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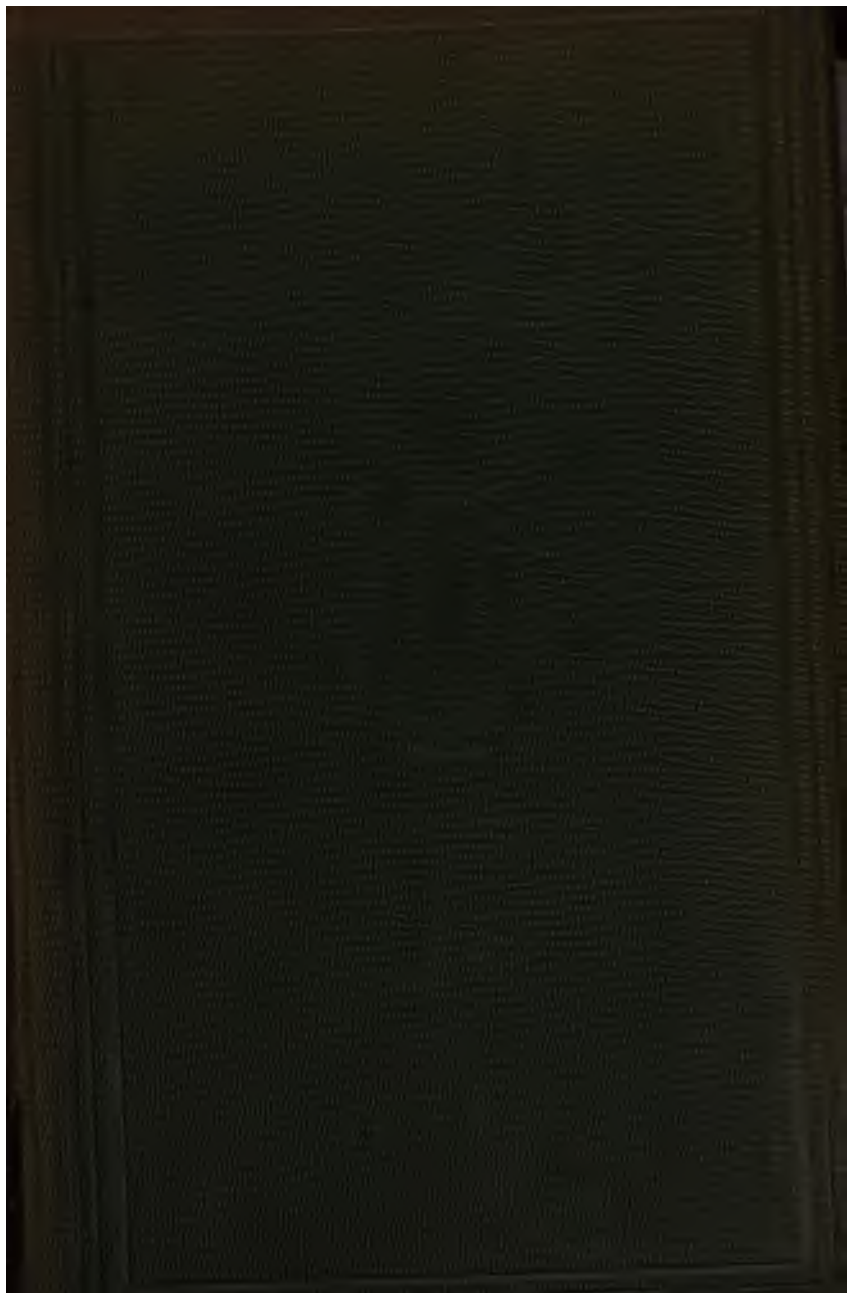
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A

VINDICATION OF THE ORGAN

A REVIEW OF THE
REV. DR. CANDLISH'S PUBLICATION
ENTITLED "THE ORGAN QUESTION."

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER CROMAR, M.A.
MINISTER OF ST. GEORGE'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LIVERPOOL.

