gallantry, honor, and courtesy associated with that class."^{34} Apparently, many upper-class Southerners became so enchanted with the concept that they were driven nearly to the point of obsession. Richard M. Weaver concludes, for example, that while modern reaction against assumptions of racial superiority has assigned chivalry a comic role, actually it was a strong and influential institution in the Old South.^{35} Evidence of this strength is seen in the writing of Daniel R. Hudley, who in 1860, published a defense of the South, even though he personally had strong Unionist feelings. In his apology, he describes the true

^{34}Rollin G. Osterweis, Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 46.

"Southern Gentleman" as coming from "aristocratic parentage," and being a "faultless pedigree," indeed a real English cavalier. In manner, "The Southern Gentleman is remarkably easy and natural, never raising his voice above the ordinary tone of gentlemanly conversation."  

Interestingly enough, the cult of chivalry was not reserved solely for the socially elite. While the relationship between the poorer Southerners and their richer neighbors was sometimes strained, the poor seemed to always covet the rank and holdings of the large planters, and, consequently, supported their aristocratic ideals. Freehling points out that the rich and poor in a slaveholding district had too much in common to risk a quarrel. All types of slaveholders, and yeoman farmers who hoped to become slaveholders, wanted to protect slavery, raise cotton prices, decrease the cost of living, and ease debtor-creditor relations. . . . Impoverished red-necks gained satisfaction from joining hands with the planters in a South Carolina crusade. By supporting the gentry, poorer Southerners could claim membership in the 'chivalry' and feel they were a part of the planter community. . . . This is why orators continually called on everyone to join the campaign of the Carolina chivalry.

---


A natural outgrowth of chivalry was the southern code of honor. Franklin believes that no matter how "seriously or lightly he may have taken other rules of life—such as religion and morality—the Southerner was convinced that life should be ordered by certain well-defined codes of conduct that were a part of the cult of chivalry." While there may have been many modes of expressing this cult, "through them all, and affecting them all, ran a concept of honor that was of tremendous importance in regulating and determining the conduct of the individual."38

The code of honor, deeply rooted in the Old World Chivalry, was a clear manifestation of the Southerner's concept of manliness. Thus physical courage became such a vital part of southern thinking that it was paraded at every opportunity. Frank Vandiver suggests that even when "legitimate opportunities were scarce, special ones were often staged for display of bravado and derring-do. Tournaments of a medieval character were sometimes held, with balanced cavaliers atop Arabian chargers doing battle for a lady's honor."39


Such prideful belligerence, protecting imagined honor, could easily lead to serious clashes among those who felt their dignity and honor threatened. Thus, when the southern gentleman felt that his honor had been insulted by another, he was apt to challenge his offender to a duel. While dueling was probably not as commonplace as some have suggested, it did, nevertheless, flourish during the ante-bellum period. It has been well established that many southern statesmen supported the dueling code of honor, among them Henry Clay, John Randolph of Roanoke, Jefferson Davis, Judah P. Benjamin, W. L. Yancey, and Sam Houston.

Weaver reports that dueling in the South took such a toll of life that Governor John Lyde Wilson of South Carolina published a pamphlet, in 1858, entitled: "The Code of Honor: or Rules for the Government of Principals and Seconds in Duelling." The purpose of the manual was to discourage, or at least diminish it, by narrowly defining the grounds on which a gentleman might "demand satisfaction."

Since the code of honor was an expression of southern manliness, physical attainment in the out-of-doors was greatly stressed. Superb horsemanship, fox hunting—

---

40 Osterweis, op. cit., pp. 96-97.

41 Weaver, op. cit., p. 61.
unlike its English counterpart—and extreme endurance tests of personal skills were frequent. A youngman might push himself into a dangerous situation in order to demonstrate that he had courage. Cash indicates that this rugged individualism was considered as important in many cases as personal wealth:

Great personal courage, unusual physical powers, the ability to drink a quart of whisky or to lose the whole of one's capitol on the turn of a card without the quiver of a muscle—these are at least as important as possessions, and infinitely more important than heroldic crests. In the South if your neighbor overshadowed you in the number of his slaves, you could outshoot him or out-fiddle him, and in your eyes, and those of many of your fellows, remain essentially as good a man as he.42

It is interesting to note that one of the aristocratic notions held in highest esteem was the noble cult of womanhood, which was interwoven with chivalry and honor. The southern gentleman placed woman on a high pedestal. He defined her role and drew the bounds which determined the extent of her participation in southern life. The ideal southern woman was portrayed as a fragile creature of innocence and purity. A male might be expected to stray from the narrow path of morality, but never a true Southern woman. She was a weak creature, to be flattered, wooed,

42Cash, op. cit., p. 39.
won, and protected. She was to be sheltered because with her rested the "standards of the Christian home and the purity of the race."^43

The impact of this legend of womanhood was commanding and romantic. In a statement that fringes on hyperbole, Cash made this observation:

She was the South's Palladium, this Southern woman—the shield-bearing Athena gleaming whitely in the clouds, the standard for its rallying, the mystic symbol of its nationality in face of the foe. She was the lily-pure maid of Astolat and the hunting goddess of the Boeotian hill. And—she was the pitiful Mother of God. Merely to mention her was to send strong men into tears—or shouts. There was hardly a sermon that did not begin and end with tributes in her honor, hardly a brave speech that did not open and close with the clashing of shields and the flourishing of swords for her glory. At the last, I verily believe, the ranks of the Confederacy went rolling into battle in the misty conviction that it was wholly for her that they fought.44

The antebellum concepts of manliness and womanhood survived the clash of the Civil War and was brought almost intact into the post-war southern culture. As stated in another place in this study, the misery of their plight and their severely wounded pride caused many Southerners to seek balm in the dream world of aristocratic romanticism.


^44 Cash, op. cit., p. 89.
This, perhaps explains why one finds in the post-war South, in literature and oratory, the same themes of chivalry, honor, womanhood, manliness, plantation life, hospitality, classicism, religious emotionalism, agrarianism, and racism, as found in the antebellum South. As Eaton comments:

The continuity of life in the Southern villages and rural districts after the war was striking. . . . They preserved intact the old Southern religious faith, its loyalty to family and kin, its romantic etiquette toward women, its hatred of the Yankee, its strong conservative spirit, and its belief in the superiority of the Southern people and their way of life to that of other residents in the United States, and in fact, to the world. 45

**DESCRIPTION OF TEXT**

Both of the Confederate addresses under consideration in this study are brief. The Centennial address contains approximately thirteen hundred words, structured into about thirty-eight sentences. The Brownsville address is nearly twice as long, containing about twenty-four hundred words. It is estimated that the Centennial address took only about ten minutes to deliver, while the Brownsville address took about twenty to twenty-five minutes.

---

The sentence composition of both addresses, as suggested in the printed text, is interesting. There were, on the average, about thirty-four words per sentence, or complete thought unit, though some of the sentences contained as many as one hundred and fifty words. Obviously, most of the sentences were either complex or compound-complex, with several of them being periodic in nature. Often the sentences were structured in parallel form, suggesting a rhythm to the address.

ARRANGEMENT

Thematic Emergence. The purpose and central theme of both Confederate speeches was, of course, dictated narrowly by the speaking occasion. Confederate veterans had come together, motivated by their nostaligic attachment to the Lost Cause, excited by all the attention showered upon the myth of the Confederate soldier, to reminisce about the glorious past and consolidate a union of close comradeship. In the Centennial address, Taylor's specific purpose was to welcome the Confederate veterans to the state of Tennessee and the Centennial celebration. Having extended the welcome in the first moments of the speech, he announced his familiar theme: "I think if I could draw back the veil which separates immortality from this vale of tears, you could see a vision of your old Comrades, who have answered
to the roll call of eternity." Five years later, in the similar situation of the Brownsville reunion, Taylor struck the chord of his central theme in these words: "But we are not yet far enough away from that awful struggle to forget." The veterans came together in an attempt to strengthen the ties with their "glorious past," to cling to that final thread of immortality that hung, for them, at least, from the shroud of their beloved Lost Cause. In the Brownsville address, Taylor repeated his theme no less than four times, concluding with this grand statement: "When time has measured off a thousand years, the world will not forget the sufferings and the sacrifices of the brave man." In the Centennial address, the theme was restated, toward the middle of the speech, in these words: "I doubt if the world will ever see another civilization as brilliant as that which perished in the South a third of a century ago."

*Method of Division.* As is typical of Taylor's speeches of special occasion, main points were not arranged in a chronological, distributive, or logical order, preferring instead, as was described in the lecture "Dixie," a quasi-mosaic structure, espousing a central theme, then constructing verbal images around that theme, in no particular order, but finally emerging with a total picture. In both addresses,
Taylor was obviously attempting to present an image of a glorious South, splendid in every regard. In the Centennial address, after extending his welcome, Taylor set forth a description of the beauty of the South, with its "soft Southern skies. . .flood of sunshine and showers. . .where the cotton fields wave their white banners of peace. . .and bright waters ripple in eternal melody. . . ." He then turned to the past and viewed the glories of the South as they appeared "a third of a century ago." This idea was climaxed by another reference to the present, the accomplishments that "Southern brains and Southern hands wrought." He then turned to the future, pointing to a danger facing the nation and how the South would stand as the "bulwark of American liberty." Returning to the present, he called for the trumpets to "sound the jubilee of peace" and encouraged the veterans of both North and South to join hands and salute the national flag. In conclusion, he defended the right of the ex-Confederate soldier to take out the Confederate flag and reminisce. He appealed to events in the past which glorified the South and her heroes to substantiate this contention.

The Brownsville address differs only slightly from the Centennial address; the difference being brought about primarily by the occasion. In some instances the exact
language used in the Centennial address in 1897 was repeated in the Brownsville address in 1902. In that latter address, Taylor, after establishing his theme, described those events and named some of the heroes associated with them, which caused the veterans to look back into the past and appreciate their "glory." Then, he turns briefly to the future, stressing that someday historians will sit down and write "true history," and, consequently, poets will sing "sweeter songs." Returning to the past, and connecting it to the present, he asserts that he knows no bitterness toward the men who wore the blue, saying that they deserve honor also for the victory they won; but then, he quickly lapses back into his favorite theme— the magnification of the men who wore the gray, defeated as they were, yet noble in defeat. With the "glorious Lost Cause" as his springboard, he rushes into the future and marvels about the possibilities of a country that has produced heroes such as "the Lees and Jacksons and the brilliant Gordon and the dashing Joe Wheeler. . . ." He predicts advances for the industrial South of the future, giving examples of their areas of achievement, yet clinging to his grand old theme: "It is not really a New South, but the spirit of the Old South resurrected." In his conclusion he refers specifically to those members in his audience who "once wore the gray,"
congratulating them that they had lived to see the "dawn of a brighter day," and assuring them of the pledge of their sons, "that they will ever defend the record you have made and themselves live up to the traditions of their fathers."

