

THE PATTERN ON THE MOUNT

**BEING AN ESSAY ON PURITY OF WORSHIP
IN OPPOSITION TO RECENT INNOVATIONS**

WALTER SCOTT, 1877

In March, 1877, three prizes - £25, £15 and £10 - were offered by the Purity of Worship Association for the best essays on Purity of Worship in opposition to recent innovations. The competition was limited to the students of the Universities of Scotland; and the essay of which the following is a part, was awarded the First Prize. The prizes were presented at a meeting of the association at Edinburgh on 15th April, 1878, by Rev. Dr. Begg.

[The essay goes on to speak of Prayer, Reading of Holy Scripture, Preaching of the Word, Solemn Fasting, Sacraments and Covenanting, which are not included here.]

INTRODUCTION

Among all God's works nothing is so beautiful as his ordinances rightly administered in his Church. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Accordingly, the question is of the highest importance to all, "Werewithal shall I come before God and bow myself before the Most High?"

The Church is God's sacred domain. Here his authority is supreme. He has appointed her form, ordinances and laws, and he is a rock, his work is perfect. His people, therefore, can acknowledge no law-giver, judge or king save him who is "the blessed and only Potentate." "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

This principle lies at the foundation of true religion. If the Church is God's building, her form and beauty must be perfect. Everything that pertains to her must be enjoined by him, and his will must therefore be her alone rule. Accordingly, at the Reformation, it was upon this principle that the Church of Scotland was established. Nothing was admitted into her constitution that was not divinely prescribed. "All worship, honouring, or service, invented by the brain of man, in the religion of God, without his express commandment is idolatry." This was the principle laid down by John Knox: and, at the Second Reformation, the Church of Scotland declared "that the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture." (Confession of Faith, Chap. XXI.1). Such was the ground taken up by the Reformed Church. She made the Word of God her will in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government; and the high degree of purity which she attained was the result. Many daughters had done virtuously, but she excelled them all.

Kirkton, a minister who lived at the time, and afterwards suffered in the persecutlon, gives the following account, which is confirmed by other historians. He says: "Now the ministry was notably purified, the magistracy altered, and the people strangely refined. Scotland hath been, even by emulous foreigners, called Philadelphia; and now she seemed to be in her flower.... I verily believe, there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time than in any other season since the Reformation, though of treble its duration; nor was there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace than were in that time. Every parish had a minister; every village had a school; every family almost had a Bible; yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles either by their parents or their ministers. I have lived many years in a parish," adds the historian, "where I never heard an oath, and you might have rode many miles before you had heard any. Also, you would not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing and prayer. Nobody complained more of our Church government than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, the people were become so sober." (*History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 54, 64.)

Much the same is the account given of England: "The Lord's Day was observed with unusual reverence. The Churches were crowded with numerous and attentive worshippers three or four times in the day.... There was no travelling... Religious exercises were set up in private families, as reading the Scriptures, family prayer, repeating sermons and singing of psalms. This was so general a custom, that we are told a person might walk through the city of London on the evening of the Lord's Day without seeing an idle person, or hearing anything but the voice of prayer or praise from churches and private houses. It is also said that there was hardly a single bankruptcy to be heard of in a year; and that even in such a case the bankrupt had a mark of infamy set upon him that he could never wipe off." (*Life and Times of Bishop Hall*, by Jones, pp.455-6).

Those were the effects of abiding by Scripture and excluding everything from the worship of God "not appointed in his Word". (Deut. 28:1) "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth."

We are told that, when the temple was reared after the pattern shewn in the mount, it was the perfection of beauty and the joy of the whole earth. So, when Scotland entered into covenant with God and engaged to make the house and all the ordinances and laws thereof, after the pattern of his Word, she became "Beautiful as Tirzah" and "comely as Jerusalem." Israel received a divine pattern and covenanted to observe it and none other. So it was with Scotland. But so also has Israel's sin been her sin: and now, she is inheriting Israel's judgment. "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? They have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt." (Deut. 29:24,25).

The ecclesiastical history of Scotland has in many respects resembled that of Israel. Taken from following the gods of the heathen, delivered from the Egypt of popery, preserved and carried through the wilderness of persecution and, at length, brought to a land of Beulah. We have had Israel's mercies; but, like Israel, we have "gone backward." And now we have mingled with the heathen and learned their ways." We are accordingly being brought into captivity and "even to Babylon."

Is not God judging us for our sin? - pursuing us, as he did Israel, for the quarrel of his Covenant? Great, then, may be our judgments before all is over, greater even than Israel's, for we have had their example as a warning. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Surely mine oath which he hath despised and my Covenant which he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head." These are prophetic words, and it will only be when, Israel-like, we return to our engagements, and to him as our God, that he will return unto us. "And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, the Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people." This is yet to be accomplished. Those who adhere to truth are generally in the minority, and they may be tempted to say, as in Malachi 3:14: "What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" But the answer of God is observable, verse 12, "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

The worship of God early began to be corrupted. Satan's masterpiece hath been to "change the truth of God into a lie," to get men to mix their own inventions with divine institutions, and in this way, to "worship and serve the creature more than the Creator." This he has been doing from the beginning; so that, although we may term the present evils "innovations," yet strictly speaking "there is no new thing under the sun," that which is now hath been before. But the spirit of innovation once begun, its tendency has been to go from one degree to another; so that although at the first it may only be meant to change the mediums of divine worship, the innovators soon proceed to change the object, and to "worship the works of their own hands, giving them the chief adoration. If, therefore, the worship of God is to be kept pure and entire, it is essential in every age to resist the beginnings of evil.

The first religious question raised after the fall had reference to the acceptable way of worship. The two first brothers of the human family met to present their offerings to God. But we find that God frowned upon Cain, and rejected his offering, while Abel's was accepted; and, says the Apostle, "He being dead, yet speaketh."

From this time, the commandments of God began to be gradually laid aside in favour of the traditions of men. Corrupt modes of worship were devised and substituted for the pure ordinances of God, till idolatry, and at length the whole system of paganism was set up. "Darkness then covered the earth; and gross darkness, the people."

Glancing at the Visible Church, we find the spirit of innovation manifesting itself there. The law is no sooner delivered from Sinai, amid the most awful manifestations of the divine majesty, than God has to say to Moses, "Go, get thee down for the people have suddenly corrupted themselves." "They made a calf in Horeb and worshipped it." From one thing they went to another, until they had "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Hence we are told "they joined themselves to Baal-Peor and ate the sacrifices of the dead." They "mingled among the heathen and learned their works." They forgot God and served groves; the high places were frequented rather than the tabernacle; an altar of Damascus proves more attractive than that which was according to the pattern shewn on the mount, and a model of it has to be placed in the temple itself. But we are told that this was to worship and swear by the Lord and by Malcham (Zeph. 1:5.) Ten of the tribes preferred to go to Dan and Bethel rather than to the "mountain of the House of the Lord." Here it might have been urged, "There is no other place we can safely go to, if we go not to Dan and Bethel. If we worship the same God, does it matter where we go?" But God counted it transgression: going to Dan and Bethel was the same as if they worshipped the calves Jereboam had set up, because they were following a divisive course from the one way of worship of his appointing. Thus, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism":- one way of worship - for God is the same still: and the command still addresses us, "Mark them which cause division contrary to that one doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." (Rom. 16:17) But vain man will be wiser than God, and forget his maker, while he buildeth temples. Like Israel, he becomes as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke of God's authority, and with Ephraim, he walks after the commandments of men.

Similar corruptions were introduced in Judah and Jerusalem, as described by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, so that, before the desolation by the Chaldees, mention is made of almost every kind of false

worship. (see Ezek. 8:3-18). Thresholds had been set up by God's threshold, and posts by his post, and the glory of the Lord had left the temple.

After the Captivity, if there did not appear the same propensity to idolatry, the purity of religion became corrupted in other ways. Reference only requires to be made to the Pharisees and Sadducees - rival sects, but equally dangerous, whose errors and traditions were so often exposed and denounced by our Lord.

The Christian Church, too, soon began to experience similar evils. The Pentecostal season she enjoyed was all needed to enable her to face the struggle upon which she was to enter. A superstitious observance of the ceremonial law, now abrogated, was imposed by false teachers. Ceremonial pomp and observances were preferred to the simplicity of spiritual worship. Hence the reproofs pronounced by the apostles against the many lying and seducing spirits going forth and drawing disciples after them.

Still later, the history of the Church presents us with a defaced Christianity; the Man of Sin was revealed in the great anti-Christian defection, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped.

Such has been the tendency in all ages; and "thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions." And prediction warrants us to look for this still - for, says the apostle, "That day shall not come except there come a falling away first" (2 Thess. 2:3).

One thing conspicuous is that the practice of men has been, not so much to reject what was once received as divine, as to add their own inventions to it. The heathen did not renounce sacrifice, but they blended it with rites of their own and offered unclean beasts. So the Jews retained circumcision, the Passover, and sacrifices, but "they were defiled with their own works." They mixed heathen rites with divine ceremonies. Therefore, when God charges them with this sin, he does not complain that they had given up ordinances which he had appointed, but that they had introduced into his worship things which he had not commanded; thus intimating that they were to abide strictly by the rule of his Word. (Jer. 7:31). "They have built the high place of Tophet which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart." And (Lev. 10:1) Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord which he commanded them not. "What authority then, has any to add any one thing to the revealed mode of worship? Men may say of their innovations that God has not forbidden them; but how will it fare with them, whom, at the end, God confronts them with the question - Where, or when, did I command them? Under the law no addition was to be made to the meanest vessel in the sanctuary; "not a hoof," said Moses to Pharaoh. The sacred perfume was not to have a single ingredient in it, other than what God had prescribed for its composition; nor was any, upon pain of death, to imitate it; nor would God endure that sacrifices should be consumed with any other fire than that which came down from above; so tender is God, and jealous in matters affecting his worship. His jealousy burns most hotly around his altar. "I am jealous," he says, "for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. The Lord avengeth and is furious". (Nah. 1:2)

In the New Testament dispensation also, the tendency has been to deface and change the simple and spiritual worship of the Gospel. Thus, to the Jews Christ was a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness. The Gospel worship was neither to be rendered pompous with outward ceremony nor embellished with art. But the natural man receiveth not the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. Hence he must have something visible; his worship must be by visible signs. Here, therefore, has been the success of Rome. Symbol and ritualism have been her most powerful attractions. As the Judaizing teachers sought to entangle the Christians by "turning them again to the weak and beggarly elements", so, about the close of the apostolic times, popery began to work, not so much through its dogmas, as its sensuous worship, until, at length, "all the world wondered after the beast." Thomas Brooks, the Puritan divine, says, in connection with our subject:

"When a man suffers for doing that which Christ commands, then he suffers for well doing, then he suffers as a Christian and then his cause is good. You know there is nothing in all the Scripture that God stands more upon than purity of religion, than purity of worship, than purity of ordinances, in opposition to all mixtures and corruptions whatsoever. O sirs! the great God stands upon nothing more in all the world than upon purity of his worship. There is nothing that doth so provoke and exasperate God against a people, as mixtures in the worship and service; and no wonder! for mixtures in his worship are exactly cross to his commands, and pollutions in worship do sadly reflect upon the name of God, the honour of God, the truth of God; and therefore his heart rises against them."

But purity of worship consists not only in observing the ordinances in their entirety, but in an intelligent and pious observance of them. Ministers preach too little on the integral parts of public worship. Consequently, the people observe them more from habit and in a way of following their ministers; and thus innovations get

an easier entrance. Once convince the people that their ordinances, their principles, their constitution and their attainments are heaven-born, - that they are parts of unchangeable truth - and that they are committed to the custody of the Church as a sacred trust to be kept and observed inviolably, - they, being thus rooted and grounded in the faith, will not be readily moved away. How necessary, therefore, whenever error is broached and truth attacked, that the Watchmen in Zion sound an alarm. Where there is no vision the people perish. So when ministers do not apply their doctrine against present defection and aim at building up their people in present truth, then it is that they are carried about with every wind of doctrine, unable to give a reason of the hope that is in them.

The question suggests itself in relation to our own country, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? A dead fly in the apothecary's ointment will destroy the whole. So anything unscriptural in the constitution of a church will affect all its parts. At the Reformation, the Church of Scotland, as we have seen, took her stand on the Word of God. Accordingly, at the Westminster Assembly, after a lengthened debate and solemn scriptural inquiry, Presbytery was acknowledged to be "the only form of church government authorised by the Word of God." It was adopted both here and in England and Ireland only because of its divine right. And here alone lies the value of anything in religion. But is not the present system of Presbyterianism in this country founded upon a denial of that principle? None can but acknowledge that, at the Revolution, Presbytery was established upon a very different footing. No longer acknowledged or maintained as exclusively scriptural, it was lowered from the high ground of scripture to the mere inclinations of the people. Thus, in "the Act 1690, Ch. 5 - Act ratifying the Confession of Faith and settling Presbyterian Church Government, their Majesties and three Estates of Parliament do establish, ratify and confirm the Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline to be 'the only government of Christ's Church within this Kingdom', because, Prelacy was 'contrary to the inclinations of the generality of the people.' "

Now, as remarked by Rev. Dr. Begg, "It is important to notice that, whilst men may argue and mystify about a point of doctrine, it is impossible to becloud or mystify a simple matter of fact." (*Use of Organs in Public Worship*, p.15). But indeed the doctrine of the Divine Right of Presbytery is now openly repudiated. In the sermon preached at the opening of the Pan-Presbyterian Council in Edinburgh, (an interesting assembly in many respects) Professor Flint says (referring to Church Government) "I cannot see that there is one exclusively divine form of worship presented by scripture and binding in all its regulations on men in all places and at all times." Here the teaching of the Church accords with her constitution. But, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed."

The famous George Gillespie, speaking at the General Assembly at Edinburgh on 6th August, 1647, said, "Because some thought a model of Church Government could not be framed which was pure divine there was another Directory for Government drawn up in propositions, with scripture truths proving the same" (*Baillie's Letters*, Vol.III, p.449, App. No. 1 - Ed. 1842) What a contrast is this to the Revolution settlement and Dr. Flint's sermon! What result can we expect from a system based on "the inclinations of the people"? The people change and their principles change. Dependent on the will of the people the tenure of the Established Church is at best precarious as the Disestablishment agitation now shews. But the Word of the Lord, that shall stand. So long, then, as we take the will or inclinations of the people to our rule or reason in matters of religion, can we look for anything but will-worship as the result? "Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either a vine figs?" May not this then be the fountain of all our present evils? "I speak as to wise men; Judge ye what I say". (1 Cor. 10:15.) The Rev. Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall lecturing in the church on Voluntaryism and its relation to Sabbath observance as reported in the Edinburgh Courant of 9th Jan., 1878, (shortly after the writing of this essay) said: "A Voluntary in a recent speech says 'We will join with our fellow citizens in settling the terms of Sabbath protections on such grounds and to such an extent as may be deemed expedient. But if the citizens should decide that there ought to be no Sabbath, what then? Of course the Magistrate must refrain from protecting it.' And thus crops up the old atheistic doctrine of the Revolution - that the will of the people is the fountain of authority and the rule of legislation". So it was in Scotland in 1688.