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TO THE
ELDERS, DEACONS, AND CONGREGATION OF
ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, LIVERPOOL.

My dear Friends—Allow me to inscribe to you the following pages, intended as a vindication of our conduct in seeking, with such success, to obtain improvement in our psalmody. The improvement of which you are every week witnesses, will be, to most men, sufficient vindication of the means of which it is the result. There are, however, some, happily not very many, who regard the expedient which we have adopted as opposed to the very nature of the Christian

dispensation, and therefore inadmissible in its service. The name of Dr. Candlish has secured a hearing for this very serious charge.

Lest any of you, who now, for the first time with liberty and comfort, join in the offering of the fruit of the lips to God, should be, by the influence of a great name, troubled by the suspicion that you have ceased to be Christian worshippers,—and that the friends of the organ may not be summarily disposed of as men who are not led either by conscience or judgment, but driven by mere sentimentality,—and that I may utter my protest against that style of conscience, so common among those who oppose us, which holds its own liberty by bringing its neighbour into subjection;—for these ends have I, in circumstances most unfavourable, written the following pages.

Trusting that the twofold harmony which now exists among us, may abide with us for ever, and that our every effort to do good may be as speedily and perfectly accomplished as the improvement by the innovation:

I remain,

My Dear Friends,

Your Affectionate Pastor,

ALEXANDER CROMAR.

LIVERPOOL, *April* 3, 1856.

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CHAPTER I.



INTRODUCTORY.

It cannot be denied that the great Free Church Secession from the Scotch Establishment marked the opening of a new era in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism. In the pulpit ministrations, in the educational efforts, in the spiritual character, and in the Christian liberality of the various Presbyterian denominations, we can now trace the beneficial results of that grand exodus. From the moment that the men, who struggled to maintain within the Church her King's supremacy in all things spiritual, had declared themselves to be the Church of Scotland emancipated from State control, they seemed in soul, body, and estate to have been set free. The world was not too wide for the desires of hearts that burned with evangelistic zeal—ten weary miles of waste on which

the inhospitable snow lay deep, seemed no obstacle to him who had that night in barn or school-house to speak to a few simple men of the glory of that Christ whose house had again been ordered after the pattern shewn by himself; and the gold which had grown dusty in secret hoarding places, or was bright only by its contact with earthly business, experienced immediate manumission, and did good service in the Lord's house. The Church was living and the Church was free.

It was, however, remarked by some that the Free Church had gone for her notions of taste to the times and men who had instrumentally furnished her with the example of the doctrine and church government in which she delighted, and the devotion which she so truly shewed.

It was urged by such talkers that Knox and Melville, and the great men of the period of the Covenant, were, without doubt, worthy of the greatest regard, as guides through the difficulties surrounding doctrine and the structure of the Church; but it was also suggested that those Fathers of the Church were not, on that account, to be constituted umpires in every question of taste, external

seemliness and detail, which might arise in the Church existing somewhere about the middle of the nineteenth century.

To this it was answered by those who thought as well as felt in the matter, that the Free Church was very much in the condition out of which the Church of Knox and the Covenanters never rose; was afflicted, persecuted, tormented; could in many places find no rest for the sole of her foot, and had, for the time then present, this as her great twofold duty—to preach the Gospel, and to find a shelter for those who came to hear it.

Besides, it was affirmed that when the Lord had given rest to the Free Church, when she was established in the earth, she would, like David, do honour to her King by beautifying his dwelling-place, and rendering comely the service of his house, as Knox, Melville, and the heroes of the Covenant would have done, if they had not fallen on evil times in which the *existence* of the Reformed Religion was the question that occupied and agitated every heart. It was, moreover, added by those who held this view, that because the Free Church existed *in* the nineteenth century, she must, according to the requirements of a law which no Free

Church Assembly had power to repeal or set aside, be also *of* the nineteenth century: that, if she were not *of* the age, she must cease from holding a place among the living institutions *in* the age: that she was the revival of the good of the past, and must, in order to fulfil her high and benignant destiny, make that good become the life and rule of the civilization, art, and progress of the present: and that thus she would without doubt, in due season clothe herself in such attire as the devotion of the period deemed to be becoming, and the art and culture of the time demanded.