**Over-all Strategy.** Since the glory of the Lost Cause was prominent in the thinking of his audience, Taylor evolved a strategy which served to satisfy, first the desire of the audience to enshrine the heroes of the Confederacy in a verbal monument of stylistic beauty. The second aspect of his strategy was to connect this past glory to the present and the future. Consequently, heroes of old and battlefields of glory were vividly recalled; courage, honor, and chivalry were associated with the Cause and its heroes so that the Confederate past became analogous with righteousness and virtue. The gap between this past grandeur and the present situation was bridged in order to convey the idea that it was the spirit of the old South which prevailed in the past, the present, and the future. Taylor's strategy, then, was to intensify the beliefs of these ex-Confederates by appealing to the myths of the Lost Cause and the Confederate soldier, drawing analogies from these fanciful dreams to the present situation. These myths were probably held to be reality by both orator and audience, and thus could be used to justify the past and reveal their enduring value.
to future generations. It is because Taylor utilized this strategy repeatedly, both in speeches of special occasion, and sometimes in deliberative addresses, that he emerges more and more as a "Southern apologist."

**STRATEGY OF MAGNIFICATION**

It is obvious from the nature of the speaking occasions and the content of the speeches involved that Taylor was not attempting to evoke a change of attitude in his audience, since speaker and audience were undoubtedly in agreement. His purpose seems to have been to intensify the objects of praise and clothe them with distinction and honor, in an effort to stimulate the audience to greater appreciation of that which they already accepted. These speeches seem to suit precisely the category described by Aristotle as "epideictic." With these observations in mind, the following methods, or inner strategies of magnification will be considered: (1) appeal to things magnificent; (2) appeal to things memorable; (3) appeal to things magnanimous; (4) appeal through logical form.

**APPEAL TO THINGS MAGNIFICENT**

Magnificence, a virtue described by Aristotle as
"productive of grandeur in outlay," was used extensively by Taylor in characterizing the mythical splendor and majestic beauty of the Southland. As in the lecture, "Dixie," Taylor used grandiloquent language to portray a South of staggering beauty and serenity. In this description, Taylor subtly suggested a comparison between the "sunny South" and the less desirable North. As always, the South appears the better when contrasted with other areas of the country, no matter what the comparison concerns. This attitude again demonstrates the defensiveness on the part of many Southerners; they may have lost the war, but still their land was the best. Interestingly, when Taylor spoke of the beauty of the South, he frequently used the personal pronoun, "I," thus enhancing his ethos and increasing his identity with the audience:

I love to live in the land of Dixie, under soft Southern skies, where summer pours out her flood of sunshine and showers and the generous earth smiles with plenty. I love to live on Southern soil, where the cotton fields wave their white banners of peace and the wheat fields wave back their banners of gold. . . . I love to breathe the Southern air that comes filtered through jungles of roses. . . .

---


47 Centennial address.
In expressing the magnificence of the South, Taylor also referred to the old South, indicating its beauty and associating it with the post-bellum South. He alluded to the myth of the antebellum plantation, as well as the myths of southern manhood and womanhood, all hold overs from the pre-war South:

I doubt if the world will ever see another civilization as brilliant as that which perished in the South a third of a century ago. Its white-columned mansions under cool, spreading groves; its orange trees waving their sprays of snowy blossoms; its cotton fields stretching away to the horizon, alive with toiling slaves, who sang as they toiled from early morn until the close of day; its pomp and pride and revelry; its splendid manhood and the dazzling beauty of its women, placed it in history as the high tide of earthly glory.

Taylor's strategy here is clearly understandable. His audience of ex-Confederates and their friends probably had their feelings stirred and their beliefs intensified concerning the glory of the old South as they heard these myths of a by-gone era repeated. Taylor reiterated one of his favorite themes in these words: "I love to live among Southern men and women, where every heart is as warm as the Southern sunshine and every home is a temple of love and liberty." In this passage Taylor links together positive word upon positive word, myth upon myth, symbol upon symbol, creating a cumulative effect with his copious elaboration. Southern men and women are directly associated
with positive symbols: "Southern sunshine, home, temple of live and liberty." The results, of course, is a myth which depicts life in the South as a virtual paradise of happiness and love. Since Taylor was speaking specifically to ex-Confederates, it is not surprising that he should take advantage of the hero complex surrounding the myth of the Confederate soldier. This hero in gray is represented as the best of all manhood, in Taylor's words, "the purest and proudest type of the Anglo-Saxon race..." Note, the comparison is within the Anglo-Saxon race; the overtones of racism is clear. The Negro cannot in any way be compared to the white man, especially the hero in gray. The image of grandeur knows definite racial bounds.

Taylor was quick to bridge the gap between southern manhood of old and the veterans who listened to the address, solidifying the process of identification. Again, he concentrated in a relatively short passage myths and symbols charged with positive emotive feeling:

They tell us that it is the new South; but the same old blood runs in the veins of these veterans, and the same old spirit heaves their bosoms and flashes in their eyes; the same old soldiers who wielded the musket long ago are nursing their grandchildren on their knees and teaching them the same old lessons of honor and truth and the same old love of liberty; the mocking bird sings the same old songs in the same old hollows. It is the same old South and we are the same old Southern people...
the same land of the free and the same old home of the brave. It is the same old South resurrected from the dead, with the prints of the nails still in its hands and the scars of the spear still in its side.\textsuperscript{48}

In this passage, positive words replicating latent symbols spring forth, using the power of analogy for their movement. National symbols like "honor, truth, liberty, land of the free and home of the brave," are carefully allied with sectional symbols, like "these veterans (meaning ex-Confederates), old spirit (referring to the old South), old Southern people," to create a patriotic hero-image that is distinctly Southern. It must be remembered that in this era Southerners, especially ex-Confederates, were eager to establish their own elite men of rank and courage. Therefore, Taylor would find receptive ears to his hero-building tactics.

Taylor made adroit use of analogy when he linked the old South with the Biblical story of redemption, involving the suffering, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The implication is clear; the righteous must suffer; indeed, there is virtue in suffering as Christ suffered. Christ suffered and died for a noble cause; but his death did not signal the end, rather the beginning, for he arose victorious over death and the grave. In much the same way

\textsuperscript{48}Brownsville address.
the South has been subjected to suffering, according to Taylor's analogy. The old South was dealt a death blow during the war, and the South has suffered intensely since. However, if the analogy be true, this suffering will not come to naught, for holy right wins out in the final analysis and the old South is resurrected from the dead. In Taylor's words: "It is the same old South resurrected from the dead, with the prints of the nails still in its hands and the scars of the spear still in its side." Undoubtedly, the old veterans who realized the impact of this analogy received pleasure in having their commonly held beliefs re-enforced in so eloquent a manner and with such a soul stirring symbol of the cross.

APPEALS TO THINGS MEMORABLE

In his Confederate addresses, as in his lecture, "Dixie," Taylor found ample opportunity to fashion images and create impressions that appear to be so filled with emotion and meaning that they are worthy of enduring remembrance. Ex-Confederates had mythical precious moments which they never wanted to forget, for these myths constantly reminded them of a glory which they desperately needed. Taylor helped satisfy this need in the Brownsville address when he made an attempt to immortalize the Lost Cause and Confederate soldier. He vividly called to mind the actions of heroes and the sounds of battle in the Civil War:
But we are not yet far enough away from that awful struggle to forget the bloody hills of Shiloh, where Albert Sidney Johnston died, and the fatal field of Chancellorsville, where Stonewall Jackson fell; we are not far enough away to forget the frowning heights of Gettysburg, where Pickett's charging line rushed to glory and the grave; we are not yet far enough away to forget Murfreesboro, Missionary Ridge, and Chickamauga, and the hundred fields of death and courage, where the flower of the South, the bravest of the brave, and the truest of the true, fought for the cause they thought was right and died for the land they loved. . . .

It is significant to note that Taylor selected the best known battles and the most revered Southern war heroes: Shiloh and Albert Sidney Johnston; Chancellorsville and Stonewall Jackson; Gettysburg and General George Edward Pickett. There was invested in these heroes all the courage, glory, and honor aspired by the ex-Confederates who heard Taylor speak. These old veterans could identify their lives and aspirations with "the bravest of the brave, and the truest of the true." In their imaginations these ex-soldiers could stand with Johnston and command the troops in the never-to-be-forgotten Peach Orchard, or charge with Pickett to the heights of Cemetery Ridge. It matters not that the battles and the Cause was lost; the glory was there, and courage, and honor: as Taylor said: . . .[they] fought for the cause they thought was right and died for the land they loved." Such words could bring a lump to the throat and a shout to the lips of the dedicated ex-Confederate.
In the Centennial address, Taylor appropriately recalled the "music that thrilled him most...the melody that died on the lips of many a Confederate soldier as he sank into that sleep that knows no waking: 'I'm glad I am in Dixie!'" This statement is a clear expression of sour grapes. Victory had eluded the dying Confederate soldier, but then, he now disdained military victory anyway. He would rather be in Dixie and lose the war than in the North and win, for the South is far superior. Besides, there are more important victories to be won than those on the field of battle, and the South is winning in those matters that are really important. The Confederate could content himself on losing the war if he could convince himself that it did not really matter, for the South was right and right would be the ultimate victor.

In the Centennial address, as in the Brownsville address, Taylor called to remembrance the "bloody fields of glory" where "courage and high-born chivalry on prancing chargers once rode to the front with shimmering epaulets and bright swords gleaming..." In this statement one observes a clear demonstration of the use of the myth of southern chivalry to impress an image on the mind of the audience. The ex-Confederates envisioned themselves as being representatives of gallant heroes, nineteenth century
knights, with all the honor and courage associated with that class. Taylor intensified this image by using language and symbols associated with nobility and knightly rank: "high-born chivalry, prancing chargers, shimmering epaulets and bright swords gleaming. . . ." Here too, Taylor recalled the battles of Shiloh, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Gettysburg, concluding that these things were worth remembering and that no one should unbraid them for bringing them to light again.