Of the points taken up in the following pages, Instrumental Music receives the prominence. History shews that during the first two centuries the church was actuated by a most jealous spirit against innovations and endeavour has been made to give authorities relating specially to that period. It may be stated, too, that the subject is treated more in an abstract and discursive manner than as affected by solemn obligations resting on Presbyterians in Scotland both by their relations in which they stand to the Standards drawn up at Westminster and to a Covenanted Uniformity.

Vows and Covenants are little regarded by the present generation. If we think of a vow as a solemn invoking of the divine Majesty, how awful must be the guilt of those who despise and ignore it! Yet such is the case with Scotland. Contrast every office-bearer in the Presbyterian churches vowing to receive, observe, and keep

pure and entire all such religious ordinances and worship as God has appointed in his Word, - and view it in connection with the fearful declension and will-worship in the land, every man doing as he thinks right in his own eyes,, mixing his own inventions with the holy ordinances of God! Surely it is a time of perfidy. "Thou said'st, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot" (Jer. 11:20). "Shall I not be avenged on such a nation as this, saith the Lord?"

We shall conclude the introductory part with the following extract from "A Seasonable and Necessary Warning and Declaration concerning present and imminent dangers and concerning duties relating thereto, from the General Assembly of this Kirk, unto all the members thereof," published in 1649:

"The Lord, who chooses Jerusalem in a furnace of affliction, hath been pleased since the beginning of the work of reformation in this land, to exercise his people with many trials;... Albeit the land be involved in many difficulties and compassed about with great and imminent dangers, yet there is hope and ground of consolation concerning this thing. The Lord is in the midst of us, and we are called by his name, our eares hear the joyful sound of the gospel, and our eyes see our teachers. We behold the arms of the Lord stretched out daily in working salvation for his people, and answering their desires upon the enemies by terrible things in righteousness: Although we be but few in number, yet the Lord of Hosts is with us, and in the power of his strength, we shall be able to prevaile; although our land be defiled with sin, yet we have not been forsaken of the Lord our God, but he hath always had compassion upon us, and delivered us from all our distresses: although some of understanding fall, it is but to try and to purge and to make white even to the end, because it is yet for a time appointed. Although many cleave to us by flatteries, yet there be a remnant who keep their integrity and the Lord shall do good to these that be good, but such as turn aside to crooked ways, shall be led forth with the workers of iniquity.

The Lord's people in England and Ireland, who adhere to the cause and covenant, may be perplexed, but shall not despair; they may be persecuted, but shall not be forsaken: they may be cast down, but shall not be destroyed; and although uniformity, and the work of Reformation in these lands, seem not only to be retarded, but almost pluckt up by the roots, and the foundation thereof razed; Yet the seed which the Lord hath sown there shall again take root downwards and bear fruit upward. "The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall performe this." (Act of Assembly, 1649).

Edinburgh, 30 September, 1877.
Walter Scott.

SINGING OF PRAISE

That praise is a duty, the light of nature may teach us. It is part of the homage we owe to God our maker. Arrianus, the Stoic Philosopher, says, "If I were a nightingale, I would do as a nightingale, if a swan, as a swan; but since I am a rational creature, I ought to praise God. This is my work; this I will do, and invite all men to the same song."

That it has a divine warrant is equally plain. It is especially enjoined in both the Old and New Testament: "O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord all the earth." "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms." We have example - "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord." The praises of Jehovah were sung in the schools of the Prophets, which the more devout Israelites seem to have frequented on Sabbaths and New Moons (1 Sam. 10:5-11, 19:18-24; 1 Kings 4:23). Paul and Silas sang praises to God in the stocks; and we have predictions assuring that the exercise would continue in the New Testament Church. "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord I will praise Thee... from the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous." (Isa. 12:1; 24:16).

Praise is one of the most delightful duties of religion. It is a heaven-born exercise, and, since the key-note was sounded at the fastening of the foundations of the earth, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the exercise may be said to have continued in one unbroken strain. Age has succeeded age in singing forth the honour of his name and making his praise glorious, and race unto race shall yet praise his works and shew his mighty deeds. And as, at length, the last note is breathed forth by the church in her militant state, it will only be to be taken up by the Church triumphant, and re-echoed in heaven throughout the countless ages of eternity.

Seeing that praise occupies such an important place in the services of the church, it is essential for us to know both what should be the matter of it, and the manner of its performance.

1. We shall first consider the *matter* of praise divinely appointed.

1. PSALMS

1. The Psalms. Every nation has had her ballads; and God has made sacred provision for the church, which is his "Holy Nation," in the "Songs of Zion." As a divine society, he has given her divine songs. That the inspired Psalms were intended to be exclusively used in the praises of the church clearly appears. Various sacred songs were composed by the Spirit's inspiration at different periods of the history of God's chosen people, prior to the time of David, but there is no evidence that they were either designed for, or afterwards employed in, the psalmody of the church. On the other hand, the "book of Psalms" presents a collection of scripture songs, occupying a distinct and separate portion of the canon of revelation; and was actually used as the matter of the church's public praise, from the days of David, till the close of the sacred canon. Accordingly, they are called the "Songs of the Lord," the "Songs of Zion," and the "Book of Psalms." In the Hebrew they are entitled *Sepher Tehillim* - the Book of Hymns or Praises of the Lord. David, as an inspired seer, arranged those penned at a former period, that were designed for the sacred collection, with those penned by himself, and delivered them into the hands of Asaph the singer, for the Tabernacle service. Many are inscribed "to the chief musician" or "the master of the music", who was the man appointed to be the leader of divine songs in the temple, the public worship of Israel. David is called "the Sweet Psalmist of Israel" from his having penned psalms for the use of the Church of Israel. Long after David's time we find that the reforming king Hezekiah, with divine approbation "commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer." (2 Chron. 29:25~26 & 30.)

The Jews who were carried away to Babylon had been accustomed to sing the Psalms in their native land; hence the language - "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" After their return from captivity the inspired book of praise was again established. Under Nehemiah the Priests and Levites were appointed "to praise and to give thanks according to the commandment of David the man of God." (Neh. 12:24, 27). They likewise appear to have been used in the synagogue. "As the first Christians were drawn from the synagogue, they naturally brought with them those Songs of Zion, which were associated with their earliest recollections and best feelings, and appropriated them to the service of the New Dispensation." (Princeton Repertory) and Oldhausen in his Commentary on Ephes. 5:19, says "Psalms are probably here the Psalms of the Old Testament, which passed from the synagogue into the Church service."

Thus the matter continued till the Desire of all nations appeared. We then find that he repeatedly referred to the collection as the "Book of Psalms," implying that it was to occupy the same place, and serve the same purpose in the New Testament worship as it did in the Old. On various occasions he quoted portions of the

Psalms; while the "hymn" which he sang with his apostles after the sacrament appears to have been a part of the great *Hallel*, which the Jews used to sing at and after the Passover, consisting of the six Psalms from the 113th to the 118th inclusive. The practice, moreover, is expressly laid down in the New Testament. "Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jam. 5:13). Why make the singing of inspired psalms in the church matter of positive injunction, if uninspired hymns could also be sung? In Eph. 5:19, the Christians are enjoined to speak to themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their heart to the Lord, where the apostle, as will afterwards be shewn, refers to the threefold division of the inspired Psalmody which had been so long in use in the church, requiring the Ephesian Christians to substitute its Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs for the odes of the Gentiles.

If, during the former economy, the Psalms of David were exclusively used in the worship of the sanctuary, and they were neither abrogated nor altered by our Lord or his apostles, surely then it must be a usurpation of one of the highest prerogatives of the Redeemer to presume to introduce new Psalms, Paraphrases or Hymns of our own into the worship of the Church. "Add thou not unto His words lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30:6).

The history of the church, after the close of the sacred canon, furnishes additional evidence on the subject. Reference to early documents, of unquestionable authority, proves that in those primitive times the Psalms of David were exclusively used in the Church's praise, notwithstanding the attempts which have been made to shew the contrary. In the celebrated letter of Pliny the younger to Trajan (A.D. 107) the early Christians are said to have sung a Hymn to Christ as God, which we have every reason for believing was a portion of the inspired Psalms. Peter's first Epistle is addressed to the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." Now, who were those "strangers scattered" but those of the diaspora, i.e. "belonging to the Jewish dispersion." What then were the songs which the Jews were accustomed to sing to Jehovah? As we have already seen, they were the Psalms from the "Book of Psalms," the New Testament name for the collection.

In connection with this, John Knox, on the subject of Praise, refers among other passages to that in Eph. 5:19 "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" and gives the same instance of the daily practice of the church. He says: "Beside other places, it is most manifest by the words of Plinius called the younger, who, when he was deputy in Asia, under the Emperor Trajan and had received charge to enquire out the Christians to put them to death, writ amongst other things touching the Christians, 'That their manners were to sing verses or Psalms early in the morning to Christ their God'." (*Plin. Epist. Lib. 10. Ep. 97*). "If," John Knox goes on to say, "any peradventure would doubt, when or by whom these churches or assemblies were institute, it is likewise evident that John the apostle who although in Domitian's time he was banished in the isle Pathinos, yet when Nerva his successor and next before Trajan, reigned, returned to Ephesus and so planted the churches as the histories report (Euseb. *Hist. Eccles. Lib. iii. cap. 23*). Seeing therefore God's Word doth approve it, antiquity beareth witness thereof and lest reformed churches have received the same; no man can reprove it except he will contemne God's Word, despise antiquity and utterly condemne the Godly reformed churches."

"And there are no songs more meet than the Psalms of the prophet David, which the Holy Ghost hath framed to the same use and commended to the church as containing the effect of the whole scriptures that hereby our hearts might be more lively touched." (Preface, *Book of Common Order*.)

Tertullian, who flourished towards the close of the second century, thus enumerates the exercises which were then in use in the public worship of the African church: "In our public assemblies the scriptures are read, Psalms sung, sermons preached and prayers presented. The same authority speaks of it, as a well known fact, that the 133rd Psalm was stately sung in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. (Tertul. *De Anim*; C. ix., quoted in "*Vindiciae Cantus Dominice*" by Dr. Anderson of America.)

Romaine puts the matter thus: "In the third century we hear much of Psalm singing. Arius was complained of as a perverter of this ordinance; St. Augustine makes it a high crime in certain heretics that they sung hymns composed by human wit. The sense in which the church of Christ has understood this subject has been, till late years, always one and uniform; now we leave the ancient beaten path. But why? Have we found a better? How came we to be wiser than the Prophets? than Christ, than his apostles, than the whole church of God? They, with one consent, have sung psalms in every age. Here I leave the reader to his own reflections. There is one plain inference to be made from hence; none can easily mistake it. May he see it in his judgment and follow it in his practice!" (Romaine's *Works*)

Cyril of Jerusalem and Jerome (4th cent.) tell us that the 31st and 45th Psalms were sung at the Eucharist.

Augustine, in one of his Homilies, offers a similar testimony (Serm. X. *De Verbis Apostoli*)

John Cassian, a pupil of Chrysostom, who flourished in the fifth century, bears important testimony in relation to the ancient use of inspired psalmody. He says:

"Our Elders have not changed the ancient custom of singing psalms, but the devotions are performed in the same order as formerly in the meeting by night. The hymns which it had been the custom in this country to sing at the end of the night vigils were the same hymns which they sing at this day, namely, the 50th, the 62nd, the 89th, the 148th and following psalms." (Cassian L.iii.c.6)

It would appear from this that the Psalms of David were then called hymns, which explains the use of that term by ancient writers to mean the inspired Psalms.

Chrysostom, one of the most eminent of the Greek Fathers, says the Psalms of David should have the first, middle and last place in the public praise of the church. (Hom. VI. *De Peinten.*)

We adduce another very important fact. The Council of Laodicea, held in A.D. 364, the same which gave a full list of the Canonical books of scripture, decreed in its 59th Canon that no psalms that are the composition of private persons should be sung in the church.

We close our reference to the usage of the early Christian Church, with a translated passage from Calvin's Institutes:

"It appears that the custom of singing in churches is not only very ancient, but apostolical, as we may gather from the words of Paul, 'I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also;' and from the epistle to the Colossians 3:16. Augustine, however, shews that the custom was not universal. He says that under the ministry of Ambrose they began to sing in the Church of Milan, which Justina, the mother of Valentinian, raging against the orthodox faith, more than usual fervour in religious exercises was excited among the people. The rest of the Western churches followed them in this practice. A little before he had said that this custom had come from the East. In the 2nd Book of his Retractions, Augustine intimates that in his time the African church used singing. One, Hilary, says he, reproached the custom, which then obtained at Carthage, of singing hymns out of the book of Psalms, either before the offering for the benefit of the poor, or while distribution was made of what was offered. I answered that reviler at the desire of the brethren: 'The Donatists,' says Augustine, elsewhere, 'reproach us because we sing with sobriety the divine songs of the prophets; while they inflame their minds with the poetical compositions of human genius'." (Edlt. 1553. Vol. R. Stephanis, Chap.IV. Sec.26)

Such are the testimonies of the ancients, and of our greatest Reformers, in favour of the exclusive use of the Psalms in divine worship. Need we add the language of the church herself, in Psalm 119:54: "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." Yea; these have been her songs: - her songs in the night, cheering her in the valley of Baca, sustaining her in her darkest hour of trial and temptation, and by which the hearts of her children have been made glad. And why? Because they are divine. Is she, then to yield such a treasure now, for any substitute provided by a creature of the dust, going astray from the womb? No; she is built upon these, as the writings of the Prophets with those of the apostles. And, all the subtlety of Satan and endeavours of man notwithstanding, the gates of hell will not prevail against her.