Thus, when I was young, and a preacher in the Free Church, did men talk of the Free Church's future: the truth of their predictions is now as apparent as the fact of the Church's existence.

The felt-roofed shed, called the "Free Kirk," has vanished from the soil of Scotland. Men, as truly Presbyterians as Knox, now weekly worship within a tabernacle fashioned after the pattern of the Romish Gothic: the vessel of homely pewter, out of which many of my readers received their baptismal sprinkling, has given place to the

gilded basin or the font of stone; the sunbeams that once poured themselves immaculate through the hole in the wall, which was indeed a window, now slanting through the gorgeous dyes of the glass-stainer, decorate, with all the rainbow tints, the garments and faces of the worshipping assembly; communion tables now stand from one end of the year to the other within comely rails, after the fashion of the prelatric churches, and the cross, which, according to certain Protestants, has been, and still is, an object of idolatrous worship in the Church of the apostacy, has now its place in Free Church architecture, and forms an appropriate finial to the external structure of the house of prayer.

It is only a few weeks since that I listened with the interest of astonishment, to a friend who related to me a visit he had paid to a newly-erected Free Church. He spoke in delight of the whole structure; of the nave duly separated from the aisles by columns and arches of wrought stone; of the splendid effects of the sunbeams streaming through the clerestery windows on the stained timbering of the open-work roof; and of the chancel arch, with its receding apse, in basi-

lica fashion, lighted so appropriately by its *corona lucis*.

Many of those who now peruse these pages must have discovered that Free Church taste has been turned not only towards form, but also towards colour, as a requisite in the production of a place of worship befitting the service of the God under whose providence the arts and civilization of the present age have been developed. A church in Paisley has recently been re-opened, of the decorations of which, in the polychromatic style, a lengthy description has been given in the "*Witness*" and other newspapers.

As I have not by me any of the prints in question, I cannot give the very words in which the ornamentation is described. It is sufficient for my present purpose that I remind the readers of that glowing description that the gallery fronts are in white enamel, relieved by green, and dusted over with golden stars, and that the vomitories are painted with vermilion, on which rather gaudy ground a frequently-recurring *fleur de lis* in black forms a pleasing diaper.

I am prepared to believe that in every congregation in which such innovations have found friends there was a minority of truly

good men, who conscientiously and stoutly resisted them ; and I am open to the conviction that the majority in every such case thought that the general good of the Church, and the progressive age in which we live, demanded of them to pay little attention to the obsolete notions and old-world murmurs of the minority.

I can conceive of the supporters of such improvements on the old shape of things using, for the conviction of those who differed from them, such arguments as these :

That the form of the house was nothing—the great matter was to secure the power of a purely-preached gospel ; that pewter was no essential of Presbyterianism, and that a vase of stone could communicate no Popish pollution to the baptismal water ; that stained windows were very much the same as curtained windows, and were indisputably more pleasing to the eye than the dust-darkened panes which resulted from an indolent beadleship ; that the reality and efficacy of the communion did not depend either on the table or the rail that surrounded it, and that there was not the smallest danger of the cross, wrought in the sand stone of the district, which surmounts the gable of Free St.

George's, ever becoming an object of idolatrous worship to the congregation assembling in that church while it was kept outside, and Dr. Candlish remained within.

On such reasonings I pass no judgment—I simply record my conviction that the Presbyterian discipline and government are perfectly maintained in the Romanesque church of Paisley; that there is no practice of idolatrous worship in any Free Church congregation over whose meeting-house the cross predominates; that the church in Stirling is not a cathedral, though it looks like one; and that the holy Samuel Rutherford, if he were still here, would be greatly refreshed by the preaching of Dr. Guthrie, even at the moment when the sunlight through the painted windows in the chancel of the Doctor's church casts a splendour, crown-like, on the brow of the first preacher of the time.