Special consideration should be given here to how Taylor used language in composing a verbal image of memorable events. His word choice, probably considered extravagant today, was perhaps impressive in 1897 and 1902 before an audience of Confederate veterans. As is typical of his speeches of special occasion, Taylor used adjectives rich in connotation in that they conveyed movement, color, and sound. Some were negative in nature, as "bloody hills. . . frowning heights. . . shattered armies;" however, most were positively oriented: "soft Southern skies. . . generous earth. . . brave men. . . dazzling beauty. . . splendid manhood. . . purest and proudest type. . . ." He indulged in stylistic alliteration when he referred to the "fatal fields of Chancellorsville," Pickett's lines rushing to "glory and grave," and nothing left of war but "graves and garlands."
The verbs used by Taylor were equally impressive in their expressions of action. In reference to the destruction of the South he said, "The war shattered it and swept it away. Billions of wealth dissolved and vanished in smoke and flame... His sword was broken, his country was crushed." Often the verbs aided the Confederate veterans in hearing the sounds of war and the movements of battle, stimulating excitement in the audience, causing them to feel that they were personally involved in the war once again:

...the shrill fife screamed and the kettle-drum timed the heavy tramp of the shining battalions... the batteries unlimbered... and hurled fiery vomit into the faces of the reeling columns... Sabers flashed and ten thousand cavalry hovered for a moment... and then rushed to the dreadful revelry... They saw it (their flag) flutter in the gloom of the Wilderness where the angry divisions and corps rushed upon each other and clinched and fell and rolled together in the bloody mire; they rallied around it at Gettysburg, where it waved about the bayonets...

The adjectives and verbs used by Taylor not only suggested intensity, movement, action, and strength, but also appear to have a rhythmic pattern. One can almost count the cadence as the kettle-drum beats and the armies clash and roll in the mud. Brigance suggests that

There is a definite relationship between certain rhythmic patterns and certain emotions. That is, that speakers under stress of certain emotions tend to use certain particular rhythmic patterns...
Unlike that of music or poetry, the rhythm does not fall into a regular beat or meter. It is ever changing, two beats at this tempo, one at that, one at another, but always there is cadence of some kind. This cadence arises, of course, from the speaker's aroused emotions and, significantly, it helps convey the speaker's emotions to the hearers.49

Taylor was dealing with a highly emotional audience at a highly emotional moment in the speech. Bland, rhythmless description at this point would have been monotonous and detracting from the intensity of the moment. Taylor combined clearness of style with rhythmic force to enhance the energy and passion of the moment.

Figurative language was likewise important in Taylor's strategy of appealing to things memorable, as he freely used such imagery as personification, hyperbole, and metaphor. Brigance suggests the reason for using such imagery:

Figures of speech have a great suggestive power. Since the figure of speech is a mirror, as it were, that reflects the thought without literally stating it, in its suggestion of the similitude between the figurative image and the literal meaning lies its great strength. At the same time it is subtle, indirect, because it does not directly assert the idea, but simply holds up the mirror and allows the hearer to catch for himself the reflected image.50

50 Ibid., pp. 159-160
The power of the figure, then, is that it allows the individual in the audience to actively participate in replicating memories, since he takes the figures of speech suggested by the speaker, and suits them to his personal experiences and beliefs, thus helping to create his own image.

The following passage is an example of Taylor's use of personification, a figure of speech which gives inanimate objects or abstract ideas the attributes of life:

Time has furled the battle flags and smelted the hostile gun; time has torn down the forts and leveled the trenches and rifle pits. . . .
time has beautified and comforted and healed. . . .
time has adorned the ruined South and robed her fields in rich harvest. . . .

Taylor indulged in hyperbole most often in reference to the myth of the Confederate soldier. He described him as the "purest and proudest type of the Anglo-Saxon race," being "magnificent in the gloom of defeat, overwhelmed and overpowered, yet undaunted and unconquered." Over-statements such as these could easily intensify the hero-myth of the Confederate soldier.

Metaphor is a figure "by which a word is removed from its proper significance into another meaning upon account of comparison."51 Aristotle suggests that the "metaphor

above all else gives clearness, charm, and distinction to style."\(^{52}\) Taylor used this figure of speech most extensively in his Confederate addresses:

> I think if I could draw back the veil which separates immortality from this veil of tears. . . . But the hurricane of Civil War shattered it and swept it away. . . . Where doubled-shotted batteries. . . . hurled fiery vomit into the faces of the reeling columns. . . . They followed (the stars and bars) amid the flood of living fire. . . .

Contemporary rhetoricians may consider such stylistic indulgence as attracting attention to the words at the expense of the ideas, which may be a valid criticism. However, one must remember that the nature of these speaking situations called for emotionally stimulating speeches, not ones highly intellectual in nature. Lively language and figures of speech as used by Taylor probably were practicable tools for vivifying his ideas and, consequently, stimulating his listeners. Among the more obvious purposes in the addresses was the intensification of sentiment toward the Lost Cause by stirring feelings of loyalty, patriotism, reverence, respect, and admiration for the Old Order. Taylor wished to give the old boys a lift and cause them to experience pleasure because of their association with the Lost Cause. He was able to accomplish this goal by

\(^{52}\text{Cooper, op. cit., p. 187.}\)
causing the veterans to re-live their mythical glory with his vivid, exciting portrayal of heroes and battles. Gray and Braden explain the use of such stylistic devices as exemplified by Taylor:

Stimulating speeches are often more literary and more polished than other types of public address. . . . Therefore, (the speaker) devotes much of his effort to the rhetorical cannon of style. He seeks to be vivid and impressive. He carefully constructs his sentences and paragraphs to achieve a pleasant, harmonious flow, sometimes rhythmical and even poetical. He uses parallel structure and repetition of thought patterns frequently. He makes his language directive, highly figurative, and of course emotionally loaded.53

Taylor, then, sought to please his audience through immortalizing the Confederate dead and their Lost Cause, using highly impressive, highly figurative language as his vehicle of expression.

APPEALS TO THINGS MAGNANIMOUS

Magnanimity is defined as "the virtue tending to produce great benefits."54 This definition refers to a certain loftiness of spirit which not only enables one to bear disaster calmly, but also disdains revenge and makes sacrifices to achieve worthy goals. Taylor clearly affirmed


54Cooper, op. cit., p. 47.
such a spirit when he states:

I would not utter a word of bitterness against the men who wore the blue. They fought and died under the old flag to perpetuate the Union, and they were men worthy of Southern prowess and Southern valor. I would not, if I could, rob Grant, the great and noble chieftain, of his fame and glory. Every Southern soldier ought to stand with uncovered head when his name is spoken. . . .

Here Taylor resorts to the same symbols as Daniel Webster did—"flag and Union"—to overcome sectional loyalty with national pride. However, significantly, the men who wore the blue were praised in terms of "Southern prowess" and "Southern valor," almost as if the South had a monopoly on these virtues. This expression perhaps demonstrates again the sour grapes attitude of many Confederates. The Yankee soldier won the war, but the victory could be explained only in terms of southern virtues, not Yankee power.

Having constructed that lofty spirit which disdains revenge, Taylor continues to portray the myth of the Confederate soldier by describing the courage, honor, and sacrifice of those who comprised the "shattered armies of Lee and Johnston—wear, half-starved, barefooted, and in rags." Normally, one might expect soldiers who had experienced this kind of defeat to falter and fall, discouraged

55Brownsville address.
and humiliated. In the case of the Confederates, however, Taylor emphasized a myth, depicting honor and courage in defeat: "When the conflict had ended, the Confederate soldier proudly stood among the blackened walls of his ruined country, magnificent in the gloom of defeat, and still a hero." This mythical, giant of a man, pictured with a broken sword, his home in ashes, having lost all "save honor," refused to "sit down in despair to weep away the passing years." Instead, even with his slaves gone, he was still a master, "too proud to pine, too strong to yield to adversity, he threw down his musket and laid his willing but unskilled hands upon the waiting plow." The Confederate hero abandoned the "rebel yell to enter the forum and the court room and the hustings; he gave up the sword to enter the battles of industry and commerce." These particular ideas, even to the specific wording, hardly seem original to Taylor. They are especially reminiscent of Henry W. Grady's "New South" address, and were probably repeated frequently by other Southern orators during this period.

Here, then, is our magnanimous character: defeated, yet disdaining revenge and seeking a greater victory through sacrifice. And what, according to Taylor's myth was the dramatic result? "...[in] a little more than a third of
a century, the land of desolation and death, the land of monuments and memories, has reached the springtime of a greater destiny, and the new sun shines bright on the domes and towers of new cities built upon the ashes of the old."

Here again is a subtle analogy to the concept of redemption and regeneration found in Christian theology. Saints have always suffered adversity, from Biblical times to the present; yet, because they are righteous, time is on their side. A day of reckoning is coming in which the wrongs will be made right and the sufferer will reap a great reward. This analogy could be used to explain all the adversity suffered by the South, while at the same time extolling the virtues of the South in any advances it might make, both in the present and the future. In the light of this analogy, the following passage from the Centennial address reveals the movement of the South from a condition of adversity to advantage:

...but magnificent in the gloom of defeat, he was still a master. Has he not mastered adversity? Has he not built the ruined South? Look yonder at those flashing domes and glittering spires; look at the works of art and all the fabrics and pictured tapestries of beauty; look what Southern brains and Southern hands have wrought; see the victories of peace we have won, all represented within the white columns of our great industrial Exposition, and you will receive an inspiration of the old South, and you will
Note, Taylor insists that all these accomplishments reflect "an inspiration of the Old South." The new is merely a regeneration of the old. The Old South, at last, is fully reaping the benefits of righteous suffering. In the Brownsville address, from a passage previously quoted, Taylor declared: "They tell us that it is the new South; but the same old blood runs in the veins of these veterans, and the same old spirit heaves their bosoms and flashes in their eyes... It is the same old South, and we are the same old Southern people." Again, the force of analogy is felt; the glory of the old is identified with the new, the current. Whatever advancements have been made, whatever is good and right in the new South, is a result of the permeating influence of the "old order," meaning, of course, the noble Confederate soldier. In this statement, the personification of the post-war myth of the Confederate soldier is clearly seen, a myth which probably would be readily believed by most of those in Taylor's audience.

What opportunities prevailed in the South as a result of the efforts of the "same old blood," and the "same old spirit," and the "same old Southern people" who

---

56 Centennial address.
function according to the principles of the "glorious Lost Cause?" In answer, Taylor echoed the theme of the New South: "Within the borders of the fair land of Dixie the finest opportunities for investment and the richest fields for enterprise ever known in the Western Hemisphere are now open to all who wish to come. . . ." He then sketches a picture of a South becoming more and more industrialized, using facts and figures to enhance and magnify his point:

Thirty years ago there was not a factory in South Carolina; today she is spinning and weaving more cotton than she raises and is second only to Massachusetts in the manufacture of cotton goods; and North Carolina and Georgia have made equal progress. . . . Birmingham is making the sky of night red with the glare of furnaces. . . . Huntsville, Decatur, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Johnson City, and Bristol, on the line, will soon be great manufacturing centers. . . .