In the Psalms, God has given the church infallible security for the purity of his praise. They are the product of the Holy Spirit; and the few allusions in them to a ceremonial ritual; their numerous references to the person, offices, and work of Christ, and to the advancement and glory of his Kingdom; their spiritual nature, their expression of the highest and most ardent exercise of the inner man; these, and the wide range of themes which they embrace, might serve to convince us, that if they were sung by Israel of old under the law, what increased motives have we to sing them now under the Gospel, that we may celebrate "the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved", with which they so abound. "This shall be written for the generations to come, and the people (or Gentiles) which shall be created, shall praise the Lord." For can anyone read such a passage and object to the use of the Psalms? It is said that their phraseology is not suited to the Gospel dispensation. But, is not Christ the Gospel? and is he to be charged with daubing the wall of the Christian church with untempered mortar, in joining Old Testament language to New Testament ordinances? Again, it is said, as asserted by the Socinians, that they encourage a spirit of revenge which the New Testament forbids. Now we ask with solemnity, "Does not this appear to be an impeachment of the immutable holiness of the nature and law of God? For, we ask, can the Holy Spirit act contrary to himself, who does all things most perfectly? David was a prophet and a type of the Messiah, and those things objected to in the Psalms are but predictions and threatenings against his enemies, and the enemies of his church which is his body. "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before Him." "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said 'Rase it,

raise it, even to the foundation thereof ", &c. (Psa. 68:1, 137:7, 8) "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, said the Lord." (Heb. 10:30.)

Once placed in the worship of the church by divine authority, none dare displace them but the same "only and blessed Potentate." It was the dignity of his person, as divine, that gave worth to the atoning sacrifice of Christ. In like manner, he has ordained that the "sacrifice of praise" to be offered by the church, shall have the divine impress, that so she may be accepted in him.

The Psalms may well be revered for their antiquity. The most of them were penned 3,000 years ago. Though the greater portion of them was written in the space of half a century, yet their composition extends over between 10 and 11 centuries, leaving no room for the objection that they contain the experience of only one age or people. Yet, even were it otherwise, their Author is the same yesterday, today and forever, and sees the end from the beginning.

The Psalms are thought to here been originally written in verse. But anyhow, the metrical version is considered to be in strictest accordance with the text; and no objection can be obtained against putting them into metre to be sung. We have no less an authority than John Knox on the point. Our Reformer says:

"Here It were too long to entreat of the meter: But forasmuch as the learned doubt not thereof, and it is plainly proved that the psalms are not only meter and contain just measures; but also have grace and majesty in the verse more than in any other place of the scriptures, we need not to enter into any probation; for, they that are skilful in the Hebrew tongue, by comparing the Psalms with the rest of the Scriptures, easily may perceive the meter: (Read Mc Chabib in his Bookes called Psalms In Meter In the Hebrew tongue.) And they to whom it is not so well known may see how the Holy Ghost by all means sought to help our memory when he fashioned many Psalms according to the letters of the alphabet, so that every verse beginneth with the letters thereof in order; sometimes A beginning the halfe verse, and B the other halfe, and in another place three verses, yea, and eight verses bequins with one letter, even the psalms throughout, as if all men should be in; planned with the love thereof, both for the variety of matter, and also for sweetness, easiness, and delectation." (Preface to the *Book Of Common Order*).

The Metrical version to which Knox refers was prepared within a few years after the Reformation. Speaking of the rhyme he says, "We thought it better to frame the rhyme to the Hebrew sense, then blind the sense to the English meter. Several of these Psalms have been retained in our Psalm Book and are still sung."

When the light of the Reformation dawned upon Scotland, the Psalms became the matter of her praise. Her first, and all her subsequent standards evidence this. In the Book of Common Order drawn up by John Knox at Geneva, 1550, the direction occurs at certain parts of the service - "the people sing a Psalm altogether in a plain tune." They came into use as a matter of course with the purity of worship. At the Second Reformation "singing of Psalms with grace in the heart" is specified as one of the ordinances of Religious Worship; and it is stated that "It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of Psalms together in the congregation and also privately in the family." (Confes. of Faith and Directory for Public Worship). It does not appear to have occurred to the Reformers that the Canonical Psalms were insufficient for the public worship of God. This arose from the great principle upon which they acted - "The Bible and the Bible alone, the religion of Protestants" - and, knowing that there was a Book of Psalms of divine appointment which had been used in the church both before and after the coming of our Lord, they had them translated into the languages of their respective nations. Accordingly, they were used in Germany, France, Geneva, Switzerland, Holland, England and Scotland, and all other Protestant countries; and there is no proof that anything but the Psalms were ever sanctioned or used by the Church of Scotland either in the first or second periods of her Reformation. And if this was so when the church was but struggling to free herself from the darkness and corruptions of popery, what must be the obligation resting upon us, and our responsibility under it, who have had the meridian light of Reformation purity, whereto we have already attained, to walk by the same rule and to hold fast that which we have, that no man take our crown.

Robert Baillie, one of the Scotch commissioners to the Westminster Assembly mentions that "The metrical version of the Psalms, commenced in the reign of Edward the sixth by Thomas Sternholde, and enlarged by the English exiles in Geneva in the following year, was adopted. The edition printed in Geneva in 1556 along with "The Form of Prayers" etc. contained only 51 Psalms but this number was increased in subsequent editions, that of 1561 having "Fourscore and seven Psalms." It does not appear however that the entire Psalter was translated previous to the edition revised by John Hopkins and first printed at London (according to Watson) in 1562 or more probably in 1563 under this title - "The Whole Booke of Psalmes collected into English Metre by Thomas Sternhold, J. Hopkins and others. conferred with the Ebrue with apt Notes to synge them withall, Faithfully perused and slowed according to the order appoynted in the Queenes Majestie's Injunctions &c. Imprinted at London by John Day, dwelling over Aldersgate benethe Saint

Martins. Cum gratia et privilegio Regie Maiestatis per septennium. An. 1563' 4to". (Baillie's Letters, Appendix, p.525).

The date when this English version was adopted does not appear; but the Assembly evidently appointed some of their numbers to revise and prepare it for the press. Hence in December 1561, we find it stated that "The Kirk lent Robert Lekprevic, printer, two hundred pounds (Scottish money) to help to buy irons, ink and paper and to fee craftsmen for printing of the Psalmes". And the Assembly on the 26th December 1554, further ordained "that every minister, Exhorter and Reader shall have one of the Psalmes Bookes lately printed in Edinburgh and use the order contained therein In Prayers, Marriage and ministration of the Sacraments."

This old version continued to be reprinted in a variety of forms, usually with the musical notes, till the year 1650. It was, however, used by the Scottish Congregation at Holland for some years after.

In his Diary for 1650 (pp. 18 and 19) W. John Lamont of Newton records that "A newe translation of the Psalms of David, in meeter, first corrected by the Assemblie of Divines in Englande but afterward revised by the Gener. Assemb. of this Kingdome and their commissioners, was appointed to be practised In all the Kirks of the Kingdome; the former discharged. This translation is more neare the original Hebrew then the former, as also, the whole Psalmes are translated into comon tunes, (whereas, In the former, their werre many proper tunes); ther be proper tunes also in this translation, but with all ther is adioyned comon tunes with them. This translation was practised the 2nd of June 1650 att Largo Church in the presbyterie of St. Androus as also through out the rest of that presbetry and appointed, with all diligence to be put in practise through the rest of the Presbetrys of the Kingdome."

A new version was undertaken by King James VI, (with the assistance of Sir William Alexander of Menstrie, afterwards Earl of Stirling, a poet of great distinction in his time) after his accession to the English throne, which was published in 1631, under the title of "The Psalmes of King David translated by King James. Cum Prlvilegio Regie Maiestatis." It was altered and republished under the same title in 1636 with Music Notes and attached to the Service Book of 1637. But this version of the Psalms met with the same opposition as the Liturgy in July that year.¹

In what has been said we have seen that Praise is a divine ordinance, that God, her alone King and Head, has given to His Church an inspired Book of Psalms as the matter of her praise; that these were used as such by ancient Israel, by our Lord and his apostles, and by the primitive church, and the Reformed Church of Scotland; and that they are intended by God to continue in the church as her only Psalmody throughout all ages. It follows, therefore, that any attempt to introduce anything of human composition, whether as paraphrases or hymns, is a direct intrusion upon the authority of God to prescribe the matter of his worship, and offering of strange fire upon the altar, which He commanded us not, by mixing human inventions with divine institutions and so must be highly offensive to Him who has said, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it." (Deut.12:32)

2. HYMNS

We shall under this head, examine the alleged Scripture authority for introducing human hymns into the public worship of God.

¹In the sermon preached on the occasion of the King's funeral in 1625 by Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, we are told His Majesty was in hand with this new version of the Psalms which he intended to have finished and dedicated withall to the only saint of his devotion the Church of Great Britain, "and that of Ireland when God called him to sing Psalmes with the angels." (Baillie's Letters Vol.3 p.529)

The translation adopted by the Westminster Assembly was that by W. Francis Rous printed in 1643. It underwent repeated revisions by various committees of the Divines as well as of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and afterwards by Rous himself who availed himself of their corrections and amendments. On the Church of Scotland receiving it from their Commissioners it was again revised and sent down to Presbyteries. It was approved and authorised by the Assembly's Commission by Act 23 November 1649, as related by Lamont, and it has now remained in universal use unaltered for more than two centuries. But for the corrections made by the Scotch Church on finally receiving it from the Westminster Assembly, the New Version might have formed part of the Covenanted Uniformity in Religion in the three Kingdoms as originally intended. It has proved a most valuable fruit of the Reformation period; and, from the time and labour bestowed upon it by our reforming fathers, it may well be prized and held in grateful esteem as an additional evidence of "The Lord's own goodness in the land." McCrie says:- "I have little doubt that the Highlanders had the Psalms in their own language during the sixteenth century. A Gaelic translation of the first fifty Psalms was published by the Synod of Argyll in the year 1650; most probably made from the newly authorised version in English (*Life Of Melville* p. 234).

1. We are referred to Matthew 26:30:- "And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the mount of Olives." But the word rendered "hymn" here may be equally translated "Psalm", as we have it in the margin; and the generality of expositors - even those who advocate hymns - agree that it has reference to the *Hallel* hymn already alluded to. The incident which the passage records occurred at the close of the last passover festival, and the first celebration of the Lord's Supper, as our Lord, with his disciples, went forth to the scene of his agony in the garden. To quote only one authority, the following is what Clarke says:

"As to the Hymn itself we know from the universal consent of Jewish antiquity that it was composed of Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, termed by the Jews *Hallel* from *Hallelujah*, the first word in Psalm 113. These six Psalms were always sung at every Paschal solemnity. They sung this great *Hallel* on account of the five great benefits referred to in it viz:- 1. The Exodus from Egypt. 2. The miraculous division of the Red Sea. 3. The promulgation of the law. 4. The resurrection of the dead. 5. The passion of Messiah."

2. It is said that the apostle enjoins the use of uninspired hymns in Eph.4:19 where he says, "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"; and Col.3:16, "Admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." With regard to these passages we might ask those who found upon them, an argument for the use of uninspired hymns, to explain such language as Exod. 34:7 "Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." or to tell us the difference between statutes and judgments and commandments in 1 Kings 6:12. It is well known that in the Septuagint, the translation of the Old Testament which was in use in Paul's time, some of the Psalms are designated *psalmos*, a psalm; others, *ode*, a song; and others, *alleluia*, a word taken from the Hebrew, and in the Greek language equivalent to *hymnos*, a hymn. Moreover, the Psalms originally are in three divisions. In his Commentary on the Epistles, Calvin says, "I think all these words refer to David's poetical pieces, as some of them are called *Mizmarin*, psalms, attended with instruments - some *Tehillim* which I think were prayers, generally sung, and others *Shurim*, songs, containing not only proper and immediate acts of devotion addressed to God, but also moral and religious instructions."

Brown of Haddington, In his Bible Dictionary, says, "When Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs are mentioned together, Psalms may denote such as were sung on instruments; hymns, such as contain only matter of praise, and spiritual songs such as contain doctrine, history and prophecy for men's instruction."

An interesting description is given of these distinctions by an author in the beginning of last century. Writing on both of the above passages, he says:- "Paul bids the Christians use 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord,' where Psalms is a general term of great latitude and is a word in common for all these songs which contain in them the praise of God and set forth in general his sacred attributes or perfections and in any other way express devotion and contribute to piety or holiness. Such were the Psalms of David wherein God is extolled and magnified and where likewise there are penitential confessions and devout prayers and supplications and commemoration of the divine mercies and pathetic exhortations to a holy life. After Psalms the apostle adds hymns as a Theophylact more complete thing, saith one of the Fathers, because they are of a singular and peculiar strain, and God is praised from the consideration of his greatness and majesty, his power and glory. Spiritual Songs or Odes seem to exceed the two former not only because they are done with more art and consist of due measures, but because the peculiar subject of them is the goodness and benignity of God. Or more exactly thus - The others set forth the divine excellencies and perfections considered in themselves and in their nature but the latter are displaying of his excellencies as they respect us, and as we have a peculiar share in them. And these compositions are styled spiritual because they are not only endited by the help of the Holy Spirit, but they flow from a heavenly and spiritual frame of mind, and are sung with great emotion of spirit. These are the three kinds of religious singing which the apostle commends to the believers, or rather which he commands them to make use of." (*Theologia Reformata* by John Edwards D.D. London, 1713, Vol. 1. p. 656).

Without quoting from other authorities, we may mention that Beza, Owen, Ridgley, Berrgel, Horne and many others agree that the terms "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" refer only to the Psalms.

3. Another passage founded on in support of the use of the hymns is 1 Cor. 14:26. "How is it then, brethren? when you come together every one of you hath a psalm." In the first place what is mentioned here is a "Psalm" not a hymn. (2.) That it was taken from anything but the book of Psalms cannot be proved; and (3.) if it is argued that the psalm spoken of was prepared by the Corinthians themselves and that therefore the same may be done now, the argument must be carried out, and everyone will have a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation of his own composition, which may prove too much.

4. There is still another text resorted to, though for what reason cannot be conceived. It is Rev. 5:9. One writer in favour of hymns passed by all the other passages cited, and, taking his stand on this one, says:- "Of

Christian hymns the New Testament contains only a single specimen (Rev. 5:9) 'And they (the four beasts and four and twenty elders) sung a new song saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book" ' " etc. We will scarcely be expected to enter on this passage, but we may with one author already quoted, ask, "Was it sung in a Christian congregation here on earth? Was it the hymn of an ordinary Christian and a specimen of a human hymn and warranting us to sing human hymns in the public worship of God? It was none of all these.

In what has been said we have endeavoured to shew the entire want of authority from Scripture for the use of uninspired compositions in the sanctuary, or of anything but the psalms of David. We might stop here: Scripture is our only rule. But as much has been said about the early practice of the church we will devote a few remarks to it.

Nothing can be found regarding the use of human hymns in worship earlier than the fourth century. In the period preceding, when in her pristine purity, the church, as we have seen, used only the psalms. At this date the case of Paul of Samostene, the only one that can be found, is by a perversion of the circumstances, cited to prove the use of hymns. But if it proves that these were seeking a place in the psalmody of the church, it is only to demonstrate the more clearly the fact that they were new inventions, and were regarded and treated as such by the church.