While the Free Church has been growing in taste, she has certainly exhibited no decline in spirituality, purity, or faith, and the works which are its legitimate and inevitable fruits.

But the Free Church has not only sought to subject form and colour to the seemingly public service of God; she has also done good work

in calling in art to aid the congregational service of song. Every true Presbyterian must rejoice at the efforts now extended by that community to promote the practice of intelligent and scientific Psalmody. Without doubt this attempt has called forth the conscientious opposition of some who see no necessity for change, inasmuch as they never worshipped with greater comfort than when, "after the good old fashion of their fathers," the psalm was alternately *lined out* and sung. The Church, notwithstanding, has for some time encouraged the cultivation of sacred music. And it will please certain parties to know that, in the demonstrations of certain psalmodic fraternities on which the Free Church has by no means frowned, there have been performed single chants, double chants, and other kinds of ecclesiastical music, of the names of which the forefathers of the performers lived and died in blissful ignorance, escaping thereby from the honest anxiety and ill-defined dread of not a few who now tremble lest their pure and simple church should gain only contamination by familiarity with such inventions of Popery.

The people have, however, anticipated the Church authorities. To attain to good congre-

gational singing, many good Free churchmen believe that instrumental aid is decidedly requisite.

In a tract on Congregational Psalmody, recently published, by the leader of the choir of one of the most important Free Church congregations in the north of Scotland, a musical professor of standing and acknowledged eminence, a man moreover in heart most true to the Church of which he is a member, the following sentences occur:—

“ In now pointing out the means of obtaining improvement, and shewing in what it consists, I may be allowed to make a few remarks upon *instrumental support*. In the Presbyterian form of worship, instrumental aid is entirely prohibited—an arrangement which I would highly approve of, nay, prefer to any other, were the worshippers all skilled musicians, and such pleasing vocalists as to require no such extraneous support. Unfortunately this cannot be said to be the case, and therefore I think our judgment here is greatly at fault, in preferring a system, which would be the best were it not for the reason just stated, to another, which, were the people all good vocalists, would be inferior, but taking things as they really are, is *infinitely better*.

Vocal music, when *properly* performed, is, in my opinion, to be preferred to the same thing accompanied by the organ ; but in our service the difficulties attending its more correct performance, have as yet been so serious, *that they have led many, I am glad to say, to the consideration of the subject of instrumental support in our churches.* The plan of an unaided vocal performance by a large congregation, led by the voice only, is of all others the most difficult to manage in the way of producing the best effects as a musical performance, and from its nature most likely to disturb devotional feeling, so much affected by the outward act. Our greatest professional singers feel that their powers are put to the severest test, when they are left to sing without the efficient and much needed assistance of any instrument ; what therefore may be expected in our case ?”*

It would appear from the “*Witness*” of March 15, 1856, that the writer of the foregoing paragraphs was not reckoning carelessly when he stated that many had been led to the consideration of the subject of instrumental support in our churches. In an article of

* Remarks on Congregational Psalmody, by William Anderson. Aberdeen : A. Brown & Co.

the foregoing date, the following passage may be found :—“ At the present time there are Presbyterian congregations and ministers, not a few who are at least seriously thinking of the matter—some of them within the precincts of the Free Church ; and just as, some few years ere the Voluntary controversy broke forth in its character as a fierce war, debating clubs and mutual improvement societies used to discuss *pro* and *con* the propriety of State endowments, and the Scriptural warrant for State Churches, we have had an opportunity of knowing that similar institutions in the present time find the question ‘ organ or no organ ’ of not less interest, and mayhap not greater difficulty. It is perhaps an equally significant fact, that Dr. Candlish—too busy a man to give himself much to the consideration of merely curious questions which have no practical bearing—should have deemed it necessary to edit at the present time a little work on this very subject, and to herald it by an introductory notice of thirty pages, which, though calmly and temperately written, takes very decidedly the form of a note of warning to the congregations of the Free Church.”