Taylor, then, professes the doctrine of the New South advocates in that he is expounding the propaganda of southern industrialization; but his New South image is immersed in the myths of the old South. This image is obviously inconsistent, but Woodward points out that "... oftener than not this archaic romanticism, this idealizing of the past, preceded from the most active propagandists of the New Order. And this with no apparent sense of inconsistency,

---

57 Brownsville address.
certainly none of duplicity."⁵⁸ Taylor probably had a specific purpose for using the New South image on these occasions. The New South represented progress, advancement. There was even the hint that the New South might surpass the North in industrial attainment. Neither Taylor nor the ex-Confedera tes could overlook an opportunity to claim fame and fortune over the North. However, while taking advantage of the New South image, they clung in desperation to the old South, claiming that the new was really a re-birth of the old. Thus, the old Confederates and their beloved Lost Cause appeared magnanimous in nature because they were allied with the glory of the past, the progress of the present, and the hope of the future.

APPEALS THROUGH LOGICAL FORM

In discussing his strategies of form in Counterstatement, Kenneth Burke introduces the concept of "syllogistic progression," which might be labeled "logical form," meaning "the form of a perfectly conducted argument, advancing step by step."⁵⁹ Holland explains further that "Burke means that kind of progression of ideas or attitudes which

---


takes place when an audience is acquainted with certain premises and hence feels the rightness of the conclusion that follows upon these premises.\footnote{Virginia Holland, Counterpoint: Kenneth Burke and Aristotle's Theories of Rhetoric (New York: The Philological Library, Inc., 1959), p. 101.}

Two sections of the Centennial address appear to use "syllogistic progression" to magnify the South. At one point, Taylor advanced this proposition: "The South will yet be the bulwark of American liberty." This statement is singularly powerful because it combines two great symbols: one sectional, the South; one national, American liberty. South is magnified because it stands as the protectorate of the great American institution of liberty; the Confederates, of course, who heard this speech were impressed because they stood for the South and its institutions. Taylor further intensified this basic assertion by presenting three other major premises: first, that the South "is the only section left which is purely American." Secondly, Taylor said "that anarchy cannot live on Southern soil." This is an appeal to a sense of security, since anarchy would destroy law and order. Thirdly, Taylor asserted "that the South has started on a new line of march," which might be an appeal to the desire for exploration which would result in benefit to others. This progression of ideas develops as follows:
Basic assertion: "The South will yet be the bulwark of American liberty."

A. For, "it is the only section left which is purely American."
B. For, "anarchy cannot live on Southern soil."
C. For, "the South has started on a new line of march."

None of these three contentions used to support the basic assertion were further developed or supported, which might indicate a weakness if the primary purpose of the speech were to effect a change of belief or attitude. However, it should be remembered that Taylor was speaking to an audience which undoubtedly agreed with the propositions as soon as they were revealed. His intent was not to change attitudes or beliefs, but to stimulate and intensify the beliefs they already held. Therefore, he probably did not need to further develop or support his assertion, for his audience already believed it; it remained for Taylor "to reveal that which needs only to be seen in order to be admitted."

Taylor again used logical form near the conclusion of the Centennial address when he attempted to justify the right of Confederate veterans to hold annual reunions. The line of progression develops as follows:

Basic assertion: No one should scorn the veterans of the South for pulling out the "riddled and blood-
stained Stars and Bars, to look upon it and weep over it."

A. For, "they followed it amid the earthquake throes of Shiloh. . . ."

B. For, "they followed it amid the floods of living fire at Chancellorsville. . . ."

C. For, "they saw it flutter in the gloom of the wilderness. . . ."

D. For, "they rallied around it at Gettysburg. . . ."

E. For, "they saw its faded glory flaunt defiance for the last time at Appomattox. . . ."

This progression rapidly carries the audience through the war, pausing to touch upon famous battles, laden with deep emotion, rushing to that final dreadful moment when the South lost all "save honor." Taylor is obviously playing upon the sentiments of the ex-Confederates. He appeals to their appreciation for the courage of the soldiers who rushed into that flood of living fire at Chancellorsville. He rallies their intense patriotism around the Stars and Bars. The language, the symbolic value of the battles and the Confederate flag, greatly enhances the emotional impact of the progression but does not logically support the basic assertion. Yet, as already stated, Taylor's primary purpose
was not to change beliefs or attitudes in his audience, for they were already in agreement with him. His purpose was to stimulate, intensify, and magnify the Lost Cause, and this arrangement of premises, emotional as they were, probably accomplished this goal.

**EVALUATION**

In consideration of the immediate effect of these two Confederate addresses, it is significant to note that the content appears compatible to the historical moments in which they occurred, and especially appropriate to audiences of Confederate veterans. The Centennial address was delivered to between eight and ten thousand, while no estimate is available on the number who attended the Brownsville address. Concerning the Centennial address, the Nashville Banner reported that the speech was punctuated all the way through with "applause and cheers" and that when the Governor concluded he was given a "regular ovation."  

The New Orleans *Daily Picayune* commented:

Governor Robert L. Taylor was the hero of the day. His patriotic, whole-souled, tender, sympathetic speech, poetical and full of loyalty to the United States and to the flag of the free, captured the vast audience, and 'Our Bob' is not only the pride of the people of Tennessee, but is the toast of all the

---

61 Nashville Banner, June 22, 1897, p. 1.
delegates from all the other states. 62

It would appear, then, that these addresses, in the era that they were presented, reflected grace and beauty in wording, and expressed sentiments that would bring pleasure and intensify beliefs and attitudes of an audience in sympathy with the Lost Cause.

Concerning the long-range evaluation, two observations should be mentioned. First, these addresses probably enhanced and popularized at least three southern myths: the Lost Cause, the Confederate soldier, and southern oratory.

With regard to the first two myths, the veterans who heard Taylor speak, and those who later read his words in print, could hardly avoid having impressions emphasized about what the "glorious old South was really like." Taylor's description probably sounded like "eloquent history" to those who enjoyed these myths, and the more they heard them—and Taylor used them frequently—the more they tended to harden into intense beliefs. Some of these myths were to haunt the South for years to come.

Relative to the third myth, Taylor's mode of expression, his magniloquent manner, his embroidered, garnished style, re-enforced a concept of southern oratory, since

---

Taylor reflected a southern image, and was looked upon by many as a representative southern orator. Taylor's style could explain how many in the South, and in other parts of the nation, associated floridity with southern speakers.

The second general observation concerns the use of myth in public address, as is evident in Taylor's Confederate addresses. Speech making has probably played a significant role in promoting the essential attributes of aristocratic romanticism in the mind and culture of the South. Southern orators, like Taylor, identified with the aspirations, dreams, myths, and folk tales of their people, clothing them in attractive and appropriate language, in order to achieve their desired goals. Hence, Taylor, and other orators like him, were constantly popularizing and repeating what the people wanted to hear, and so frequently that their visual images—myths as they were—assumed a reality in the current mind. As the people in the South continued to be frustrated and defensive, the orators found it to their advantage to stir their vaulting imaginations, to promote in a most eloquent manner that their pattern of living was indeed the noblest of all. On any given occasion, Taylor could give flights of rhetoric, arousing latent memories, stressing that ever-to-be desired aristocratic romanticism until many people confused myth with reality.
It is evident, then, that many of the orators who flourished in the South from the latter part of the nineteenth century through the first ten years of the twentieth century, like Taylor, were expressive of the antebellum romantic sentiments of the southern people. The "mounting tide of passionate defense and defiance, of glorification and brag,"\(^{63}\) rose higher and higher, until an indelible mark was left on the southern culture.

\[^{63}\text{Cash, op. cit., p. 133.}\]
CHAPTER FIVE

ADDRESS AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE
OF ISHAM G. HARRIS

This study has examined, to this point, two areas of Taylor's ceremonial speaking; first, the popular lecture, "Dixie;" secondly, two memorial addresses delivered at reunions of Confederate veterans. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze a third type of address of special occasion, the eulogy. The speech under consideration was delivered by Governor Taylor at the memorial services of Isham G. Harris, held in Memphis, Tennessee, November 21, 1897.¹

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: SPEAKING OCCASION AND AUDIENCE

Isham G. Harris, in whose honor these services were conducted, was a prominent Tennessean and Confederate hero. Early in his career, in 1849, he was elected to Congress and became "conspicuous for his advocacy of extreme State Rights." He was elected Governor of the state of Tennessee in 1857 and again in 1859. In the crisis of 1860, after the election of President Lincoln, he issued a call for a

¹A full text of this speech is available in the Memphis Commercial Appeal, November 22, 1897, p. 3. It has also been published in; Bob Taylor, Life Pictures (Nashville: Taylor Trotwood Publishing Company, 1907), pp. 146-149.
special session of the legislature to whom he delivered a militant speech justifying the position of the southern states. In a later session, after Fort Sumter had been fired upon and Lincoln had issued a call for troops, Governor Harris retorted: "Tennessee will not furnish a single man for coercion, but fifty thousand, if necessary, for the defense of our rights and those of our southern brothers." When the Tennessee Legislature convened on the twenty-seventh of April, 1861, Harris declared: "Thus declaration of war upon the South has virtually dissolved the Union. It will be idle to speak of ourselves any longer as members of the Federal Union. . . . I respectfully recommend that our connections with the Federal Union be formally annulled. . . ." Thus, under Harris's leadership, an almost un-willing Tennessee was led into the Confederate camp and ultimately to the disaster of war.

After the fall of Fort Donelson and the evacuation of Nashville by the Confederate forces, Governor Harris reportedly volunteered to serve on the staff of General Albert Sidney Johnston and was, reportedly at least, with the General when he was killed at the battle of Shiloh. He remained in the army throughout the war, serving, for

---

the most part, on the staffs of various generals.

After the war Harris, like many of the leaders of the Confederacy, decided to leave the country, fleeing to Mexico where he resided for some eighteen months. He lived in England for one year after leaving Mexico. Finally, after matters had cooled considerably in the United States, he returned to Memphis and entered the practice of law. By 1877, having again established himself as a political power in his state, he was elected to the United States Senate, where he served for twenty consecutive years until his death in 1897.

**The Memorial Services.** Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Confederate veterans, gray with age, began to pass away in increasing numbers. Each death of a veteran, especially a prominent one, presented an opportunity to rejuvenate the surging Confederate sentiment. When an old soldier "fell," his graying and unsteady counterparts, together with their families and friends, gathered to hear a tearful eulogy. Battles were re-lived, glorious moments recalled, and the veteran—a true knight in shining armor by the completion of the eulogy—was enshrined "in the hallowed halls of memory" forever and "borne by lovely angels in the quiet of the evening" to his eternal
The death of Isham G. Harris presented one of the numerous opportunities to eulogize southern heroes. First, he was a significant leader for the Confederacy in Tennessee, gaining the reputation of being a strict "constitutionalist" and "State Rights" man. Secondly, it was commonly believed that he was a true "war hero," since he had been associated with the immortal Albert Sidney Johnston at the Battle of Shiloh, though he may not have participated in the fighting at all. Thirdly, he symbolized the re-vitalized spirit of the old South by winning his way into the United States Senate and staying there for twenty years. True Confederate patriots could hardly let this man's death slip away with little notice; and they certainly did not.