Accordingly, the party named was condemned by an ecclesiastical council - that of Antioch - for setting aside the psalms formerly sung *in gloriam Christi* and substituting in their stead, hymns in his own praise. This Paul became an Arian.

So long as the Scriptural simplicity of faith and worship prevailed, so long there was no word of human hymns in the church. It was not till the errors and ritual of Rome appeared that the use of the compositions of man with the other corruptions of Antichrist were in any way sanctioned. In keeping with this "The Reformed Church," says Dr. Gibson, "generally in proportion to the distance which they removed from the practices of Romanism and adopted the simple and severe Protestant principle, seems to have thrown off every addition to their service in all its parts, which had not direct divine sanction, as prescribed in the Holy Scripture. In their psalmody in the public worship nothing was kept but an occasional and almost solitary doxology at the end of the book of Psalms.

We regret that a minister in the Free Church so eminent and revered as Dr. Horatius Bonar should represent the Reformers as approving of the use of other than the Psalms in the church. Dr. Bonar says:- "The idea that nothing ought to be sung in public worship beyond the 150 Psalms was unknown, not only to our Scotch Reformers, but to the Reformers of the Continent. Luther, Calvin, Beza, as well as Knox, Craig, and Melville, all took for granted the hymns of both Old and New Testament belonged to the service of the congregation as truly as did the Psalms of David. The Wedderburns had given their rude but nervous songs to the church, meaning them to be sung, not only in families but in the congregation. They had done so under the imprimatur of Knox and his colleagues; as Marot had done at Geneva under the sanction of Calvin and his brethren." (*Catechisms of the Reformation*, Appendix, p.302.) We think these statements most unguarded. Let it be noticed that Dr. Bonar gives no authority for what he says. Like other kindred writers he has evidently felt the lack of that. But we do not feel prepared to accept his statements without it, especially in the face of evidence to the contrary. One circumstance he mentions which we will not dispute. He says "In some of the editions of the Book of Common Order we have 'The song of Moses, to be sung to the tune of the third Psalm.'" But what can this prove? We will allow the printer to tell. In his epistle to the Reader the printer says:- "Being in conference with a Godlie Brother (Christian Reader) I shewed unto him that I was minded to print over again this Book of the Psalmes, who saide unto me that he marveled that the Song of Moses was never yet insert therein..... I requested him therefore, that I might have it put into meeter, who accorded, and sent me the same to be insert in this new edition." So far from this proving what Dr. Bonar says, we think it proves the very reverse. The "Song of Moses" is now printed with the Book of Psalms for the first time; it is done at the instance of a private individual; and moreover we have no evidence that it was ever used in the worship of the church. Suffice it here to state that in the Book of Common Order, which was drawn up by Knox, and approved by Calvin, no mention is made of anything but Psalms. Regarding them it says:- "There are no songs more meet than the Psalms of the prophet David, which the Holy Ghost hath framed to the same use and commended to the church." The same is true of the Standards since omitted by the Reformed Church, and we call upon Dr. Bonar to produce an instance where any composition other than the Psalms was authorised to be sung in the church up to the time of the Revolution Settlement. Dr. Gibson says:- "Hymns were extensively composed, but rather as 'gude and godly ballades' for popular use and to counteract the use of papist hymns, rather than for the public worship of God. This was the idea of Calvin and Beza, and was the purpose of many of Luther's hymns, as well as some written in Scotland and elsewhere - such as Wedderburn's "Psalms and Godly Ballads." Anything to the contrary of this adduced by the advocates of human hymns is mere conjecture, and at least entirely of a negative

character, for whatever may have been the opinions of individual men, whether of great or small name, or the occasional irregular practice, the taste of private parties, or whatever the interest or likings of printers might suggest or dictate, as in the case of Andrew Hart, there is not a vestige of proof that the use of human hymns in the public worship of God was ever sanctioned by anything which could be called Church Authority, either in the first Reformation period or the second Reformation period in Scotland." (Gibson. p.73).

Where, then, we may ask, are the abettors of the use of hymns other than the Psalms, to find their warrant? If it is not in the Bible, nor in the practice of the church in her purest times, where is it to be found? One writer answers "In the same source to which Puseyites have gone to find stepping stones to carry them back to popery."

Thus, God has not only given to his church a book of Psalms, but in his rich mercy and condescension has given it in such fulness and variation - made up of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs - as to adapt it to whatever condition his church or people may in his providence be placed. But it is not in human nature to think so. We are prone to think our own crooked ways the best. The living fountain is forsaken for broken cisterns hewn out by ourselves, but they can hold no water. So, when human compositions are referred to divine, we can look for no spiritual edification because they are no ordinance of God. We have heard Dr. Begg remark from the pulpit that when human hymns came to be introduced into the church it was a sure sign of the decay of spiritual life. So true is this that it is a notable circumstance, verified by history, that their introduction in the past has been the fruit of times of great spiritual declension. Such may be said of Dr. Watt's publications; and need we mention those of Wesley and Whitfield? Indeed not only have the times been times of defection but the authors have themselves been remarkable for their unsound views; and these views, it cannot be denied, their hymns have been used to promote. Can this be well-pleasing to the Lord? He terms it iniquity. The moment we recognise any authority save God in his house, then he says we defile his holy name. It is putting a power into the hands of men to prescribe ordinances for the church equally with God while he says "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

Romaine puts the matter in a true light. he says "What! say some, is it unlawful to sing human compositions in the church? How can that be? Why, they sing them at such a place and such a place; great men and good men - ay and lively ministers, too, sing them. Will you set up your judgment against theirs? It is an odious thing to speak of one's self except it be to magnify the grace of God. What is my private judgment? I set it up against nobody in indifferent things. I wish to yield to every man's infirmity, for I want the same indulgence myself. But in the present case, the Scripture, which is the only rule of judgment, has not kept the matter indifferent. God has given us a large collection of hymns and has commanded them to be sung in the church, and has promised his blessing to the singing of them. No respect here must be paid to names or authorities, though they be the greatest on earth, because no one can dispense with the command of God, and no one, by his wit, can compose hymns to be compared with the Psalms of God. I want a name for that man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. His collection is large enough; it wants no addition. It is perfect as its Author, and not capable of any improvement. Why, in such a case, would any man in the world take it into his head to sit down and write hymns for the use of the church? It is just the same as if he was to write a new Bible, not only better than the old, but so much better, that the old may be thrown aside. What a blasphemous attempt: and yet our hymn-mongers, inadvertently, I hope, have come very near to this blasphemy; for they shut out the Psalms, introduce their own verses into the church, sing them with great delight, and, as they fancy, with great profit; although the whole practice be in direct opposition to the command of God, and, therefore, they cannot possibly be accompanied with the blessing of God." (Romaine's *Works*).

Hymns are now in general use throughout the three large Presbyterian bodies in Scotland. They may not have been formally sanctioned in the Free Church; but, what seems equivalent, their use has long been connived at by the judicatories of the Church.

The defection which prevails in respect of the matter of praise in the worship of the church is in sad contrast with Reformation times. A very noted feature of reforming times has been the people's delight in and attachment to the inspired Psalms. Calderwood mentions that when John Durie returned from banishment in 1582, a procession was formed in the High Street of Edinburgh, by between two and three thousand people who "sang in four parts" the 124th Psalm. "Now Israel may say and that truly, If that the Lord had not maintained our cause" &c. The old version of this Psalm was retained at the Second Reformation and is still in use.

On the night after Queen Mary's funeral in 1561 we are informed that the multitude sang psalms on the streets.

Dr. Edwards says:- "Among the primitive Christians in the ages after Christ and his apostles, they continually exercised themselves in it (singing of psalms) both privately and publicly... Clement of Alexandria reports concerning his time that they sang psalms at their meals before and after their meat and drink... Even the men of trade and business scarcely let an hour pass without singing in their shops, nor the countrymen in the fields; yea when they were at their meals and refreshments they did the same." Well may it be said "What is the cause that the former days were better than these? Lord thou hast been favourable unto thy land wilt thou not revive us again; that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

3. PARAPHRASES

The Paraphrases had their origin during the dark days of Moderatism in the Established Church. The first collection of Paraphrases was published in 1745. It was remitted by the General Assembly of the Church to the various presbyteries, after which it came to be used in worship. In 1775, a committee was appointed to revise that collection, and, after being considerably altered it was again published and transmitted for the consideration of presbyteries on 1st June 1781 with a declaration allowing it "to be used in public worship in congregations where the minister finds it for edification." It was only partially adopted at this time but it gradually came into general use throughout the church. It has continued in the Free Church and is also used in the United Presbyterian Church by permission of the Synod. The objections which militate against hymns apply equally to Paraphrases. In some respects they are more dangerous than hymns. Unlike hymns they profess to be a paraphrase or translation in verse of passages of Scripture, while in many cases, entirely misrepresenting the meaning of the sacred text. But what device has not been tried whereby to get something of men into the ordinances of God? When the evil one cannot get man to give up the worship of God he does the next best by getting them to corrupt it. What God appoints is an ornament, hath beauty, is for glory, but let man set up ought in the worship of God, it hath no beauty but blackness, no holiness but iniquity and God must be worshipped in the beauty of holiness. (1.Chron. 16:29) (Greenhill on Ezekiel).

4. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

II. We proceed to consider the divinely prescribed *manner* in which this ordinance of praise is to be performed, in relation chiefly to Instrumental Music.

The mode of worship is the subject of divine appointment. "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof. even so shall ye make it." (Exod. 25:9). Such was the command of God to Moses: and so particular is he on this score that it is repeated v.40 "And look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount" - as if he said, Look to it, beware of doing anything of thyself without my authority.

It was the same in the matter of the temple. David received the model temple from God: "All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." (1 Chron. 28:19). Neither the King in Jeshurun nor the man after God's own heart, nor yet Aaron the High Priest had any authority to do anything of their own accord, in the framing of the tabernacle or temple. God would not allow the slightest infringement of His authority and therefore barred them from it by giving them an exact pattern, - "so dear to Him" (says Charnock) "Was always this flower in His crown." The least departure from this pattern was matter of divine displeasure. Hence on one occasion David says "The Lord our God made a breach upon us for that we sought Him not after the due order." (1 Chron. 15:13).

No less tender was God with regard to this dispensation; for as "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after", so "Christ as a son over His own house was faithful to Him that appointed Him." (Heb.3, 2,5,6.) Even Christ the Son could do nothing in this matter without appointment and pattern.

In like manner in his last message to his apostles before his ascension, our Lord commissions them to teach all nations "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:20).

If then God has prescribed the manner of his worship and is so jealous about it, it must be of the very high importance that we observe that order and none other.

What, then, is the prescribed manner of worship?

In his interview with the woman of Samaria the Lord Jesus laid down the general principle by which the worship of the New Testament was to be regulated "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain

nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.... the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth". (John 6:21-23).

In stately magnificence and great outward glory and excellence God has set up the temple among the Jews - "He garnished the house with precious stones for beauty; and the gold was gold of Parvaim": All was overlaid with fine gold (2 Chr. 3:6,8). This, along with gorgeous ceremonial, belonged to the worship at Jerusalem. And it was this, therefore, that the worship which Christ pointed to as now to commence was to take the place of. And our Lord here intimates that like as the former dispensation excelled in material pomp and grandeur, the new dispensation was to be distinguished by its plainness and simplicity, as peculiarly spiritual.

Accordingly the temple, with all its accompaniments, was removed, not so much as "one stone being left upon another", so complete was the change to be and so entire the abrogation of the temple service. The worship of the Christian church was established, consisting of preaching, prayer, singing and the dispensation of the sacraments; a striking contrast to what had preceded it. Need we wonder if the Jews stumbled at it, looking as they still did for a worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances. In the temple they had had one of the stateliest buildings the world had ever seen. Its rearing had employed 150,000 workmen. Its building had taken seven years. The apostles themselves, we are told, wondered at its goodly stones. Now instead of this the infant church of the Christian dispensation meets in an upper room - assembles in the house of John Mark's mother, and there offers up spiritual sacrifices - Paul discourses in the school of Tyrannus and preaches for two years in his own hired house at Rome. Such was her simplicity. Her worship could now be conducted anywhere - on the shores of the sea, in the open market place, on the moorland solitude or in the private dwelling. "The true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth"; and he who dwells in the high and holy place hears; it ascends before him, even in his holy temple, and enters into the ears of the God of Sabaoth. While he beholds the beautiful order, worship and ordinances of his house as bearing the stamp of his authority, his people behold, not with the carnal eye, but in faith, the beauty of the Lord, and worship him in spirit "whose glorious presence and lovely truths" it is that draw them thither, that he may teach them his ways.

The multiplied rites and ceremonies were adapted to the church in a state of pupilage - under tutors and governors. They were necessary as types - hand-posts, as it were - to point to the Lamb of God yet to come. But now that the great anti-type has appeared, their purpose has been served, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect," (Heb.11:40). - their value and significance as types has passed away.

God was preparing the church for a more elevated and spirited service. The veil, therefore, has given way to the glass, and the true light now shineth - the mirror of Gospel ordinances reveals to us a finished redemption, an empty sepulchre, and a glorified Redeemer. And while we in turn look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; and the building of grace the spiritual temple goes on; the copestone will in due time be brought forth with shouting of grace, grace unto it. Then also the mirror shall vanish before the heavenly vision and, amid the unclouded manifestation of divine glory, his people shall behold, face to face, the unveiled perfections of the deity in the person of Immanuel.

Having seen that God has appointed the exact mode of his worship, and that under the Old Testament economy, that worship was ceremonial, as distinguished from the spiritual worship of the New Dispensation, we shall now endeavour to show that instrumental music formed part of that economy and was therefore peculiar to the Jewish church.

Musical instruments seem to have been invented at an early period. Mention is made of them as far back as the time of Tubal, who lived between three and four thousand years before Christ. Scripture informs us that "he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ". (Gen. 4:21) They were evidently employed on festive occasions before being introduced into the solemnities of religious worship. Hence Laban complains that Jacob left him without affording him an opportunity to send him away "with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp."

Such is the origin of instrumental music. But it is not till the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt that mention is made of its being used in worship, some seven hundred years after the flood or about the year of the world 2500.

Plain and humble, no doubt had been the worship of the Patriarchs. And ere sin entered to becloud his spiritual vision the fruit of the lips was man's only sacrifice of praise to his maker. It was simple to the eye of sense but it had the beauty of holiness to adorn it, which made it precious in God's sight and reflecting his image. And what does this suggest to us? In Christ God sees no iniquity in iniquitous Jacob and no

perverseness in perverse Israel. Now that Christ has come therefore, should not our worship be the same - pure and spiritual?