From these extracts it is clear that the introduction of instrumental aid is seriously

contemplated by not a few within the communion of the Free Church.

What the Free Church now talks of, some of the sister churches have already done. Ten years have elapsed since the Supreme Court of the Old School Presbyterians of America granted liberty to the sessions under its supervision, "to arrange and conduct the music, as to them shall seem the most for edification, recommending great caution, prudence, and forbearance, in regard to it." Any opinion expressed by the American Church must command our respect, seeing that our pulpit ministrations are so largely indebted to the Theological Literature of that church, seeing that its Christian zeal and missionary enterprise are examples which our churches may feel honoured in imitating, and seeing that the most distinguished of our clergy have not refused to wear academic decorations, in Literature and Theology, which that Church has seen fit to confer. The organ is widely employed in the American Presbyterian Churches.

The church of the Waldenses, so long imprisoned within her secluded glens, no sooner finds herself free to erect temples in

the cities of lowland Italy, than, despite the fact that her congregations, from the days of Paul, have praised their God with the unaided voice, she, equal to the situation, time, and work for which God has preserved her, adopts the organ as the guide of congregational psalmody; therein affording to other Presbyterians an excellent example which they will be wise in following, when they seek to introduce their form of Church government into countries such as England, where instrumental aid in public worship is almost universal.

Within the bounds of the Synod of Canada the organ question is now agitated, and so strong does feeling run in the matter, that although the Synod has pronounced against the innovation, the organ in the Church of Brockville is, I understand, still in use. On this subject, a Canadian Presbyterian thus writes to me, "The fact is, there is a general movement amongst Presbyterians for the improvement of our praise, and it is found that this cannot be done with effect without the assistance of some kind of instrumental music, and the general opinion is that the organ is better than the fiddle or the fife."

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England—which is the true successor of

the Church of the Commonwealth, and has in two thirds of her membership actual descendants of the men who *came out* with their pastors in the noble disruption which followed the restoration of Charles II., has hitherto tolerated instrumental aid of various kinds in congregational psalmody, and will, I am confident, continue to do so, though mere Scotchmen ministering to mere Scotchmen, in chapels which the English people persist in calling Scotch, and mere Free Churchmen, tarrying in England only till they may, for the greater good of the Church, be called upon to fill desirable vacancies in their fatherland, may perhaps be found denouncing loudly this *awful* innovation. The organ has been used in the worship of the Presbyterian Church in England for upwards of two years at St. John's, Warrington; and the immediate cause of Dr. Candlish's reprint and of this review, is the introduction of an organ into St. George's, Liverpool.

While Dr. Candlish's republication was still in the press, the friends of the organ in Scotland were rejoiced to learn, through the medium of the newspapers, that a congregation in connection with the Free Church's stately sister, the United Presbyterian Church,

had determined to call in the organ's help in their public worship. Just as Dr. Candlish *donned* the armour of the mighty Porteous, and came forth to do battle against the organ, the incorrigible spirit of Dr. Ritchie once more entered into a church within the city of St. Mungo, and so inflamed the hearts of its members with an admiration of the instrument which the caricaturist represented the Doctor as carrying off on his back in an easterly direction, that is, in the direction of Dr. Candlish's diocese, that they determined to erect an organ, of another than the barrel type, which should be at once a good servant of the congregation and a sort of apology, on the part of the city, rendered to the departed man of taste whom it had once so roughly handled. It was observed by a friend of mine, on this intention becoming public, that in the hands of the United Presbyterians of Glasgow the cause of the organ was safe, adding,

"The organ battle, once begun,
Bequeathed by Glasgow sire to son,
Though baffled once, will now be won."