The Memphis Commercial Appeal, on the day preceding the memorial exercises, published the following news item:

United States Senators David Turple of Indiana and William B. Bate of Tennesse, Governor Robert L. Taylor, Hon. John Sharpe Williams, representative from the Fifth Congressional district of Mississippi, and Hon. John J. Vertrees

\[^3\]Numerous examples of Confederate eulogies may be found in The Confederate Veteran, a periodical published by the United Confederate Veterans in Nashville, Tennessee, from January, 1893, to December, 1932. See also Weaver's discussion of this publication in: Richard M. Weaver, The Southern Tradition at Bay (New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington House, 1968), pp. 350-354.
of Nashville will arrive in Memphis this evening and take rooms at the Peabody. These distinguished gentlemen will come to Memphis to participate in the memorial exercises in honor of the late Senator Isham G. Harris, which will be conducted in the Auditorium tomorrow evening beginning at 7:30 o'clock. . . .

With so many distinguished men in attendance, the planners of the memorial service wanted to be as impressive as possible. This occasion was indeed solemn and grand, demanding extensive planning. From all indications every detail was carefully attended, as indicated by the Appeal:
"The committee of ladies. . . who were requested to take in hand and supervise the decoration of the auditorium, has practically completed its work, and the effect which is promised will be impressive and beautiful." The language of the newspaper indicates that "effect. . . impressiveness. . . beauty. . ." were uppermost in the minds of the citizens of Memphis as they prepared for this momentous occasion. The newspaper reported a fairly extensive description of the decorations used to beautify the auditorium:

The galleries will be faced with bunting, rosettes and clusters of flags. About the stage will be more of the National colors in graceful draperies, and at the speaker's stand will be a Confederate and a United States flag intertwined. At the center of the proscenium arch will be an exquisite star of flowers.

\[Memphis \text{ Commercial Appeal}, \text{ November 20, 1897, p. 5.}\]
From this to the base of either supporting column of the arch will fall three festoons of Southern smilax. On the stage will be many palms, and upon two stands will be huge clusters of chrysanthemums. This flower will be prominent in the floral decorations and will figure in the festoons of smilax breaking the monotony and increasing the beauty. The two columns in the rear of the main auditorium will also be decorated with smilax and chrysanthemums.

Interest in the memorial occasion was evidently running high. The Commercial Appeal reported that attendance was expected to be so large as to completely fill the huge auditorium. The service was declared to be public and citizens "of the county, state, and country" were invited to be present. Several churches in Memphis cancelled their evening services in order that their members might attend.

Apparently, the expectations of the Commercial Appeal concerning attendance was fully realized. On the morning following the service it reported in large headlines: "Thousands pay honor to Senator Harris." The description of the scene indicated that "not a seat was vacant and all available standing room was occupied."

The Commercial Appeal clearly outlined the nature of the memorial service in their Sunday morning edition, November 21, 1897. W. J. Crawford, chairman of the committee

---

5Ibid., November 22, 1897, p. 1.
on arrangements, was selected to call the meeting to order and introduce Senator William B. Bate, "who will assume the Chair and preside thereafter." Senator Bate was to speak briefly, "outlining the nature of the ceremonies and presenting the salient features of the life and character of the late Senator." The following program was formally announced:

Music. . . . . . . . . . . Orchestra
Invocation. . . . . . . . Rev. N. M. Woods
Music. . . . . . . . . . . "Lead Kindly Light"
Memphis Bar
Resolutions. . . . . . . Gen. George W. Gordon
State Resolutions. . . . Hon. John J. Vertrees
Music. . . . . . . . . . . "When Darkness Comes"
Address on Behalf of Memphis . . Hon. Casey Young
Vocal Solo . . . . . . . "The Conquered Banner"
Address on Behalf of the United States Senate. . Hon. David Turple
Music. . . . . . . . . . . Orchestra
Address on Behalf of Tennessee . . Gov. R. L. Taylor
Music. . . . . . . . . . . "One Sweetly Solemn Thought"
Address on Behalf of the United States House of Representative . Hon. John S. Williams
Music. . . . . . . . . . . "Nearer My God To Thee"
Benediction. . . . . . Rev. Dr. Potts

This program was apparently followed in every detail, with the exception of the speech by John J. Vertrees, who was unable to attend.

The doors of the auditorium opened for the service on Sunday evening at 6:00. The crowd gathered early,
keeping the ushers busy getting the people to their proper seats. By 7:30, the time for the services to begin, the auditorium was packed, but still the people came, filling up the aisles, taking all the available standing room. Bankers, merchants, political figures, the clergy, numbering close to a hundred, were seated on the stage by special invitation. Well-known men like E. W. Carmack, Judge Jacob Galloway, Judge L. P. Cooper, Chancellor J. L. T. Sneed, L. B. McFarland, General J. R. Chalmers, A. B. Pickett, General Colton Greene, and Captain James Lee were among those seated on the stage.

Also included in the audience, as might be expected, were Confederate veterans organizations, all attending in a body, and all dressed in full uniform. These included the Neely Zouaves, the Confederate Veterans, and members of the Confederate Historical Association.

When 7:30 p.m. arrived, W. J. Crawford rapped for order and the formal exercises began. After some brief remarks, Crawford formally introduced Senator Bate. The program then proceeded as scheduled, with the one exception already noted, until its conclusion nearly three hours later. While the program appears long—as indeed it was—nevertheless, the Commercial Appeal felt that it was "magnificent...and worthy of the great man whose memory was honored."
The text of Taylor's eulogy on Isham G. Harris appeared in the Memphis Commercial Appeal, November 22, 1897, the day after it was delivered. It contains between eleven and twelve hundred words, which was brief when compared to some of the other speeches delivered on the same occasion. The address probably lasted no more than ten to twelve minutes. By way of contrast, the speech of Senator David Turple contains more than four thousand words and probably took longer than thirty minutes to deliver. John Sharp Williams delivered an address of more than fifty-six hundred words, which probably took more than forty minutes to deliver.

There were numerous factors evident on this speaking occasion which held the audience together in a bond of unity. The myth of the Lost Cause and the cult of the Confederate soldier was involved, of course, since Harris was both a statesman and soldier of the Old Regime. However, especially evident as a unifying factor was the southern concept of religion with the accompanying views of God, life, death, and immortality. In understanding this point of identification it will be helpful to peer back to the roots of the southern view on religion and show its
relationship to the South in the latter part of the nine-
teenth century.

Richard Weaver asserts that the attitude of the old South toward religion "was essentially the attitude of orthodoxy: it was a simple acceptance of a body of belief, an innocence of protest and heresy which left religion one of the unquestioned and unquestionable supports of the general settlement under which men live." 6

As a consequence of this "attitude of orthodoxy," the South was as conservative in their religion as they were in their politics. They felt their religion should be a settled affair, leading to a "comfortable and orderly design for living." 7 A skeptical mind was immediately suspect and viewed as an opponent of decency and order. Reverence for the Bible as the "Word of God" was a "highly important aspect of Southern orthodoxy." 8 This time-honored reverence often lead to strict adherence to certain positions as being truisms established by God "in the Book," even in view of empirical evidence to the contrary. In this sense the Bible became a "Holy Relic" to be worshipped more than

---

7Ibid., pp. 103-104.
8Ibid., p. 105.
a philosophy to be lived. As often as not, what was held to be in "the Book" was in reality a mere reflection of the aspirations or traditions imposed by the southern culture.

Like southern politics, religion was measured by the standard of "our" Christianity, meaning that which agrees with "our" ideas, concepts, and practices. Consequently, only those things which coincided with the peculiar romantic notions of the South was allowed to pass through this blockade. As Osterweis concluded: "Not diversitarianism, then, but local selectivity characterized the romantic impact in Dixie."  

It should be emphasized, as Clement Eaton does, that the antebellum period was "probably the most religious age in the entire history of the South."  

However, the religious expression, more often than not, assumed the character of anti-intellectualism. Eaton, for example, states that relatively non-emotional religions, such as Unitarianism, "declined to a shadow after 1830," and that deism and skepticism, characteristic of the eighteenth-century mind, 

---


virtually disappeared in the South. ¹¹ These views were replaced by a highly emotional expression of religious feeling, characterized by the camp meeting, "protracted meeting," dramatic conversions and baptisms. The protracted meetings and camp meetings tended to whip people into a religious fervor by the "unrestrained, extravagant, and emotional exhortations of accomplished revivalists," coupled with an opportunity for feasting "under the stimulation of a carnival-like atmosphere."¹² Perhaps Cash best describes and explains the religious mind of the old South:

What our Southerner required... was a faith as simple and emotional as himself. A faith to draw men together in hordes, to terrify them with Apocalyptic rhetoric, to cast them into the pit, rescue them, and at last bring them shouting into the fold of grace. A faith, not of liturgy and prayer book, but of primitive frenzy and the blood sacrifice—often of fits and jerks and barks. The God demanded was an anthropomorphic God—the Jehovah of the Old Testament: a God who might be seen, a God who had been seen. A passionate, whimsical tyrant, to be trembled before, but whose representatives were not silken priests but preachers risen from the people themselves. What was demanded here, in other words, was the God and the faith of the Methodist and the Baptist, and the Presbyterians... Fully nine-tenths of the new planters—

¹¹Ibid., pp. 181-182.
of the men who were to be masters of the great South— were, and, despite some tendency to fall away to Anglicanism as more high-toned, continued to be numbered among their adherents.\(^{13}\)

As previously indicated, the post-war South "preserved intact the old southern religious faith. . . ."\(^{14}\) The post-war era, in fact, saw a revival of evangelical fervor, not unlike the revivalism of the early part of the nineteenth century, with camp meetings, mass conversions, and the like. Woodward points out that in this period "religious zeal was abnormally intensified. Membership in the Southern Methodist Church, lower in 1866 than in 1854, doubled in the fifteen years following the war. The greatest gains were made when revivalism was at highest pitch, and the eighties were a time of extraordinary revivals."\(^{15}\)

The intense interest in religion in the South during this period of time may be explained in two ways. First, as already pointed out in another place in this study, Southerners were suffering the pains of defeat and frustration. Their religion offered them some relief and hope


for a "better day." Secondly, the South was probably reacting against the flood of liberalism sweeping the country during this era. Arthur Schlesinger commented: "Perhaps at no time in its American development has the path of Christianity been so sorely beset with pitfalls and perils as in the last quarter of the nineteenth century." The reason for this peril lies in the bold attacks made by some men of science and other intellectuals on the validity of the Bible and the concept of God. Doubt began to sweep across Christendom, affecting every religious group and turning the faces of some prominent religious leaders to liberal views. Skeptics, who in earlier years lay dormant, suddenly sprang to battle and openly challenged traditionally sacred grounds. "To the irreligious and unchurched the doubt came as welcomed confirmation to long held suspicions. But to the believer whose life had been explained in terms of complete reliance upon the Bible as God's inerrant decree, the doubt was agonizing." These viewpoints were especially vocal in the Northern states, where the influence of the Transcendentalists and the Unitarians had already set up a definite drift toward the general sophistication and