*Praise ye the Lord unto Him sing
a new song and his praise
In the assembly of his saints
In sweet Psalms do ye raise.*

The night that Israel went out from Egypt the passover was instituted - the first great ordinance of the Levitical dispensation. In celebrating that memorable deliverance we read that "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." (Exod. 15:20,21). Previous to this we have no account of instrumental music being employed in the service of Jehovah. Nor do we even yet read of its appointment. But Miriam was prophetess and acted by the extraordinary impulse of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, the Israelites were now entering upon the period of the ceremonial law. Hence we read that the women went after Miriam not only with timbrels but with dances. God gives his church line upon line, precept upon precept - here a little and there a little, as she is able to bear it. Thus the old economy was introduced and perfected by degrees. And the bringing in of the new as in keeping with it for the worship of the synagogue was by a wise providence intended to pave the way for the Christian dispensation. Accordingly, although it became matter of divine appointment in connection with the giving of the ceremonial law, yet it was not till the time of David, when the residence of the tabernacle became fixed, that instrumental music came to occupy any prominent place in its service. We read in 2. Chr. 29:25, "And he (Hezekiah) set the Levites in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David and of Gad the King's Seer, and Nathan the prophet; for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets." In arranging the Levites for the different services, four thousand were set to praise the Lord with song and various instruments of music (1 Chr.33:4,5). These were divided into 24 courses headed by the sons of Asaph 4, Jeduthun 6, and Heman 14 - in all 24. Each was the head of a different course of those who were for "song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, harps, for the service of the house of God. According to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman." (1. Chr. 25:6). In passing it may be remarked that David, himself a cunning player and still known in the church as "the sweet Psalmist of Israel", appears to have brought this part of the service to a high state of perfection as may be imagined if we consider the grandeur and almost overpowering effect which must have attended it as conducted by 4,000 Levites with song and various instruments. Dr. Burney, in his *History of Music* (Vol. 1, p.249) referring to the Jews, says:- "They had no written music; had scarcely a vowel in their language; and yet (according to Josephus) had two hundred thousand musicians playing at the dedication of the temple of Solomon. Mozart would have died in such a concert in the greatest agonies!" From this time the offering of sacrifices in the tabernacle and temple was always accompanied with the praises of God. "When the burnt offering began the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets and with the instruments ordained by David King of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished." (2. Chr. 29:27,28) Lightfoot informs us in his *Temple Service* that praise continued to be a regular attendant of sacrifice in the temple till the end of the Jewish state, only in its latter period the song of the Lord did not begin till the drink offering was poured out. When captives in Babylon, they "hanged their harps upon the willows" whilst their "spoilers call'd for mirth and said a song of Zion sing." And when the temple was built this part of the service was restored, a provision being appointed them, that they might wait upon their service "according to the commandments of David and Solomon his son." (Neh. 11:23, 12:45).

Such were the praises of God in the former dispensation when the church had "a worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances imposed until the time of Reformation".

Did the use, then, of instrumental music in the worship of God belong exclusively, like sacrifice and incense, to the ceremonial dispensation? That it did we think will appear if we consider the nature of ceremonial rites. One of their chief characteristics was that they typified something to be more fully revealed and set forth under the Gospel. But that instrumental music was typical of the praises of the Christian church cannot be denied. It is spoken of in the New Testament in connection with incense, an emblem of prayer. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." (Rev. 5:8). If the vials full of odours were types of the prayers of the church, it must follow that the harps represented her praises. Hence in the verse following after referring to the harps, it is said "they sung a new song" *etc.* Chrysostom remarks on Psalm 150: "As therefore the Jews did praise the Lord with all instruments so we are in like manner commanded to glorify God with our members."

Isidore Pelusieia on the same psalm says:- "If ye seek an explication of that musick which the Scripture speaks of understand it after this manner, Praise ye the Lord in the sound of the trumpet, that is in memory of the Resurrection which will be with the Trumpet. As it is written, praise him with the Psaltery and Harp, that is with the tongue and mouth, struck upon by the Spirit as with a bow or quill. Praise him with the Timbrel and the Dance, that is with the body and spirit from whence prayers pass to God. Praise him with the Strings and Organ, that is with the heart and all inward parts and the nerves which truly he calls the Organ. Praise him with the loud sounding cymbals, that is with the lips." (Lib. 1, Epist. 457). Clemens of Alexandria speaks to the same effect.

Theodoret says:- "All these things were performed according to the legal worship; for they made use of harps and cymbals and timbrels and other musical instruments. and these things spoken of them agree to us if they be understood spiritually. And we may render ourselves an harmonious organ to God and praise God by the instruments of all the senses as well internal as external. (Comment. in Psa. 32:2,3).

Thus Scripture and the Ancients agree that the musical instruments employed in the old dispensation were types of the spiritual worship of the New Testament, and therefore abolished.

Again, like ceremonial rites, it was such as exercised the senses while also it partook of the outward grandeur of that dispensation. This its defenders virtually admit when they argue for its continuance in respect it adds to the attraction of the service. It may be pleasing to a carnal eye or ear but it cannot attract faith - "the evidence of things not seen" - and it is sadly at variance with the simplicity and gravity of New Testament worship. This our Lord signified to the Pharisees when speaking of the New Testament church, he said: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation", that is, outward show or splendour. (Luke 17:20).

Another feature of a ceremonial rite is that it requires positive precept for its observance, and, apart from the divine command, possesses no intrinsic value for accomplishing the object of its use. The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin; hence it was only a type. In like manner, praise in the due work of a rational being. "I will sing with the spirit, I will sing with the understanding also." but no one will pretend that this can be done by an organ. Therefore it was a mere type and can be of no more use in the church. Moreover its use as we have seen, was dependent upon the divine institution expressly laid down in the Jewish Economy, *2. Chr. 29:25*. But there is no such institution now. Hence, as will afterwards be shown, it ceased with that dispensation.

Further, ceremonial services were but the rudiments or first elements imposed until the time of Reformation. They served as fences to keep the children of Israel a separate nation and to prevent them mingling with the heathen and learning of them their ways. They were a "stiff-necked people", prone to idolatry, and God allowed many things out of condescension to their weakness. It was a time of types and shadows and they saw but darkly. This seems to be borne out in Numbers 15:38,39. There the Lord, in commanding the Israelites to make them fringes in the borders of their garments and to "put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue", he add a as his reason for it:- "that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye used to go a-whoring". In connection with this Theodoret (on Psalm 15) says: "God being willing to free them from the error of idols suffered these things to be, for seeing that they were studious of sports and plays and lovers of mirth and jollity and that all these things were round in the temples of idols, God permitted them these things, by this means alluring them and preventing a greater damage by a less detriment, and teaching them by imperfect things."

Cyprlan speaks to the same effect, assigning the infant state and weakness of the Jewish church as a reason why instrumental music was then permitted in divine service.

Another author - McCatton (on "Singing of Psalms", page 8,) - reasons thus: "Suppose that singing with instruments was not typical, but only an external solemnity of worship, fitted to the solace of the outward senses of children, under age such as the Israelites were, in the Old Testament, *Col. 4:1,2,3*, yet now in the grown age of the heirs of the New Testament, such external pompous solemnities are ceased and no external worship reserved but such as holds forth simplicity and gravity; nor is any voice now to be heard in the church of Christ but such as is significant and edifying by signification, *1. Cor. 14:10,11,26*, which the voice of instruments is not."

In keeping with all this we have the language of the apostle himself, "and the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now" - with the full blaze of the Gospel light - "commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Other reasons might be given to prove the use of instrumental music in the Old Testament a ceremonial rite. But we think it has already been made clear. It may simply be stated that the use of instrumental music was

no casual thing. It formed the principal part of the Old Testament music. (Numb. 10:1-10). Even when Aaron went into and came out from the holy place no sound was heard but the tinkling or chime of the bells upon the hem of the robe of the Ephod. (Exod. 28:35). Further it was a constant attendant of sacrifice and intimately connected with it from the days of David and the blowing of trumpets from the days of Moses (2 Chr. 29:27, 28). Again, the greater part of the praise was confined to the representatives of the people. (1 Chr. 13:8; 15:28). The body of the Jewish people were not permitted to join audibly in the praises or public worship. On extraordinary occasions when called on to give a responsive "Amen," and when responsively they might say "Praise the Lord," they were allowed to take part with their voices; but commonly were obliged to be silent; and they only joined in the Levitical praises by lifting up their hearts to the Lord. (Bannatyne's *Hearts and Voices*).

All these were ceremonial observances no longer in force. And can we except instrumental music? On the contrary, the late Dr. Begg in his *Treatise on Organs*, p. 198, remarks that "As the sacrifices under the law terminated in the death and sacrifice of Christ it is most reasonable to conclude that all the concomitants of that typical service were also abolished with them."

We come now to enquire whether instrumental music has been authorised by God in the New Testament church.

Looking into the New Testament, then, we find it expressly laid down by the apostle that we are no longer come to "the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words but unto Mount Zion and unto the City of the living God." (Heb. 12:18,22).

Accordingly in the whole of the New Testament no mention is made of instrumental music being used in the worship of God. On the other hand it is clearly stated what worship is to be. Paul writing to the Hebrews about the doing away of their priests, sacrifices, and all that pertained to the "worldly sanctuary" says most emphatically, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually," and lest there should be any misunderstanding, or any should think this praise was to include instrumental music, he adds a particular definition of what he means, - "that is," says he, "the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15). In this passage the apostle evidently alludes to Hosea 14:2, "So will we render the calves (or, as the LXX render it, the fruit) of our lips." This prediction of the prophet had already been accomplished in part in the Jewish synagogue where instruments of music were never admitted. And while the Temple, to which instrumental music was confined, was to be abolished, the service of the synagogue was to continue in the New Testament church where, as Paul here shews, the language of Hosea was to receive its full accomplishment.

Charnock on the passage in Hosea says, Here "there is a rendering the calves or heifers of our lips" alluding to the heifers used in eucharistical sacrifices. The praise of God is the choicest sacrifice and worship under a dispensation of redeeming grace; this is the prime and eternal part of worship under the gospel. The Psalmist (Psa. 149, 150) speaking of the gospel times, spurs on to this kind of worship; "Sing to the Lord a new song; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King; let the saints be joyful in glory, and sing aloud upon their beds; let the high praises of God be in their mouths."

The evangelical worship is a spiritual worship.

Professor Killin of Belfast in his *History of the Doctrine and Worship of the Ancient Church* says:

"The worship of the synagogue was more simple. Its officers did not introduce instrumental music into the congregational services. The early Christians followed the example of the synagogue; and when they celebrated the praises of God in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, their melody was the fruit of the lips. For many centuries after this period, the use of instrumental music was unknown in the church."

In keeping with what Paul lays down in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we have the example and precepts of Christ and his apostles for singing the praises of God in his worship to the exclusion of instruments.

During his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem "the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise the Lord with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen." Our Lord and his apostles joined in singing a hymn (in the margin it is rendered "psalm") after the institution of the ordinance of the Supper. James directs those who are merry to sing psalms; and the Christian church to sing generally "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." and to sing them (it is still singing) with grace in their hearts "making melody to the Lord." Conybeare and Howson render the passage thus: "Let your singing be of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and make melody with the music of your hearts to the Lord." And in a footnote they add: "Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the heathen and the

Christian practice, *e.g.* when you meet let your enjoyment consist not in fulness of wine but fulness of the Spirit, let your songs be not the drinking songs of heathen feasts but psalms and hymns, and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre. but the music of the heart." (Kerr on the Fruit of our Lips. p.10.)

Again, Paul declares for the example of the Church in all ages "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also." Here it is interesting to observe the rendering of this passage in the Old Version! Knox says "St. Paul giveth a rule how men should sing", and then quotes the verse thus: "I will sing in voice and I will sing with understanding", (1. Cor.14:19) bringing out, as it does, more clearly, the emphasis which the apostle laid upon the manner in which the ordinance of praise was to be performed in the New Testament.

Such is the example of Christ and his apostles; and, while it is in strict accordance with the principle laid down by our Lord that the Father was henceforth to be worshipped in a spiritual manner, it also as we have shewn accords with the inspired predictions regarding New Testament times.

Thus we search in vain for any direction or example for the use of musical instruments in the New Testament. Now, how account for this if they were not to be done away? If they held such a prominent place in the worship of the old economy, and we hear so much about them in connection with it, why, if they are to be continued in the New, have we no mention of them? and how can we explain their exclusion from the worship of the early Christians? These are questions which cannot but suggest themselves to us. Was the love of the apostles and first Christians not so ardent, or their zeal not so great, as that of professors now? What do we find? Theirs was a time of pentecostal showers - God was giving them "drops from heaven" a refreshing from his own presence, and thousands were daily being added to the church. "Their prayers went not forth out of feigned lips." They had tasted not the aid of music or other outward stimulants to offer to God their heartfelt adorations, but out of the abundance of the heart the mouth spake. If then at this period and at like periods since in the history of the church, as Scotland can testify, musical instruments in worship were unknown, have we not need to try ourselves concerning the manner of our worship? With us it is a time of degeneracy - of abounding apostasy and will-worship. We are living in the end of the world and in "the dregs of time", wherein the apostle predicts there may be much of a form, but little of the power of godliness (2 Tim. 3:1,5). And what if it be thus with us? Yet we will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. Thou O God didst send a plentiful rain whereby thou didst confirm thine heritage when it was weary. Return we beseech thee O God of Hosts; look down from heaven and behold and visit this, thy vine; it is burned with fire, it is cut down: Turn us again O Lord God of Hosts, cause thy face to shine; that we may return to our first husband, for then was it better with us than now.

Next to the example of Christ and his apostles we have the example of the primitive church.

We have before shewn that several of the ancient writers ranked instrumental music with the other carnal ordinances of the Jewish economy. Their testimony regarding the practice of the church at the time in which they write is equally explicit and is both unanimous and conclusive - proving beyond a doubt that for at least the first seven centuries, instrumental music had no existence in the Christian church.

Pliny, already referred to, in his famous Epistle to the Emperor Trajan, written before the death of the apostle John, in the year 103, stated that in his time the Christians met together on an appointed day to sing praises unto Christ as a God, and to bind themselves by a sacrament."

Justin Martyr, who suffered martyrdom in the year 167 under Marcus Aurelius informs us that in his time there was "only plain simple singing with the voices used in the church." He terms the instrumental music of the Old Testament "A childish way of serving God", and puts the question "Why do we use in the churches those songs after the manner of these childish persons under the law?" - Answer - "To persons in a state of childhood or minority it is not agreeable simply to sing. But to sing with inanimate instruments, with dancing and cymbals; wherefore the use of songs with these sorts of instruments and others agreeable to persons in a state of childhood is not received into the churches but simple singing is retained in them." (Just.Mart. *ad Orth.* q.107).