It has fallen, I know not how, to the lot of the Rev. Dr. Candlish of Edinburgh to make the first attempt to check, or, to speak more

mildly, to regulate the current of Presbyterian taste. The editor of the "Organ Question" has for a considerable number of years looked upon the flow of external ecclesiastical innovation, no doubt in sorrow, but still in silence. What his sufferings have been during the period in which he has ministered in a church surmounted by a cross, which is, I very much fear, one of the *superstitious devices* which, according to the "Larger Catechism," are sins forbidden in the second commandment, who may tell? It is sufficient for us to know that there is a limit to human patience, and that he has at last discharged his conscience by striking a blow at one of these innovations, which may be expected in measure to affect the rest—the one selected is the organ.

I am at one with the editor of the "Witness," when he says that Dr. Candlish's preface "takes very decidedly the form of a note of *warning* to the congregations of the Free Church:" it as decidedly takes the form of a note of *menace* to congregations, like my own, not in immediate connection with the Free Church, which consider the organ not so much a luxury as a necessity.

The organ controversy, we are told, "can-

not fail to raise questions *painfully affecting the relations of Presbyterian Churches to one another. It may break us up even more than we are broken up already. . . .* Our friends who would like to see the organ introduced cannot possibly consider it a necessity. At the most it is a luxury. ‘LET THEM NOT PURCHASE IT TOO DEARLY.’” The tone of these words is, I grant, calm, but a practised ear can detect in them an undertone of gathering storm. I see no reason *why a few more* cases of tolerated instrumentalism within the Presbyterian Church in England should render necessary any change in the relations now existing between that community and the Free Church of Scotland. And I regret that Dr. Candlish has permitted himself to publish words which sound so painfully like the first mutterings of an excommunicatory blast “from out the Flaminian Gate.”

I certainly deprecate controversy on the organ question, seeing no reason for our beginning a “wrangle about such a poor innovation on our hereditary mode of worship.” I grant that, because we are Presbyterians, the question must come before our church courts: but the Doctor’s warning, even if acted upon, has come too late to prevent

this, seeing that the movement is not a local and peculiar fact, but the result of a principle which seems to be alive and in operation, through the length and breadth of Presbyterianism.

It must be apparent that the work which now devolves on our churches is in their courts to treat the subject in the spirit of wisdom and moderation.

The editor of the "Organ Question" wishes he had for a little the quiet ear of those who are occasioning, if not causing the discussion of this subject. Surely such conference might have been arranged. Or is his mode of administering private counsel to proclaim his views on the house-top? It was not in the form of a publication containing upwards of two hundred pages that he should have sought to gain the quiet ear of the refractory instrumentalists. The first expression of his desire to arrange a peace is, oddly enough, by casting a bomb-shell into the midst of the party with whom he is desirous of opening negotiations. Dr. Candlish has the honour of having first taken the field—and in another man's harness.

In the remarks on the forbearance to be shewn to those who conscientiously differ

from the friends of the organ, I entirely concur. I hold, with Dr. Anderson of Glasgow, that no such innovation, though excellent in the main, should be followed out, if, thereby, hurt, without remedy, were done to one conscience. If I had known of one Presbyterian, who by the introduction of an organ into St. George's, Liverpool, would thereby be compelled to exile himself from the church of his fathers and of his convictions, and from the ordinances in which alone he could find edification, I should have resisted that measure with my every influence. But I knew of none such, and therefore did not in session oppose the congregation's almost unanimous request to be allowed to attempt an improvement in the psalmody by the introduction of an instrumental guide.

The argument based on the contrast between a church *stopping short in its reformation* and one, more advanced, making a voluntary *return to some of its old usages*, will be properly answered at the close of the organ controversy, not till then, when the churches have agreed whether the expulsion of the organ from our sanctuary service was a reform or a blunder.