17 Ibid., pp. 18-19.
liberalization of the old beliefs.\textsuperscript{18}

The response in the South to the liberal trends evident in the North was reactionary. To the Southerner, the "faith of the Fathers" was a matter of "patriotic pride and a shield for the South's defense." It was entwined with his adoration of the "Old Order" and the Lost Cause. The God and Christ of the Bible became, to the Southerner, personal redeemers. They found comfort in the scripture which taught: "Yea, and all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."\textsuperscript{19} The South may have suffered defeat and frustration and misery, but then, were not the righteous supposed to suffer? Were not these same suffering ones promised redemption? Did not this, indeed, prove that the South was superior, seeing that they alone were suffering "for righteousness sake" and that they alone were clinging to the Bible and God and Holy right? The defense of fundamental Christianity was clearly a matter of pride to the South, and a defensive mechanism, as Cash observes:

\begin{quote}
To hold fast to it, to retreat on the ideology of the sixteenth century as embalmed in the evangelical heritage, hacking away every excrescence and sternly barring out every notion that might conceivably lead to liberalization, was, in any case, a normal part of the glorification of the past. But to do it at the same time
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[18]Cash, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 133.
\item[19]\textit{II Timothy 3:12}, Kings James Bible.
\end{footnotes}
when the Yankee was falling away was to bolster the Southern pride ever more stoutly with the sense of being a Chosen People, to assert Southern superiority in a way which was felt to be finally decisive, and to stand forth always more unmistakably as the last great champion of the true faith in the world which, with this Yankee in the van, was plainly deserting to Satin.  

The South, then, in the 1890's, was as defensive about its religion as it was about the Lost Cause, since the two were closely associated. This defensiveness, coupled with the "persecution complex" and the "redeemer complex," perhaps explains why Taylor, a layman, would spend so much time on the Christian concepts of God and immortality in his eulogy of Harris. A funeral, of course, is an ideal place for one to affirm his belief in Christian concepts, and Taylor, speaking to a defensive-minded southern audience, probably achieved close identity with their beliefs in his brief Christian apology. Naturally, this strategy would not hurt his image in the political arena either.

ARRANGEMENT

Thematic Emergence. The purpose and central theme of this speech was dictated narrowly by the occasion, as was the case in the Confederate addresses. The primary difference in this address and the Confederate speeches

\[20\text{Cash, op. cit., p. 135.}\]
lies in the scope of the process of magnification, not in the process itself. In the case of the Confederate addresses, attention was focused upon the total myth of the Confederate soldier with specific examples used to illustrate the whole. In the case of the Harris eulogy, emphasis, of course, was placed on the man, Isham G. Harris. The theme of the address involves two primary aspects: first, reverence and praise for Harris; secondly, hope as revealed in the Christian faith. Taylor clearly stated the first aspect of his theme in the beginning of the speech with this purpose sentence: "I come to drop a flower of love and reverence on the grave of Isham G. Harris in the name of the state which he served so long and so well." The second part of the theme is suggested with a series of rhetorical questions followed with a strong affirmation of belief: "... Poor child, is there no better world where the soul shall wake and smile in the face of God? Poor tired man, is it all of life to live? Is it all of death to die? Is there not a heaven where thy tottering age shall find immortal youth and where immortal life shall glorify thy face? It must be so; it must be so." The entire address revolved around this two-fold theme. In the conclusion of the address Taylor drew these two aspects together into one unit, combining the man with the hope: "Therefore, somewhere
beyond this world there is infinite power and eternal life. Let us hope that the Christ who whispered 'peace' to the troubled waters of Gallileee has whispered 'peace' to the troubled soul of our departed Senator. . . ."

Method of Division. Brigance seems to agree with John Q. Adams that there are two modes of proceeding in the preparation of a eulogy.\textsuperscript{21} The first may be called the biographical method, which Brigance says is the easier of the two. In Adams' words, "Its divisions are uniform, and are precisely the same in every subject to which they are applied. It traces the hero of the story through his genealogy to the moment of his birth; accompanies him through life; follows him to the grave, and gathers all the flowers ever scattered on his tomb."

The second method, suggested by Brigance, is the selective. The selective differs from the biographical in that it does not consider the details of the subject's life so much as it concentrates on his services. "Where the one is, in structure, purely chronological, the other is topical. The eulogist who follows the selective method pays little attention to the details, as such, of the subject's life. Where such details are given they will be

used as a means of measuring his influence and services rather than as an end in themselves."

Taylor's eulogy of Harris suits the description of the selective mode of arrangement. Yet, it differs somewhat in that it is not really topical in arrangement. Taylor tends to take the image of the man Harris—an image already presented to the audience by prior speakers—and entwine it with a philosophy of life, death, and immortality. Thus, the eulogy has a distinct religious flavor.

Having established his theme and purpose, Taylor makes a few general complimentary remarks concerning Harris' honesty and then refers specifically to the sadness of his death, commenting that his death came "in the triumphant hour of the State, when the Centennial bells were ringing out the old century and ringing in the new." Having introduced the concept of death, Taylor asks, "What is life? What is death?" He then plunged into a philosophical answer using symbolism, moving by analogy, alluding mystically to the life of Isham G. Harris, seemingly trying to explain the mystery of life and death. However, a close examination of the speech indicates that he was not merely trying to explain a philosophy concerning life and death, but was, in the process, praising the "matchless Senator from Tennessee," for the Senator was deemed worthy of achieving the ultimate
victory promised in the Christian faith, the victory of peace and eternal life. The Christian concept of God and eternal existence was introduced with this question: "Is it all of death to die?" Taylor's answer, which was especially appropriate to religious fundamentalism as seen in the South, and especially in Tennessee, was a strong affirmation of belief in God and immortality: "... There must be a God. ... his (Harris) tired eyes have opened to the light of blissful immortality."

**Over-all Strategy.** Taylor's strategy seems to have involved at least two aspects. First, he desired to give honor and praise to the hero of the hour, Isham G. Harris. Secondly, in view of the evidence of death, he apparently wanted to associate himself and Senator Harris with the Christian belief in God and immortality, thus linking the departed Senator with the hope of the Christian faith, as well as re-enforcing the Christian beliefs of the audience. The first part of the strategy was accomplished by associating the Senator with that which is noble and worthy: honesty; truth; loyalty; courage. The second aspect of the strategy was accomplished by appealing to the nature of things, such as the stars, the endlessness of space, the orderliness of the universe, a drop of water teeming with animal life, suggesting that the only way these could exist
in the way that they do is for some greater, creative power to so ordain it. On the one hand, Harris is pictured as a man worthy of honor and praise; on the other hand, the Christian hope for eternal life for the righteous is depicted. In the final analysis, Harris is linked with the virtues required by the Christian system for eternal peace.

STRATEGY OF MAGNIFICATION

Taylor's strategy of magnification may be divided into two natural divisions. First, the magnification of the hero, Isham G. Harris; secondly, magnification of belief in God and immortality. As already indicated, these two points were carefully interwoven, lending support to each other, and probably reflecting what the audience wanted to hear.

Magnification of Isham G. Harris. In considering the amplification of the virtues of Isham G. Harris, Taylor used several inner strategies of magnification. For example, early in the address, he used highly polished, positive language and stylistic hyperbole to associate Harris with a lofty and sublime moral nature. Note the virtues depicted in the following passage:

If all the noble deeds he has done for his country and for his fellow-man were flowers, I could gather a million roses from the
hearts of Tennesseans tonight. Whatever else may be said of him, he was an honest man. His heart was the temple of truth, and his lips were its oracles. He loved his native land, and loyalty to duty was his creed. He lived a long and stormy life; he died a hero.

Notably, much of the language in this passage is highly symbolic and associated with positive good: "... country... honest man... temple of truth... loved his native land... loyalty to duty... " These symbols connote a man who deliberately choose, as a rule of life, the course of virtue and right. At this point Taylor's strategy of magnification seems to follow rather closely Aristotle's recommendation in using the moral intention of the subject as a mode of amplification:

Since we praise men for what they have done, and since the mark of the virtuous person is that he acts after deliberate moral choice, our speaker must try to show that the subject of his praise is a man who does so act. To this end one will find it helpful to make it appear that the man has often acted with a moral purpose. Accordingly, mere coincidences and the results of chance must be represented as the results of moral choice; for if many like cases are produced, they will give an impression of virtue and deliberate choice.22

A second mode of magnification in praising the life of Harris was to associate him with deeds of courage reflecting great stamina and tenacity. Note the vivid imagery used

in portraying these traits:

He rushes into the struggle of real life, and wins his way from the log cabin to the gubernatorial chair. The lightnings begin to leap from the gathering clouds of war, the thunders begin to fall about him; but he stands like a lion at his post; and when the dreadful shock of Shiloh comes, where the flowers of Tennessee are rushing to glory and the grave, through the rifted smoke I see him kneeling on the bloody field, with the peerless Albert Sidney Johnston dying in his arms.

This passage dramatically combines both symbol and myth to reflect an heroic image of Harris' struggle against life. Using the power of analogy, Taylor links Harris with the national myth of the American success story. The myth is suggested in the symbol of the humble log cabin, long revered in America as the birthplace of noble character and high ideals. In America, and especially in the South, there has always been an aura of awe and respect surrounding the man who can claim that he rose from the "humble log cabin" to the glory of the "gubernatorial chair." So strong has been this myth that politician after politician has ascribed to it in efforts to identify with the common folks. Indeed, humility and a simple life are cardinal images in the Christian concept. Thus, it is not surprising to find Taylor linking Harris to a humble log cabin beginning.

Taylor not only revealed Harris as a man of humble parentage, but also depicted him as having the courage
necessary to succeed. The similitude of the lion standing at his post, even in the face of great danger, has stood for many centuries as a symbol of courage and manliness. To enhance further the image of courage, and possibly to stir feelings of compassion, Harris is identified with the struggle of the Lost Cause, and associated in a most intimate way with one of the most illustrious heroes of the Confederacy, Albert Sydney Johnston. Our hero is placed right on the bloody battlefield, amid dying soldiers, holding up the head of Johnston as he dies. A more noble scene of pathos could hardly be depicted for those in the audience who found emotional balm in the glories of the Lost Cause! Again, Taylor's method of magnification appears to suit the recommendation of Aristotle concerning the amplification of the objects of praise and blame:

Now if we regard virtue as a faculty of beneficence, then the greatest virtues must be those that are most useful to other persons. And hence it is that none are so highly esteemed as the just and the brave; for courage is useful to one's fellows in war, and justice in peace as well as in war. . . . Courage is the virtue which moves men to perform noble deeds in times of peril. . . .