Clement of Alexandria, who was born about the year 150, contrasts the worship of the Christians with the instruments used by the heathen at their idolatrous worship, and says:

"We (Christians) make use only of one organ or instrument even the peaceful word with which we honour God; no longer with the old psalter, trumpet, drums or cymbal and pipe", and "commend the blessing and praising of God by thanksgiving and singing of psalms." (*Paedop.* Lib.ii Cap.iv.)

Origen, a presbyter, who succeeded Clement of Alexandria in his school, speaking of the Christians, says they: "sang in good rhyme, tune and harmony" (*De Orambione* sec.6) Origen lived in the first part of the third century.

Tertullian, the most ancient of the Latin Fathers, who flourished in the early part of the same century, giving an account of the primitive manner of public worship, says "The Scriptures are read, psalms are sung, sermons are preached and prayers are presented." (Tertull. *de Anima* cap.3.)

Eusebius, a deacon of Alexandria, writing in the latter part of the third century gives an account of the council of Antioch. In connection with the case of Paul of Samostia he says "Paulus Samostenus bishop of Antioch abolished those psalms which were wont to be sung to the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ." (*Act. Concil. Antioch apud Euseb.* Liber.vii. cap.xxx.). We have seen in a previous section what became of this Paul.

Chrysostom, who flourished about the year 400, says on Psalm 144: "Then (under the Law) there were organs by which songs of praise were offered up to God. But now in the stead of organs we make use of the body for now we sing not only with the tongue but with the eyes, the hands, the feet, and the ears: For if any one of these members do these things which bring praise and glory to God... then the members of the body become a psaltery and a harp and they sing a new song which consists not in words but works... Let no man deceive you; these (musical instruments) are alien to the Catholic Church: All these things do the nations of the world seek after." (Chrysost. *Opera.* Tom. 7. p. 222. Editio Etoniensis.)

Isidore Pelusioire of the fifth century, a scholar of Chrysostom, says: "If the Divine Being by reason of their childishness in which they then were, did allow them to offer sacrifices, why do you wonder that he also allowed them that musick which is performed by the harp and the psaltery?"

Theodoret, who flourished about the same time, says, "God indulged them (the Jews) the use of musical instruments of a sweet sound not because himself was delighted with their harmony but so by little and little he put a stop to the deceit of idols." (Theod. Serm.7.)

With these excessive testimonies regarding the practice of the church for a period of five centuries, following upon the apostolic time, without the slightest evidence to the contrary, have surely the highest authority for the statement that instrumental music was entirely excluded from the worship of the primitive church. Mention is repeatedly made of singing the praises of God, but nowhere do we find that organs, or any other instruments of music were employed in this part of divine worship.

Such being the practice of the church while the ordinances were yet pure as they had been received from the hands of the apostles, what shall we say of the present generation, and of the existing state of religion in the country, but that well saith the prophet Isaiah, they are "children that are corrupters." One of our old divines says: "Let them adduce a solid proof that the primitive Christians needed any such beggarly elements to elevate their spirits in celebrating the divine praises. But our modern formalists, it would seem, measure the religious exercises of the apostles of Jesus Christ and holy martyrs of the first ages by the standard of their own call and lifeless liturgical services; not considering that the primitive saints were elevated to heavenly contemplations and joys, by internal motions of the Holy Ghost shed upon them abundantly, in the use of such ordinances as Christ had enjoined them and, that the holy men of these times had approached our Saviour (as Dr. Goodman speaks) had as it were some rays of his divinity shed upon them; and their faces shone like Moses's when he came down from the holy mount. And that a Christian church; as a college of holy and good men, and the glory of God filled the place where they were assembled, and fire came down from heaven to exhale and lift up the odours of their pious and devout prayers. These men imagine, because themselves are flat and low in their devotions and need the musick of an organ make lively and sprightly (as indeed they cannot but need a something or other to help their devotions, who lean wholly upon the crutch of a Common Prayer Book) that therefore the primitive Christians were flat and low in their spiritual performances too." (*Sacred Uses of Organs*, editon 1865).

Having seen that instrumental music in the worship of God was not authorised by Christ or his apostles, nor used by the primitive church, we have now to shew that its introduction belonged to a corrupt era, when darkness was again "covering the earth and gross darkness the people."

Like human hymns and other corruptions in the church of God, instrumental music owes its origin to popery.

After being remarkably preserved in the midst of a fiery persecution, the church had enjoyed a breathing time. The ordinances still remained pure and entire. "But as the moon waxes and wanes" says the late Dr.

Shaw, "so the church sometimes shines forth with splendour and at other times is so obscured as to be scarcely discernible." Her numbers may be few and these may be so scattered that even the most discerning Christian may scarcely perceive the form of a visible church. Such was the case in the period on which we are now entering. Apostolic purity had given place to anti-Christian darkness and error, as that which letted was taken out of the way and that wicked became revealed. Then, we say, and not till then, were organs brought into the worship of God.

Platina informs us in the Life of one Vitalian that he was the first that brought instrumental music into the church in the year of our Lord 657. "It could not fail to happen indeed" says Neander "that the very thing which Christianity was to overcome - the tendency viz. to make religion an outward thing... would gain admission even into Christianity. Accordingly we find instrumental music getting admission just as the church lost her vitality.

The Magdeburgh Centuriators ascribe its introduction to this year 666. They say "When the number of the beast, *Rev. 13*, was now full the churches received Latin Singing with organs from Pope Vitalian and from thence began to say Latin Mass and to set up altars with idolatrous images." (*Centur. Magde. Cent.7 c.6*)

Bellarmino the Romish author states that the organ began to be used in the service of the church about the year 660 and that when Pope Vitalian reformed the singing of the Roman Church he added to it organs in order to support and embellish it. (*Altaro Damascenum Cap. 8. and Enc. Brit. on the word "organ"*).

Bishop Stillingfleet mentions that "music was first employed in the Church of England by Augustine and afterwards much improved by Dunstan, himself an eminent musician, who first furnished the English churches and convents with the organ. (*Enc. Brit. on the word "music"*).

Cajetan, a popish cardinal who was sent as a Legate into Germany in 1518 to suppress the commotions raised by Luther against indulgences states that "organs were not used in the church in the time of Aquinas, neither are they at this day used before the pope, and indeed musical instruments are not to be allowed in the offices and devotions of the church which were designed for the conveying of inward divine grace; but they are rather to be disallowed of and laid aside because that divine and internal grace is more excellent than any human discipline and art." (*Ad. Tho. Aquinas Sum. qu. g.1. art.2.*)

Another authority tells us that the earliest account to be relied on of the introduction of the instrument into the West is about the year 755 when the Greek Emperor Copronymus sent one as a present to Pepin King of France; and that in the time of Charlemagne in the following century organs became common in Europe. The same authority states that in England they had become common before the tenth century; and yet in the English Convocation held in Queen Elizabeth's days "for settling the Liturgy" (A.D. 1562) the retaining of organs was carried by only a casting vote. (*Christian Antiquities* by Coleman.) It would appear, he adds, from the following quotations, that the use of these or other instruments in worship was by no means general in the period included between these dates. "Our church," says Thomas Aquinas (writing probably at Paris about the year 1236) "does not use musical instruments as harps and psalteries, in the house of God, lest she should seem to Judaize." (*Colman's Apostolic and Primitive Church*).

Sarmalao the great Reformer of Florence, about A.D. 1494, (shortly before Luther began to oppose the sale of Indulgences) thus includes the introduction of instrumental music among the evidences of the then destroyed condition of the church. "None," says he, "teaches the Holy Scriptures. Since that light has been extinguished it has been night. Instead of preaching Christ they offer for money from the pulpit a mixture of philosophy and Christianity or one hears nothing at all but of Aristotle and Plato of Cicero and Demosthenes and other heathens. They hold markets too in the churches and to disturb even the still devotion of individuals the devil has begun to bring into operation music and the organ which only please the ear and edify nothing. In the ancient polity it is true there were many festivals, with songs, trumpets, a tabernacle and the like but these for the most part had an end with Christ." (Myers). "The learned Erasmus wrote in a similar strain against the use of organs in churches observing that people flock thereto as to a theatre or stage that their ears may be tickled or delighted." (*Lawson's Mite into the Treasury. 1703*)

Scotland seems to have been the last to receive the organ. Calderwood states that organs were not introduced into the churches until the reign of James I in the fifteenth century. He ascended the throne in 1425, and seems to have been one of the most learned men of his time. With a great taste for music and poetry he had organs introduced into the cathedrals and abbeys in Scotland. He did much to improve the national music and is said to have brought the choir service to such a state of perfection as scarcely to be excelled in all Europe) (*Ency. Brit. on "music"*).

From this statement it appears that the introduction of instrumental music belongs to the darkest age of church history; that it originated in the church of Rome, partly in imitation of pagan worship, and partly of the Jewish ceremonial; and that it increased according as that system developed, until, in the fifteenth century it had come into general use - a period during which vital godliness was almost extinct.

5. THE REFORMATION PERIOD

How often has the church experienced that the darker the night is, the nearer is the morning light. It was so here. After the long night of popish idolatry and superstition, the dawn of the Reformation was the signal of light and purity. Accordingly, at the Reformation from popery in Scotland, the worship of God was purged from all those corrupt practices by which it had been polluted, and restored to its original simplicity and purity. In the language of Peterkin they expelled all the dregs of superstition.

*Though ye have been among the pots
like doves ye shall appear
Whose wings with silver and with gold
whose feathers covered are.*

It was with much struggling and suffering that this Reformation was attained. But it was the work of God and he perfected it in due time. "We went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." (Psa. 66:12). Thus was accomplished in the year 1560. when the corruptions of popery were denounced and condemned and the Reformed religion publicly acknowledged by the Estates of Parliament (Aug.24). Thereafter the solemnity of an oath was added by which popery was abjured. Scotland entered into solemn covenant with her God, and, like ancient Israel, became a land married to the Lord. "We stand bound by solemn oath, covenant and subscription, published to the world, to defend the doctrine and discipline of this kirk, and to oppose the hierarchy and all rites and ceremonies added to the worship of God. Silence in such a cause may be sin to other kirks, but to us it is perjury in the sight of God" (Calderwood). The doctrine of Rome was that the church was supreme in all matters. Here it was therefore that the difference lay. It must either be man's inventions or God's institutions. The Reformers knew that they could not serve God and Mammon (both). And instead of the authority of man the Reformed church took her stand on what became the great principle of the Reformation - that of requiring an express Scripture warrant for everything introduced into the church, whether as regarded the worship or otherwise. Thus in presenting the First Book of Discipline "to the Great Council of Scotland," Knox and others who took part with him in drawing it up, say:- "Most humbly requiring your honors that as ye look for participation with Christ Jesus that neither ye admit anything which God's plain word shall not approve, neither yet that ye shall reject such ordinances as equity, justice and God's word do specify.... By the contrary doctrine we understand whatsoever men by laws, councils and constitutions have imposed upon the consciences of men without the express commandment of God's word." This was the principle upon which the Reformation proceeded. It was just the principle of taking the word of God as the alone rule of faith and manners. And while the superstition of popery could not stand before it, the carrying of it out, in all the arrangements of the church, raised Scotland to a degree of purity above all the churches. By the application of this principle, instrumental music was removed, and the simple singing of praise, of the primitive church, restored.

The Second Book of Discipline laying down the worship and government of the church was agreed upon by the General Assembly of the church in 1578 and this was established by authority of the state in 1592. The following is the preamble of the Act of Assembly: "In respect that at the desyre of the Assemblie, certain of the nobilitie were convenit, *viz.* my Lord Chancellour, the Earle Montrose, my Lord Setone, My Lord Lindsay, it was exposit and schawne be the Moderator of this Assemblie in name of the kirk what care and studie the kirk of God had taine to entertaine and keep the purity of the sincere word of God unmixt with the inventions of their awne heids, gwick their speciall care was to reserve to the posteritie heirafter and seeing that the trew religione is not able to continew nor indure lang, without a good discipline and policie, in that part have they also employit their witt and study and drawne furth of the pure fountaines of God's word sic a discipline as is meet to remayne within the Kirk, which they presentit to the King's Majestie."

It proceeds throughout upon the same principle, and in speaking of the division of the rents and patrimony of the church into four parts it says:- One thereof to be assigned to the pastor for his entertainment and hospitality. Another to the elders, deacons and other officers of the kirk such as Clerke of Assemblies, takers up of the Psalms, beadles and keepers of the kirk so far as is necessary, joining therewith, also the doctors of schools to help the ancient foundations where need requires." (Chap. 12. S.12) shewing that the only officer in connection with the psalmody was "the taker up of the Psalms."

Speaking on the duty of assembling with the congregation, Knox says: "the promise made that 'wheresoever two or three be gathered together in my name there shall I be in the midst of them' condemneth all such as contemneth the congregation gathered in his name. But mark well by the word 'gathered' I mean not to hear piping, singing or playing nor to patter on beads or books whereof they have no understanding, nor to commit idolatry, honouring that for God which is no God indeed. For with such I will neither join myself in common prayer, nor in receiving external sacraments, for in so doing I should affirm their superstition and abominable idolatry, which I by God's grace never will do, neither counsel others to do, to the end."

The Editor of Knox's Works in describing the service of the church, says: "There was neither kneeling during prayer, nor while receiving the sacrament - there were no responses or collects for particular days - the frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer was avoided, and the Litany and the use of the Creed rejected. Congregational singing also was universally adopted in place of the chanting and choral anthems and instrumental music retained in the English service."

In the Book of Common Order (1556) singing only is laid down: "The people sing a Psalm altogether in a plain time."

Hase, in his *Church History*, quoted by Dr. Begg in his *Treatise for the Times*, says: "The Reformed Church returned as far as possible to the simplicity of the Apostolic Edifice.... It did away with everything sensuous and artistic; (He gives as his authority Bullinger B.1. p.131) and after the organs were pulled down it obtained from France the Psalms in appropriately written metre." "The Scottish Church", adds Dr. Begg, "standing in an immediate line of descent from the Genevan inherited the pure doctrine and simple worship of that church to which it was so nearly related, Calvin having frequently and especially in his Homily on 1 Sam. 18:1-9, condemned organs in worship as a "ridiculous and unsuitable imitation" of the Jews.

Accordingly in 1574 (*Aberdeen Kirk Session Records* - Introduction to Book of Common Order, p. 241) the Session of Aberdeen ordered the organs to be removed out of the church. As the Northern Counties were then distinguished by their obstinate retention of old forms of faith and worship, we may safely believe that long before that date organs had been rooted out of the rest of Scotland."