In concluding this long, and I fear, tedious

introductory chapter, I must express my regret that Dr. Candlish did not in this case, forsake his wonted place in discussion. Why has he kept himself up for a reply—why on a subject of such importance and increasing interest, has he been contented to publish Dr. Porteous's muddle of special pleading, gossip, and Established Kirk quiddities, when fifty pages, in clear and condensed style from his own pen, in defence of the convictions expressed in the Preface, might have done much, if the friends of the organ are in the wrong, to bring the matter to a speedy issue, sparing me this uncongenial work, and delivering the reading public from their many labours which are yet to come?

CHAPTER II.



THE QUESTION.

THE natural religions of all historic time, while differing widely in their conceptions of the Divinity, have agreed in this—that, in the service of the Supreme, man should not withhold his wealth, talent, most consummate skill, even life itself. In the wreck of our humanity there linger still tokens of the glory which it once possessed: the eye still strives to look beyond the visible to the unseen cause; the heart, even till it ceases to beat, seeks more or less to discover some homage-worthy object on which it may lavish all its affection, and in the return of the love of which it may find rest and happiness; the will, with all its self-sufficiency and independence, waits the advent of a master whom it may obey, and the con-

science points the soul in these inquiries and aspirations beyond itself, and the things which are temporal, to forms of power, of wisdom and beneficence, which are its misty memories of the true God. Gods many and lords many have ruled this world, and men have gladly laid their most precious possessions as offerings of praise before their shrines: every triumph of man's power has in every age been dedicated to the object of his worship. The circle of Stonehenge was, I doubt not, the greatest architectural achievement of the men who erected it, and though some on reading these words may be inclined to smile, it is to others suggestive of instruction to know that this memorial of the existence of our rude forefathers is also a record of their devotion. If the literature of ancient Greece, with its influences on the languages of modern times, could be at once and forever destroyed, we should still be able to judge of its civilization, and should still be constrained to award to it the palm in architecture and sculpture, simply by a study of the ruined temples of its gods.

“Man must worship.” Man has always done so, and his worship has not consisted of a creed only, but of the dedication, in

some measure, of his being and his every attribute and attainment to the object of his religious service.

The law, of which this is a necessary obedience, was written in the nature of Adam, and has not by sin been wholly obliterated from the constitution of his sons. Because of this law men have denuded themselves of their earthly honour, denied themselves the comforts which life affords, passed their days in poverty and suffering, and given even the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls.

This law led the soul of David, quickened and regulated by the Spirit of God, like that of every saint, to dedicate to the God of Israel the glory of genius with which that God had crowned him, and to touch with skilful finger the harp, the notes of which guided the poetic utterance of the holy joy of his heart. In a word, all who have been influenced by religion, false or true, superstitious or intelligent, formal or spiritual, have hitherto more or less shewn the truth and force of the principle, that the true expression of Divine worship is the consecration of *all* to God.

This doctrine seems to have met with little

favour at the hands of Dr. Porteous; and we do not wonder at this, as his whole production manifests a mind better qualified to *know*, than to *think* or *feel*. "When we look into the history of nations, that were strangers to Divine revelation, there, too, we find universally the use of instruments in giving praise to their gods. Such use, then, appears to be something that belongs not to sects or parties, but to human nature. It is dictated by the best of those feelings which the God of nature hath implanted in every bosom, prompting men to employ with reverence, according to the means which they possess, all their powers in expressing gratitude to their Creator. It appears to be such from its existence prior to all positive religious establishments, and from the universal practice of mankind."

Thus wrote Dr. Ritchie forty years ago, and his words have in them truth which cannot change.

How, simple reader, doth Dr. Porteous, to his own sufficient satisfaction, reply to them?