In depicting Harris as a man of courage, Taylor causes him to appear noble, for "whatever is productive of virtue must

23Ibid., p. 47.
be noble. . . . it follows that anything done by courage, any sign of courage, or anything done courageously, must be noble."24

A third method of magnification used in praising Harris was to demonstrate that even in the face of defeat and adversity, this man was able to return to his homeland and demonstrate a performance beyond what one might normally expect. Thus, Harris was pictured as a man whose flag had gone down in "blood and tears...exiled from his country..." But in the final analysis when the hero returned home, he received the ultimate triumph in being "clothed by the people with greater power than ever before and to sit like an uncrowned king in the highest council of the nation until his raven locks turn white as snow." Aristotle suggests that such action as attributed to Harris is noble: "Then there are the circumstances of time and occasion, when a man's performance exceeds what we might naturally expect. (It would be noble, for instance, if a man showed great liberality in a time of pecuniary stress; or take the action of Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen, when the circumstances made his action seem the greater...)."25

---

24Ibid., p. 48.
25Ibid., p. 53.
Nearly one-third of this eulogy was slanted toward Christian concepts of God, life, death, and immortality. In the first half of the speech, just prior to the survey of the life and career of Isham G. Harris, Taylor introduced the two perennial questions that have always plagued mankind: "What if life: What is death?" In answer to his questions, Taylor used a stylistic device which has been called "catachresis." This device has been described as "the most licentious as to language of all the tropes, as it borrows the name of one thing to express another, which has either no proper name of its own; or if it has, the borrowed name is used either for surprising by novelty, or for the sake of a bold and daring energy. . . ."26 This description seems to fit precisely what Taylor accomplished when he answered his two philosophical questions: "Today, we hear a bird singing in the tree top; they tell us that is life. Tomorrow the bird lies cold and stiff at the root of the tree; it will sing its song no more; they tell us that is death." Thus, the bird comes to represent both life and death in a novel way. Even the uneducated could understand. Immediately Taylor makes application of this illustration

as he moves by force of analogy to the birth of Harris and traces his life and accomplishments. Then, dramatically, he returns to the melancholic scene of death, represented by the bird lying at the foot of the tree, cold and stiff, but this time applied to Harris: "But the scene shifts again; and as we are called from our revelry to stand around the coffin of our matchless Senator, there are tear stains on the cheeks of merriment and mourning muffles mirth. They tell that is death." Returning to the trope of the bird, Taylor accomplishes what is expected of him; he gives a ray of hope for both the living and the dead:

Poor bird, is there no brighter clime where thy sweet spirit shall sing forever in the tree of life? Poor child, is there no better world where the soul shall wake and smile in the face of God? Poor tired man, is it all of life to live? Is it all of death to die? Is there not a heaven where thy tottering age shall find immortal youth and where immortal life shall glorify thy face?

In viewing these words one might remember that Taylor is speaking in the deep South where feelings of despair, frustration, and defeat exist. Yet, he introduces the most feared, potent enemy man faces—death. However, the strategy appears to have purpose, for as surely as Taylor introduced the enemy, he introduced the victory. "Is there not a heaven? ... It must be so; it must be so." The "Redeemed of the earth" concept is obvious. Man may suffer
and die, but ultimately he will have victory. To a people frustrated by defeat, thwarted in their efforts to gain power and pride, these words provided the "conquering master" image, an image reflecting ultimate victory for those who have suffered.

But Taylor was not content to suggest merely the Christian triumph. He apparently felt compelled to amplify further the concept of God and immortality. In beginning, he asserted a strong affirmation of faith: "There must be a God." In support of this proposition he argues by analogy: "We look up through the telescope into the blue infinite and catch glimpses of his glory. We see millions of suns. . . . ten thousand fields of light. . . . islands and continents of suns. . . . We turn from the telescope and look down through the microscope, and it reveals in a single drop of water a tiny world teeming with animal life, with forms as perfect as the human body. . . ." Having made these observations about nature, Taylor concludes with the following common Christian enthymeme, which would be readily accepted by his audience: "It cannot be denied that some power beyond this world created them. We know that some power beyond this world created us. We know that they must perish and that we must die, and we know that the power which created them and us and the stars above us lives on
forever." Having advanced these propositions, which his audience probably readily accepted, Taylor finally affirms that the "matchless Senator" has opened his eyes "to the light of a blissful immortality."

As can be observed from the passages just quoted, Taylor appears somewhat defensive concerning the Christian faith. He does not merely assume God and immortality but tries to prove it. He uses logical progression to magnify and intensify these religious concepts, using basic Christian dogma which was held as truth by most in the audience. The audience probably experienced comfort and exhilaration in hearing the Governor of Tennessee affirm and reinforce such faith. This audience response was undoubtedly politically advantageous to Taylor. As already observed, skeptics were making bold attacks upon religious fundamentalism during this time. Doubt was sweeping across Christendom greatly disturbing those who found comfort in their time-worn, ancestral religion. Many of these Tennesseans were totally unable to answer the doubter—were, in fact, helpless before his intellectual onslaughts. In this speech, Taylor appears to be aware of the impending threat of liberalism and intellectualism to the traditional faith, and thus seeks to soothe the frayed nerves and feelings of his Tennessee constituents. Such an affirmation and defense
of the Christian faith would indeed be a popular move in the "Bible-belt" state of Tennessee. One Tennessee historian points out that "few states of the union have been more potently influenced by Christian principles than has the Commonwealth of Tennessee." Obviously, any politician who desires to remain popular in that state must subscribe to the basic Christian tenets. Taylor appears to have been aware of this fact and used the opportunity afforded by the death of Harris to re-affirm his religious position, an action which could help him the next time he ran for political office in Tennessee.

It should be remembered, however, that for his primary purpose Taylor wished to praise Isham G. Harris. He never lost sight of this goal. What greater praise could he offer this fallen hero than to place him in the company of "the Christ who whispers peace" and the God who created the universe. "The troubled soul of the departed Senator" has finally achieved the ultimate victory. His "flag" may have gone down in "blood and tears," and he may have been exiled from his country, "having lost all save honor," as Taylor often phrased it, but in the final analysis, it

---

is the righteous who suffer persecution; and it is the righteous who open their eyes to "blissful immortality." Again Taylor uses the power of analogy to carry his idea. The life of Harris, with its suffering and struggle, is made analogous to the Christian concept of struggle and suffering, so that Harris appears bound for the Christian reward. Consequently, another southern hero has been crowned with "glory and honor;" the Lost Cause has been vindicated once again.

In summary, Taylor's strategy of magnification appears to encompass two areas: first, magnification of the Confederate hero, Isham G. Harris; secondly, magnification and intensification of faith in God and immortality. These two were really not separate entities, but were entwined together into a composite relationship. The inner strategies of magnification included the association of Harris with a lofty and sublime moral nature, associating him with deeds of courage related to the Lost Cause, and praising him for demonstrating performance beyond what one might normally expect considering adverse circumstances. The concepts of God and immortality were amplified through appeals to logical form as revealed in the "nature of things."
EVALUATION

The immediate effect of Taylor's eulogy of Isham G. Harris was, perhaps, suggested by the comment of the Commercial Appeal which reported that the speech was "Tayloresque," explaining that this meant an address "graceful, beautiful, and profoundly impressive." It would appear from an examination of the speech text that the evaluation of the Commercial Appeal, while perhaps overly-stated, was not mere editorial bombast. The speech certainly contained elements of vividness and impressiveness. The language was forceful and picturesque, replicating warm memories of the past and suggesting meaningful symbols to the specific audience gathered on that occasion. Taylor's use of analogy especially enlivened the address, causing it to deviate from the ordinary, plain, common discourse. In comparing Taylor's speech with the others delivered on the same occasion, one detects a distinctness about the former, in terms of brevity, novelty, and boldness of invention. Taylor did not merely recite facts from the life and career of the man being praised, as did most of the other speakers, but rather considered the qualities of life which supposedly stamped Harris a great man. Having freed himself from the strictly

---

28 Memphis Commercial Appeal, November 22, 1897, p. 1.
biographical method, Taylor was in a better position to apply a moral lesson appropriate to the historical moment, as he did in alluding to Christian apology, thus intensifying the feelings of the audience toward the Christian concept of God and immortality.

A eulogy, of course, is often so transient in nature that its impact is lost as soon as the person being honored is entombed. The speaker arouses the emotions of the audience, purges them, relieves them, sends them home hopefully feeling better. The words may be lost in the emotional moment, but the speaker accomplishes his purpose if the emotions of the audience are aroused and relieved.

However, the eulogy may, in some cases, have a lasting impact. While it is not possible to measure with any degree of accuracy the long-range impact of Taylor's eulogy of Harris, there were two possible lasting effects. These effects came about not just because of the immediate speaking occasion, but because the speech was given wider coverage in the newspapers and magazines, thus giving it more opportunity for greater impact.

The first impact concerns the Confederate hero myth. In 1897 great emphasis was being placed on the Confederate soldier as a hero, a defensive mechanism which enhanced the image of the South. The memorial service for Isham G. Harris
had definite myth-making potential. Taylor's impressive address, which could please both the hearer and the reader, probably intensified the already myth-encrusted aura of the hero image of Harris. The South felt a need for and demanded such heroes; Taylor merely gave what was requested.

The second impact concerns Taylor's political image. One must remember that Bob Taylor lived in a state where politicians traditionally campaigned with a "Bible under their arms and a prayer on their lips." After all, Tennessee was in the heart of the "Bible belt," and the politician, if he were to identify with his people, had to associate with their religious feelings and demands. The Christian apology in the latter part of this address had strong consubstantial powers in a state and a region which was feeling the attack of the intellectual liberals. Taylor was Governor at this point in his political career, but it was certainly no secret that he aspired higher political office, namely Senator. He was a layman, not a preacher, but he wanted that aura of religiousness about him. As we have observed before, Taylor may not have been a powerful statesman, but he knew the heart of his people. He knew that Tennesseans were basically conservative and fundamental about their religion. They accepted God, creation, the Bible and immortality as facts to be believed.
Any man, book, or creed which fell short of this position was immediately suspect. Taylor was undoubtedly sensitive to this condition and took every opportunity to align himself with the fundamentalist viewpoint so characteristic of his state. This speaking occasion offered him an opportunity to seal a bond of religious unity with the people of Tennessee.
Thus far in this study, the development of Taylor's oratorical image has been described in an effort to determine both the orator's view of himself and the evaluation of his audience toward him. Secondly, a rhetorical study was made of epideictic speeches representing three distinct kinds of ceremonial addresses delivered by Taylor: (1) the popular lecture "Dixie;" (2) two memorial addresses at Confederate reunions; (3) the eulogy of Isham G. Harris. The purpose of this final chapter is to offer an evaluation of the nature of Robert Taylor's ceremonial speaking. However, before these evaluations are attempted, some general observations are in order.