But the worship of the church was destined soon to be defaced by the introduction of Prelatical innovations. After passing a number of Acts to pave the way King James in 1617 visited Scotland for the first time after his accession, "his chief object being to introduce the ceremonies of the English church into his native church" (Lee's *History*). Calderwood informs us that "upon Saturday the 17th of May 1617, the English service, singing of quisters and playing on organs and surplices were first heard and seen in Chapel Royal." A protestation from the ministers of the church followed in which they refer to the contrast between the Genevan model they had chosen and the English church with his ceremonies, including organs, quisters, surplices etc. Row narrates the same thing in his *History of the Church of Scotland* (p-306). The protestation was unheeded and Calderwood says again - "Upon the 19th August Mr. William Cowper, Bisop of Galloway, Deane of the Chappell preached. There was playing of organs and singing of men and boys both before and after service. Again, the historian says on 25th December the said Bishop preached "when there was playing upon organs." "So the Bishops practiced novations before ever they were embraced by any General Assembly and therefore ought to have been secluded from voting afterwards and in that matter condignly censured." Organs were thus reckoned among the "novations", and their use in worship made matter of solemn protestation and resentment by the church. In these circumstances force was resorted to and in 1613, the following year, was held the unlawful Assembly of Perth, since famous in history on account of its superstitions, enactments, known as the "Five Articles of Perth." In connection with this, it is interesting to read the Act of the 1638 Assembly overturning the Prelatic corruptions: "Assembly 1638, Sess. 12, No. 9. In all lawfull assemblies the grounds of proceeding were, and used to be, the Word of God, the Confession of Faith and Acts of former Generall Assemblies. But in this pretended Assembly, the ground of their proceeding in voicing was the King's commandment only" etc. The strong opposition however, which it met with, retarded the defection, and it is only in the year 1636 that we find the Town Council of Edinburgh sending Dean Hannay to Durham that, after seeing the choir there, he might superintend the putting up of an organ in St. Giles - five years after orders had been received from the King to that effect.

The late Principal Lee, who of historians will not be suspected of partiality on this score, thus testifies to the resistance and hostility which existed. He says: "The innovations which were dreaded at this time were the use of organs, liturgies and ceremonies to which the people entertained the strongest possible antipathy." (*Church History*, Vol. 2. p.225) The contrast which Calderwood in his "*Pastor and Prelate*" draws of the two opposing systems cannot but commend itself to true Presbyterians. The following is an extract:-

"The pastor thinketh it the principal part of his ministry to labour in word and doctrine because 'woe is unto him if he preach not the gospel' " *etc.*

"The prelate thinketh of preaching as accessory and would have it worn out of use by a long dead liturgy." *etc.*

"The pastor loveth no music in the house of God but such as edifyeth, and stoppeth his ears at instrumental music as serving for the pedagogy of the untoward Jews under the law, and being figurative of that spiritual joy whereunto our hearts should be opened under the gospel."

"The prelate loveth carnal and curious singing to the ear more than the spiritual melody of the gospel, and therefore would have antiphony and organs in the Cathedral Kirks upon no greater reason than other shadows of the law of Moses, or lesser instruments as lutes, citherns, or pipes might be used in other Kirks." - (*Presbyterian Armoury*. Vol.3. p.4)

Episcopacy has been well described as popery commenced, and popery as but episcopacy completed. The one has all the elements of the other, and so the introduction of episcopacy into Scotland brought with it the beggarly elements of popery of which instrumental music was one. But it formed no part of Presbyterianism. Presbytery being founded on the word of God as of divine right. It could admit of nothing that had not similar credentials proving it to be of divine institution.

Accordingly, at the Second Reformation, instrumental music was abolished with all the other "novations" and the purity of worship re-established.

We give the following Acts of Parliament in regard to organs:

"May 1644 - The Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament the better to accomplish the blessed Reformation so happily begun, and to remove all offences and things illegal in the worship of God, do ordain that - all organs and the frames or cases wherein they stand in all churches and chapels aforesaid shall be taken away and utterly defaced and none other hereafter set up in their places."

(Warrant to the Commissioners of the Thesaurarie to dispose upon the organs in the Chapell Royall)

"1649. The Estaits of Parliament now convened in this third session of this second Triennial parliament givis full power to the Commissioners of the thesaurerie to tak the organs out of the chapell royall dispose upon the same guhairanent thir pirtis shalle their warrand." (Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, Vol. 6. ii. p.339)

"Fol. 113 Decimo Tertio Juny. 1649.
Prayers said Rollis callit.
Act in favore of the minister of the Kirk of Glencross.

225. The estaits of the Parliament having hard and considerit ane suplicaoune givin Into them be the Commissioners of the Presbetrie of Dalkieth schewing that great pains hath bein usit for obtaining of ane sufficient provisioun to the minister of the kirk of Glencross... And understanding that thair is within the parosche and prelandrie (the soume) of sevine scoir mks zeirlie payit of lait out of the landis of Castell law belonging to the erle of Roxbrugh for mantinance of the organs and singers in the Chapell of Stirling not onlie abolished but now vacant.... and as they conceive wold think it best bestowed for the mantinance of the pure worschip of God within the said parosch... Thairfoir they have or dainit and ordanis that the byrune dewties of the said prelandrie extending to sevine scoir marks yeirlie be mortified and doe mortifie the semyne to be employed upon pious uses within the foirsald parosch at the sight of the said presbitrie for tyme bygane and in tyme coming for to be employed and payit to the minister for helping of his stipend and ordanis letters of liorning and are neidfull to be direct heirupon on ane simple chair of sex dayis if neid beis." (Ilid p,482)

Organs were also removed in England as Presbytery was introduced. In recording this, the commissioners from the Church of Scotland, attending the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, reckon the organs as part of the corruptions of popery and prelacy. In their letter to the General Assembly of 20 May 1644 giving an account of their deliberations, they say:

"We cannot but admire the good hand of God In the great things done here already, particularly that the Covenant the foundation of the whole work is taken, prelacy and the whole train thereof extirpated, the service book in many places forsaken, plain and powerful preaching set up, many colleges in Cambridge

provided with such ministers as are most zealous of the best reformation, altars removed, the communion in some places given at the table with sitting, *the great organs at Paul's and Peter's in Westminster taken down*, images and many other monuments of idolatry defaced and abolished, the Chapel Royal at Whitehall purged and reformed; and all by authority, in a quiet manner at noon day, without tumult."

Dr. Macrae of Hawick, referring to this in an Assembly Speech, says:
"If these things were done in the green tree, what would not be done in the dry".

In their reply, dated 4th June, 1644, to the Westminster Divines' letter, the General Assembly state:

"We were greatly refreshed to hear by letters from our commissioners there with you of your praiseworthy proceedings and of the great good things the Lord hath wrought among you and for you. Shall it seem a small thing in our eyes that the Covenant (the formation of the whole work) is taken? That that anti-Christian Prelacy, with all the train thereof, is extirpate? That the door of a right entry unto faithful shepherds is opened; many corruptions as altars, images and other monuments of idolatry and superstition - removed, defaced and abolished; the service book in many places forsaken, and plain and powerful preaching set up; *the great organs at Paul's and Peter's taken down*; that the Royal Chapel is purged and reformed; sacraments sincerely administered, and according to the pattern in the mount?"

These letters are contained in the "Acts of Assembly," 1644. Consistent with them "singing of Psalms with grace in the heart" is the only praise mentioned in the Westminster Confession. And in the Directory for Public Worship it is declared to be "the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of Psalms in the congregation" and that "in singing of Psalms the voice is to be tuneably and gravely ordered but the chief care must be to sing with understanding and with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord." The Directory is prefaced with the statement: "Our case hath been to hold forth such things as are of divine institution in every ordinance; and other things we have endeavoured to set forth according to the rules of Christian prudence, agreeable to the general rules of the word of God." The Directory was adopted by the Church of Scotland Feb, 3, 1645. It was received as "a part of the Covenanted Uniformity in Religion betwixt the Churches of Christ in the kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland," and has since continued to be the only authorized Directory for the worship of God in the Reformed Church of Scotland.

Dickson, an eminent Divine of the Second Reformation, says: "The typical ceremonies of musical instruments in God's public worship belonged to the pedagogy of the Church in her minority before Christ and are now abolished with the rest of the ceremonies." (*Commentary on 150th Psalm*)

The above sketch leaves no doubt as to what were the principles of the Reformation church regarding the use of instrumental music in worship, and, combined with the practice of the primitive church, it furnished strong argument against the admission of the organ into the church. We are told to walk in the footsteps of the flock; and, if such has been her undoubted practice in her purest times, we cannot but incur a most solemn responsibility if, notwithstanding, we follow a divisive course. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." We are at no time to go farther than we can say "It is written;" but if in addition to Scripture we have the uniform practice of the godly, a departure therefrom becomes specially aggravated in the sight of God and to Him we must answer. "Remove not," (saith He) "the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set" (Prov. 22:28), but "ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein." (Jer. 6:16).

Scotland was not alone in abolishing the use of organs at the Reformation. The same is recorded of the Reformed churches of Germany, France, Piedmont, Helvetia, Transylvania and most of the Reformed churches of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, the United Provinces of Holland, England, as we have seen, and, to a great extent, Ireland.

Even Luther, according to Eckhard, a German Doctor of Theology, "considered musical instruments among the badges of Baal (*organa musica inter Baalia insignia refert.*)" Eckhard added: "They are laid aside in most of the Reformed churches nor would they be retained among the Lutherans unless they had forsaken their own Luther."

Calvin, in his Commentary on Exodus 15:20, says: "Instrumental music is not fitter to be adopted into the public worship of the Christian church than the incense, the candlestick, and the shadows of the Mosaic Law... In popery, a ridiculous and unsuitable imitation of the Jews, they employed organs and other such ludicrous things, by which the word and worship of God are exceedingly profaned, the people being much more attached to these rites than to the understanding of the Divine word.... We know that our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared, and, by His Advent, has abolished these legal shadows.... For instruments of music in

gospel times, we must not have recourse to these, unless we wish to destroy the evangelical perfection, and to obscure the meridian light which we enjoy in Christ our Lord."

Zuinglius, the first Reformer of the Helvetian Church, referring to instrumental music, says: "It is evident that this ecclesiastick chanting is a most foolish vain abuse and a most pernicious hindrance to piety."

Erasmus testifies against it in his Commentary on I. Cor. 14:9.

Cajetan, a Romish cardinal before quoted, says: "Organs are not at this day used before the Pope, and indeed musical instruments are not to be allowed in the offices and devotions of the church which were designed for conveying inward divine grace."

Bishop Taylor, of the Church of England, says: "The use of singing Psalms is very apt for the edification of churches but as for musical instruments, they are more apt to change religion into air and fancies and take off some of its simplicity". (*Duct. Dub. Lib. 3. p. 329*)

In one of the English Homilies, part 2, ratified by acts of Convocation and of Parliament, the complaint is supposed to be made: "What shall we do at church? ... since we cannot hear the like piping, singing, chanting and playing upon organs that we could hear before?" to which the church replies: "Dearly Beloved, we ought greatly to rejoice and give God thanks that our churches are delivered out of all those things which displeased God so sore and filthily defiled His House and Place of Prayer."

In his Commentary on 1 Chron. 6:39, Dr. Adam Clarke, referring to musical instruments, says: "Those who are fond of music in the theatre are fond of it in the house of God when they go thither, and some professing Christianity set up such a spurious worship in order to draw people to hear the gospel! This is doing evil that good may come of it and by this means light and trifling people are introduced into the church of Christ."

When we read these varied testimonies does it not appear as if, like Israel, we were being made to "grope at noonday as the blind gropeth in darkness" for "not observing to do all the words of this law."

Ray, of Cambridge, the Naturalist who travelled over a large part of Scotland in 1661, thus notes in his itinerary the result of his observance of the manner and order of the public worship. He says:

"The Ministers there in the public worship doth not shift places out of the desk into the pulpit as in England, but at his first coming in ascends the pulpit. They commonly begin their worship with a Psalm after the minister comes in, who after the Psalm is finished prayeth and then reads and expounds in some places, in some not; then another Psalm is sung and after that their minister prays again and preacheth as in England. The people here frequent their churches much better than in England and have their ministers in more esteem and veneration. They seem to perform their devotions with much alacrity. There are few or no sectaries or opinionists amongst them. They are much addicted to their church government excepting the gentry, who love liberty and care not to be so strictly tied down."

Under the Revolution Settlement there is no evidence of any change of the manner of worship. In the instructions to the Scots Commissioners for a Treaty of Union with England, the Act provided that the said Commissioners shall not treat of or concerning any alteration of the worship of the church of this kingdom as by law established.

David Laing, the editor of Knox's Works, as quoted by Dr. Begg, says: "I doubt much if for the greater part of the seventeenth and the whole of the last century there existed such a thing as an organ in any one Presbyterian church in Scotland." "Anything resembling instrumental music used in public worship until a very recent period was altogether unknown."

Before closing our remarks on the use of instrumental music in worship, we will take up a few of the arguments in its defense.

1. The argument of Bishop Horne and others that being introduced before the ceremonial law, as in the case of Miriam, it cannot be a ceremonial rite, we have anticipated. Here it may be replied that the ceremonial law, like all other periods in the history of the church, came gradually, and in the time of Moses it was only, along with the additional ceremonies then appointed, arranged into a regular system. Thus we read of sacrifices as far back as Abel, but these belonged to the ceremonial economy, and with all their concomitants, were done away when Christ came. Had instrumental music in worship been a moral duty, it would have been binding in all ages, whereas it was not in general use till David's time. Its use rests on the Divine

institution, the only authority for a ceremonial observance, "for so was the commandment of the Lord by His prophets."

2. It is defended on the plea that it is an aid to devotion and kindles our affections. Bishop Beveridge (in his *Thesaurus Theologicus*, p. 211) says: "It excites and stirs up good affections." If this is so, then how account for the period of its introduction being one of the darkest in history? It is when we leave God and His institutions that we go to broken cisterns of man; but we are told that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, while it is the spirit only that quickeneth. 'The spirit helpeth our infirmities'. 'The flesh profiteth nothing' ".

3. The exercise of the saints in heaven as described in Rev. 14:2, is a favourite plea. Bishop Beveridge lays much stress upon it. But it reminds us of the argument in favour of the surplice, from the heavenly inhabitants being clothed "in fine linen clean and white which is the righteousness of the saints." To this, one writer replies, we are sorry to say it is all the righteousness some saints have. In the passage referred to the Beloved Disciple says "I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps." But he also says he saw altars, sacrifices, incense *etc.* and consistency would require us to use these and many other things as well as harps. Thus, like the baptists, we should greet one another with a holy kiss - we should wash one another's feet *etc.* The same argument applies to other passages where Jewish phraseology is used. But as leaving no doubt on the subject Paul informs us what sacrifices are meant. He says "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually that is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name."

4. We are told that the use of instrumental music is not forbidden in scripture. This is a dangerous principle to go upon. In the case of Nadab and Abihu it was for offering "strange fire before the Lord which he commanded them not," that "fire went out from the Lord and devoured them." The example of Artaxerxes, a heathen monarch, is a reproof to those who use this argument. In his Royal Decree he orders "whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven to be diligently done for the House of the God of heaven"; and he adds as the reason, "for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" (Ezra. 7:23) But is the use of instrumental music not forbidden? Are we not abundantly informed of the abrogation of all Jewish ceremonies? and does not scripture expressly forbid "will-worship?" Does not Christ himself lay down the opposite principle as our rule? Matt. 28:20. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you", intimating that a divine command is necessary as our warrant for every observance in the church, and that therefore "In vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Of the tribe of Judah Moses "saith nothing" concerning priesthood. Hence Paul inferred that there was nothing. So nothing is said of instrumental music in the New Testament.

5. It is said that the use of organs lends a majesty to the worship and inspires a reverence and veneration in the worshippers. In answer we say that the thrills of music and the divine joys of the soul are very different things. But this argument supposes that we may accommodate the worship of God to our own taste and feelings; and papists plead the same thing for their images, tapers *etc.* But God says of such "Who hath required this at your hand?" There never was a corruption in the church which was not introduced under a plausible pretence. The will-worship and carnal inventions of primitive times had a show of wisdom and humility, Col. 2:23. "Beware", says the apostle, "lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8) Charnock observes that "when God has by his sovereign order framed a religion for the heart, men are ready to usurp authority to frame one for the sense; to dress the ordinances of God in new and gaudy habits to take the eye or the ear with a vain pomp." So -

*"Some to Church repair
Not for the doctrine but the music there."*

6. Our Presbyterian worship is termed "bald" and organs are required to embellish it. So said the Jews. They had been accustomed with a "worldly sanctuary" and when Christ came to set up His spiritual kingdom they saw no beauty in it to desire it. "A godly man is more for the purity of worship than the pomp." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14).

Even were we to admit (which we do not) the use of musical instruments in worship on the plea that they were used in the old economy, it would still be an objection that instrumentalists do not use the instruments mentioned in the Old Testament. For instance, the Jewish organ was very different from our modern organ. It is supposed to have been a kind of flute composed of about seven pipes made of reeds joined together, of unequal length and thickness. Further, why use only the organ? Is it not said "sing unto the Lord with the harp, with trumpets and sound of cornet" *etc.*? "Praise Him with the timbrel and the dance". We are as much enjoined to do the one as the other; and as the sacbut, another instrument, is understood to resemble our

bagpipe, according to the theory of our modern innovators the bagpipe and the dance might soon be introduced.

The human voice is God's own instrument. It is a gift of no mean order. And when God requires it of us, should it not be our highest privilege to employ it in singing the high praises of the Lord? It is said that the vocal music of the Imperial Choristers in St. Petersburg incomparably surpasses, in sweetness and effect, the sounds produced by the combined power of the most exquisite musical instruments.

In fine, if instrumental music was to continue in the Christian church, how does the apostle speak of "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal"? Does his language not imply that the musical instruments of the sanctuary were part of "the beggarly elements imposed until the time of reformation"? Moreover, how else can we explain the language of inspired prophecy, when describing the praise of the New Testament church it is expressly termed "the calves of our lips"? On the other hand, it is written of the ungodly "They take the timbrel and harp and rejoice at the sound of the organ; they say unto God, Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways". "Be the worship what it will, carnal man can see no glory in it nor did it give any satisfaction to their minds - for having no light to discern its glory they could have no experience of its power and efficacy. What then shall they do? The notion must be retained that divine worship is to be beautiful and glorious. But in the spiritual worship of the gospel they could see nothing thereof, wherefore they thought it necessary to make a glory for it". (Owen).

"Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter days some shall depart from the faith." But "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion. That chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of mnsick Ilke David; But are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph". (Amos 6:1,5,6)

Under this branch of the subject we have endeavoured to prove that there is a divinely instltuted mode of worship; that in the worship of the Jewish and Christian dispensations there is a wide difference - the one being material and the other spiritual; and that while instrumental music was proper to a "worldly sanctuary" and "carnal ordinances", its use is opposed to the spirituality and simplicity of gospel worship - unauthorised by the precept or example of Christ or His apostles, or the practice of the church, either in the primitive or Retormation periods, but is a part of the Apostasy predicted to take place in the last and perilous times.

Of the other Innovations on the subject of Praise, we will consider briefly chanting and choirs.

6. CHANTING OR ANTIPHONAL SINGING

Chanting and Chancel are kindred terms and both are akin to popery. They have been regarded as popish corruptions and were abolished at the Reformation as such. In the *History of the Waldenses* (Vol. 1. p.233) in connection with the opposition of Henry, formerly a monk, and others, to popery, in the 12th Century it is said: "Baronius adds that Henry superadded this position, - 'That God is mocked by the songs which are added in the Churches'. Peter de Clugny earnestly opposes Henry in asserting this position, but it contains no great crime, and is a testimony against present corruption, for Isidore on *Offices* owns that the singing then used was an innovation. The popes had now abolished the Gothic liturgy in Languedoc, and the neighbouring provinces depending on Spain, and the Roman liturgy substituted was more favourable to present opinions. A sort of rhyming verses called proses were introduced...".

Referring to certain observations by Dr. Cumming, regarding early Presbyterian worship, and the Common Book of Order, Dr. Laing (*Knox's Works*, Vol. 6. p.233) says: "The Presbyterian forms of worship were totally unlike those of the English church by endeavouring to adhere more closely to Scripture and to avoid anything approaching to popish ceremonial worship... Congregational singing was also universally adopted in place of the chanting and choral anthems and instrumental music retained in the English service." Accordingly, in the Book of Common Order the people are directed to sing a Psalm all together in a plain tune. And the Puritans in their Confession say: "Concerning the singing of Psalms we allow of the people's joining with one voice in a main tune but not of tossing the Psalms from one side to the other with intermingling of organs".

Bishops Grindal and Horn wrote to Bullinger Feb. 6, 1567, "For almost all these artcles are falsely imputed to us;... we do not assert that chanting in churches together with organs is to be retained but we disapprove of it as we ought to do." ("*Zurich's Letters*.")

During the reign of James I, which began in 1423, "organs were by him introduced into the cathedrals and abbeys of Scotland and choir service was brought to such a degree of perfection as to fall little short of that

established in any country in Europe." (*Enc. Brit.*) "He brought into divine service a new kind of chanting or music wherein he was expert himself. They placed a great deal of religion in curious singing in those days".(Calderwood)

It is stated that Luther introduced harmony or singing in parts into the service but that "the sterner disciplinarian Calvin refused to admit anything but the simple melody."

It may be noticed that in the edition of the Psalms "Printed at Edinburgh by Henrie Charteris 1595" (if not also in some previous ones) there appeared a kind of doxology in different measures, added as "The Conclusion or Gloria Patri after the Psalm;" the use of which seems at a subsequent period to have been disallowed as a prelatial innovation. After the Restoration of Charles (but previous to any change in regard to the church) notice is taken in the *Mercurius Caledonius* of a minister who, preaching before Parliament on the 27th January 1661, "restored us to glory to the Father, to be sung at the end of the Psalm", and this, it is said, "has been a great stranger to our kirk these many years". (Appendix *Baillie's Letters*.)

Perkins (In his *Foundatlon of Christian Religion*, 1612) says "Will-worship is where God is worshipped with a naked and bare good intention not warranted by the word of God. Col. 2:23; 1 Sam. 13:9,10,13. Hitherto may we adde, popish superstitions in sacrifices, meates, holidays, apparell,..." "To these may be added comfort in musick in divine service, feeding eares, not edifying the minds. 1 Cor. 14:15. Instinus Martyr in his *Booke of Christian Questions and Answers*, 107. It is not the custome of the churches to sing their meeters with any such kind of instruments etc. but their manner is only to use plain song."

The late Bishop Forbes of Dundee, in his last charge to his clergy, thus refers to the Episcopalian tendencies of the Presbyterian churches in this matter: "Another hopeful sign in Scotland is the death of that mode of thought which maintains that the greatest devotion was maintained by the greatest simplicity. ...The inattractive forms of Presbyterian worship are being modified by the introduction of chanted Psalms, organs and other accessories of Divine Worship which would have horrified the last generation. All this must surely be in the right direction; it will develop the aesthetic taste in religion."

The "Solemn Warning" emitted by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders in 1758 states under the head of "Corruptions of Public Worship": "The simplicity and spirituality of Gospel worship is further depraved by what is called antiphonal singing; by chanting of prayers and instrumental music... A great many devised holidays, saints' days, fasts and festivals, are likewise observed; with peculiar offices for the same".

"This imposed model of worship rites and ceremonies, in the public Liturgy, which is in a great measure derived from the popish church, being void of any institution or warrant of Jesus Christ, can have no title to His blessing upon it for the edification of His Church. Yes, in so far as men are thus setting their threshold by His thresholds and their post by His posts; they are really setting a wall between Him and them. (Ezek. 13:8). He left not the ancient tabernacle or temple, or the methods of His worship therein, to be framed and ordered by the discretion even of the best of men; far less has He left the modelling of His house and worship; under the New Testament, unto any human device or pleasure. As in the government and discipline, so in the worship of His church, - the word of God is the only rule; and he is a jealous God, jealous of all deviations from that rule. These human inventions about his worship, which greatly mar the power of godliness and the imposing whereof hath made a woeful havoc in his church, ever since the Reformation from popery, are abominable in his sight, and must greatly expose us to His righteous judgments." (Gib's *Display of the Secession Testimony*, Vol.II. p. 208).

From these statements it is clear that chanting or antiphonal singing have been reckoned, along with instrumental music, as corruptions in the church and associated with popery. Nothing can be produced to shew that this alternate singing was ever practised in the Christian church until the defection from her primitive purity. There is no evidence that it existed prior to the fourth century. On the other hand the authorities cited prove that while it was used in the "dark ages", it was abolished at the Reformation as being contrary to the scriptural purity of worship. And this was done not only in Scotland but in England also and on the Continent. "When all owned the duty, claimed the right and enjoyed the privilege of untidely engaging in all the solemn services of the sanctuary according to the comely order of the word of God, in the preaching, praying and praises of God's house, the psalmody, especially could no longer be left to the chanting of ghostly fathers in an unknown tongue, and to be a mere sensuous round of sounds, expressive to them neither of articulate words nor of articulate ideas." (Dr. Gibson).

Singing is an ordinance of God, and He takes account of how it is gone about. It was while "the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard, that the glory of the Lord filled the temple." It is essential that we sing with the spirit and with the understanding. God cannot be pleased with the mere sound of music. Without grace in the heart the most exquisite singing is to Him as a "sounding brass and a

tinkling cymbal". What a concern then should it beget in us that we serve God in fear "with grave sweet melody", and so not come under the "woe" pronounced by the prophet Amos on "them that are at ease in Zion;" that "put away the evil day and that chant to the sound of the viol."

7. CHOIRS

In the time of David, singing came to have a more prominent place in the tabernacle and a separate order was instituted for that service. Of the three classes into which the Levites were divided the second formed the choir of singers. It was divided into 24 courses and was handed by Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, the masters of the music. These, we read, were set "for song in the house of the Lord with cymbals, psalteries and harps for the service of the house of God." (1 Chron. 25:6) Some were appointed to sound with sounding instruments, and others to sing with the voice. But these appointments all pertained to the Temple service, and to the ceremonial economy. Accordingly, when Christ came, and it was abrogated, the congregation, as in the synagogue, were the only "singers" in the New Testament church.

The praises of the sanctuary appear to have been thus conducted during the Primitive time, and, indeed, until popery was set up. To this Bingham bears testimony in his "*Antiquities of the Christian Church*."

With the introduction of the sacerdotal system came the order of singers. Hence, among the inferior clergy of the Romish church were the *Psalmistrae*, and that part of the church or cathedral allotted to the choristers or singers was known as the *Choir* or *Chancel*. According to Isidore the term is derived *d'coronis circumstantium*, because the choristers were disposed round the altar. The praises devolved on the priests, which, like prayer, were conducted in an unknown tongue. Accordingly, it is said nothing gave them greater offence, nor more excited their violent and persecuting rage, in France, and other places, at the time of the Reformation, than the singing in their mother tongue, by the Protestants, in their places of worship, of the Psalms of David.

The setting up of *Psalmistrae* in the church, confining the singing to professed musicians, seems to have led to a "more refined" mode of singing. At the Reformation, however, the psalms were again sung by the whole congregation. Luther and Calvin restored the scripture order of this part of the service and the people joined in the praises of the sanctuary.

It may be said that the choirs of Presbyterian churches are quite different. But even allowing this, if the root is there, the evil will grow, which recent history abundantly proves.

They appear to have commenced by a few of the best singers in the congregation being appointed to sit near the precentor in order to assist him, as was urged, in raising the time. The idea seemed plausible enough, but subsequent experience shews the danger of this letting in the thin end of the wedge. A choir seat had afterwards to be provided. The singers had to be specially trained. Now, in many congregations, they are professed musicians and have a regular salary. The "refined music" must also be used; and this step attained, it is not unusual for the body of the people to remain silent and listen to the performance as if they were at a concert. We ask: Can this be termed anything but an imitation of, and return to, the beggarly elements?

The evils which necessarily attend such a state of things are obvious.

Instead of the praise being the spiritual sacrifice of Scripture, it degenerates into mere sensuous enjoyment. The music is rendered in the finest style to gratify the audience. Is this other than profanity in the house of God? A worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator? The sacred song is the entertainment, the choir is the entertainer and the congregation the entertained.

Thus amusement is afforded and the third Commandment is broken. The singers admit that they cannot think of the language they are using, as all their attention is required for the music. And can the church be blameless in allowing such a thing? Moreover, when the desire for such entertainment has been created and fostered by the profane use of Scripture, is it to be wondered at that organs are longed for? The late Dr. Lee used this very thing as a plea for organs. He says: "You have introduced choirs.... you have done twenty things and you have not received the sanction of any Presbytery," and why, he asks, should he require authority for his innovations?

We cannot, then, but regard the existence of choirs as in themselves unnecessary and as highly detrimental to the interests of purity of worship.