First, Robert Taylor's ability as a ceremonial speaker did not come about by accident. It does appear that he was endowed by nature with a strong, clear voice and a good mind. However, his natural abilities were developed by assiduous training and his mind was cultivated with the rudiments of a good education. His speech training included exercises at home under the watchful eye of his father, who was also a good speaker, practice debates with his brother Alf, and frequent debates and exhibitions at school. In
short, Bob Taylor worked and practiced diligently to train himself in the art of public speaking.

Secondly, Taylor became widely known as a speaker of special occasion. He delivered his lectures on the lyceum platform throughout the South and in many other sections of the country. In addition, he was constantly in demand as a commencement orator, commemorative speaker, and eulogist.

Thirdly, Taylor's oratorical image, no matter where he traveled, was distinctly southern. He associated himself with and used southern themes, aspirations, myths, and ideals. He frequently used southern folk-tales, anecdotes, and illustrations. His audiences, both North and South, were rarely left to doubt what his true sentiments were. Taylor espoused to be southern and his ceremonial speeches supported that preference.

Taylor's ceremonial speaking, by nature, tended to reflect the bonds of identification\(^1\) in the audiences to whom he spoke. These bonds are clearly evident in the language he used, the myths he employed, and the folk-tales, anecdotes, and illustrations that he included in his ceremonial addresses.

\(^1\)Kenneth Burke's term is being used here.
Concerning use of language, Taylor typically choose slanted terms, positive words, emotionally loaded adjectives, all shaded in such a way as to identify with the emotions and feelings of his audiences. Through this positive loading, he connoted to his Southern constituents that the South was free of censure and was, instead, pleasant, attractive, and palatable in every respect.

Taylor made extensive use of figurative language. The Speeches abounded in similies, metaphors, personification, and hyperbole. As suggested, the power of this figurative communication lay in its visual imagery. The audiences were stirred to see and feel the images which Taylor conveyed, causing them to identify closely with the speaker's ideas.

Taylor took advantage of the commonly held beliefs and myths of his audiences, using them as points of identification in his ceremonial addresses. The most frequently used myths involved both the universal myths of rural living and the aristocratic romanticism of the antebellum South. As pointed out in this study, many Southerners were not willing, indeed, perhaps, were not able to face the reality of defeat. The misery of their plight and their severely wounded pride caused them to seek balm in a dream world. They extracted from the concepts of the antebellum
South, intact, the dreams of the aristocracy. Consequently, the cult of the Lost Cause and the myth of the Confederate soldier formed convenient rallying points for frustrated Southerners.

Taylor gained the full impact of the myths he employed through frequent use of analogy. In fact, his ceremonial speeches moved through force of analogy. Images, myths, and illustrations, drawn from the commonly held beliefs of the audiences, were graphically portrayed by Taylor and made analogous to the objects of his praise. This occurrence explains why these ceremonial addresses are arranged mosaically, rather than topically or chronologically. He presented visual images, gathered around a central theme and linked them to the audience through the application of analogy. Logical argument was unnecessary since the audience already agreed with the speaker. For his goals, Taylor sought intensification of belief and inspiration, both of which analogy served well in achieving.

This study further reveals that Taylor characteristically used folk-stories and anecdotes in his ceremonial addresses, especially his lectures. Most of the people to whom Taylor spoke were not only seeking intensification of belief, but they also desired diversion. They wanted to be entertained and have their emotions purged. Taylor seemed
to be aware that to hold an audience he not only had to identify with their beliefs, but also had to evoke a response of pleasure and laughter. The Yankee and the Negro were the most frequent objects of his humor, which, of course, probably caused the white Southerner to laugh and at the same time feel superior. With his down-to-earth folk-tales about rural living, Taylor was able to identify easily with the man behind the plow and in the workshop. These were people who supported him politically and also paid their quarters and half-dollars to hear him lecture. Taylor knew them, understood them, had strong feelings for them, and always, in his speeches, gave them what they expected.

Although the foregoing discussion seems to indicate that Robert Taylor was an original thinker, such is not necessarily the case. It is true that he had a fine command of language and could express himself impressively and vividly. However, Taylor does not appear especially original, neither in his ideas nor in his stylistic devices. "Dixie" and his Confederate addresses reflect the influence of Henry W. Grady. The ideas, even some of the specific phrases, appear to be lifted directly from Grady. The similarity is simply too great to be accidental.

Stylistically, Taylor probably reflects the influence of Robert G. Ingersoll. The "purple passages" in Ingersoll
find their counterparts and similarities in the speeches of Taylor. While there is no direct evidence to indicate that Taylor studied Ingersoll's style, again, the similarity is too great to be ignored.

Taylor emerges then, not as an inventor or creator of ideas, myths, and style, but rather as a popularizer of the concepts of others. He adapted what he read and heard so that members of his audience could understand and appreciate it.

What was the impact, if any, of Taylor as a ceremonial speaker? Concerning the immediate situation, Robert Taylor's ceremonial speeches pleased his audiences. Evidence indicates that during his lectures and Confederate addresses, the audiences generally cheered, applauded, and laughed. The newspaper accounts were, for the most part, favorable. However, perhaps the most significant indication of his immediate audience appeal was his popularity as a lecturer. Taylor's papers indicated that the demand on his time was so great that he could not fill all the requests to speak. For fifteen years he made an excellent living delivering lectures and other speeches of special occasion.

Taylor, however, was more than a professional lecturer. While he seemed to love the applause of the lecture platform, the power and prestige of political office was his first
affection. He went into politics as a young man and remained there until his death. Perhaps his greatest contribution to the political scene in Tennessee was the ability to maintain unity in the Democratic party. His power to accomplish this unity, of course, was through identification with the farmers and blue collar workers; they loved to hear him tell his folk-tales and anecdotes.

Taylor's political strategy, however, involved far more than country humor. He effectively incorporated the beliefs, dreams, and myths held by the frustrated ex-Confederates as a means of social control. Taylor repeatedly expressed what the people wanted to hear in language they could understand and appreciate. He packed his ceremonial speeches full of their commonly held beliefs and myths. He returned repeatedly to the myths of the Lost Cause, the Confederate soldier, and the New South. Not only did this constant repetition intensify these ideas, but it also surrounded Taylor with an aura of a Southern hero. Taylor became identified in the thinking of the voters of Tennessee as a great defender of Southern tradition. He was the protagonist of the Yankee and the champion of Tennessee and Dixie. Of course, the average Tennessean was helpless to explain why he believed what he believed; he was willing to leave the expression and defense of that
belief to Robert Love Taylor. When Taylor ran for political office the voters could hardly forget this "defender of all we hold dear." This identification perhaps best explains why Taylor emerges as one of the most popular men in Tennessee history.

In the final analysis, the question arises as to the permanence of the influence of Taylor as a ceremonial speaker. It may generally be concluded that Taylor had a knack for saying the right thing at the right moment. It is evident that he carefully analyzed his audiences and in general knew their interests. Consequently, the words and the figures used by Taylor frequently had special meaning to the particular audience that heard him. However, his ideas and style were transient in nature; they affected Taylor's immediate situation, but were too limited and too sectional to have any lasting impact. Daniel Webster created great national myths which are still effective today; Taylor used myths which were, for the most part, effective only in the generation and section where he spoke, with one unfortunate exception—racism. Robert Love Taylor was not a great statesman, for no significant legislation is associated with his name; the secret of his success in politics and in oratory lay in his intricate knowledge of what the average laborer in Tennessee wanted to believe and
his ability to identify, in word and deed, with their particular set of values.

In conclusion, there are two final points which need to be considered. First, this study suggests how orators and oratory can be sectionally stereotyped. It is granted that Taylor's ceremonial speeches qualify as high flown, grandiloquent, embroidered, and florid. Since several of these speeches were widely published, and since Taylor was generally considered a "Southern orator," many people came to consider the ceremonial style as representative of "Southern oratory." Thus, the myth of a "Southern style" of oratory was further enhanced through the popularity of Taylor.

Secondly, Taylor's epideictic speeches reveal a clue as to how myths grow. Ceremonial situations are often replete with deep emotion. Consequently, the speaker on such occasions finds minds emotionally receptive to deeply ingrained myths and stereotypes. Latent memories and dreams are usually recalled and repeated with such impressiveness and vividness that the audience does not soon forget. Later, the speaker may use the same emotional motivation to aid in the control of the social or political situation. This fact has often been overlooked by speech theorists and, consequently, epideictic oratory has been relegated to a less
important position behind deliberative speaking. However, it should be recognized that ceremonial situations may be used both directly and indirectly, through expression of myth and stereotype, to exert influence in social and political matters.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


NEWSPAPERS

The Dickson Democrat, Dickson, Tennessee, September 16, 1886.
The Johnson City Comet, Johnson City, Tennessee, December 30, 1891.
The Memphis Avalanche, Memphis, Tennessee, September 7, 1886.
The Nashville American, 1885-1912.
The Nashville Banner, Nashville, Tennessee, 1885-1912.

PERIODICALS


UNPUBLISHED STUDIES


UNPUBLISHED PAPERS AND LETTERS

Cartmell, Robert H. Unpublished diary, Manuscript Division, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Dickenson, Jacob McGavock. Private papers and letters, Manuscript Division, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Moore, John Trotwood. Private papers and letters, Manuscript Division, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Taylor, Robert Love. Private papers and letters, Archives Department, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Taylor, Judge Robert Love. Private collection of family papers, letters, and scrapbooks, Memphis, Tennessee.

INTERVIEWS

Hauk, Dr. O. S., Director of Forensic Psychiatry, Tennessee State Penitentiary, January 25, 1967.

Taylor, Mrs. Hillsman, daughter of Robert Love Taylor, August 9, 1968.

White, Dr. Robert H., Tennessee State Historian, January 20, 1967.

OTHER SOURCES


VITA

Raymond W. Buchanan was born in Pensacola, Florida, on July 16, 1937. Educated in the public schools of Escambia County, Florida, he received his B. A. degree from David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee, in May, 1959. After being employed for five years, he entered the Graduate School at Louisiana State University and obtained the Master of Arts in May, 1967. Afterwards, he continued graduate studies while working toward the Doctor of Philosophy degree.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Raymond W. Buchanan, Jr.

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: The Epideictic Speaking of Robert Love Taylor Between 1891 and 1906

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

July 22, 1970