On turning to the 74th page of the reprint, the reader will find that the redoubted foe of instrumental music, like a true son of the Kirk of that period, seemingly inspired

by Dr. Ritchie's phrase, "religious *establishments*," gives the innovating Doctor to know that no reference to laws of nature can in this question be permitted, seeing that he, Dr. Ritchie, is neither a heathen, an Episcopalian, nor a Congregationalist, but is the minister of St. Andrew's Church, a component part of the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, *the forms of which were demanded by our forefathers* in the Claim of Rights, established at the Revolution, and declared to be *unalterable* by the Act of Security and Treaty of Union. By these words we are duly instructed that what our forefathers had a right to demand and did obtain, we, their sons, have no right to ask and never can receive. Dr. Ritchie meekly suggests that the root of the organ movement is in the nature which God has given us; and Dr. Porteous puts him to silence by telling him that that root of bitterness has been plucked up by the Act of Security. Would that that same Act of Security had eradicated the bigotry, religious conceit, and intolerance of many who dwell under its shadow! It has not however done so—the other roots of evil have been left, and it is to us matter of the deepest sorrow to know that the Act of Security, bent on

eradication, made so extremely injudicious a selection.

With all deference to Dr. Porteous, I still hold that it is in our nature to worship, and the grace of God is bestowed upon us to enable us to worship aright, the law regulating the form of that worship being always in accordance with our mental and bodily constitution. The present organ movement is at once an obedience to this natural law and an expression of the Christian consciousness, of which the Spirit of God is the life, and his word the enlightenment, and which is animated by the sense that, while God rejoices in all his children, his children should honour Him with their every power.

The friends of the organ have for a long time asked themselves the question—"Why should the deeds of earthly heroism, why should the love which pertains to time, why should devotion whose object is transitory, be illustrated by the highest attainments in musical science, in the homes and social assemblies of Ch_ri_stian men, while, in the assemblies of the s_aints, the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the e_rry love of their heavenly Father, and the th_vnkful praise of his redeemed children, have no ^abetter memorial than a ser-

vice of song in which becoming order and skill have little place, and whose only satisfying feature is its close?"

A good man, himself a great innovator in church worship, had asked himself long before, "Why should I abide in a house ceiled with cedar, while the God of Israel dwelleth in curtains?"

The supporters of the organ have answered to their self-questioning thus—"Let us in the public service of our God make use of every talent and appliance which the time affords to enable us with seemly order and dignity to lift up our voices unto Him with joy." And after due deliberation they have concluded that the dignified order so requisite can be best subserved by the introduction into congregational praise of instrumental guidance.

Dr. Candlish will be astonished to learn that the men who move in this matter are actuated by conscience. They are under the impression that they should serve God with the best of all which they have and are—that beaten oil alone should be used in His house, and that their offering should be neither the halt, the maimed, nor the blind. These men feel that it is wrong to sing God's praises as

hitherto they have sung them. And not a few of them, on reading the "Organ Question," have felt themselves deeply wronged by finding that its editor, a minister of the Gospel of Christ, and a ruler in the kingdom whose law is charity, should in his preface have distinctly denied them any standing ground in conscience. They may well ask the Doctor, "Is our conscience no conscience, because it has not been made in the image of yours, and by whose authority do you take upon you to announce that there is no plea of conscience on our side? We have to account for every faculty we possess, and, while we shall not have to answer for a transcendent intellect like yours, we still shall have to restore, with *the expected usury*, certain talents which our Master, for a time, has entrusted to us, and we hope to be able so to use our knowledge and taste in the science of music, that we shall meet the approbation of Him who alone has a right to judge in the matter. Our conscience demands of us that we should improve the service of praise: our judgment has ruled that the organ is the best outward instrumentality to effect this, and the movement is thus a conscientious one. No doubt there are 'angry fel-

lows' among us, just as there are 'weaker brethren' in your party who *will* speak words of folly and uncharitableness, but we, the supporters of the organ, as a body, grant that your preface proceeds from your conscientious conviction, and we, as citizens of the Gospel commonwealth, expect that our efforts towards improvement in the service of the sanctuary, for which some of us have already suffered much, shall not thus summarily be set down as the offspring of phantasy or whim."

The organ movement has originated in good conscience. The judgment of the friends of the organ, which is at best the judgment of fallible men, may be by superior minds found to be in error, but until the error has been shewn, they feel constrained to act upon that judgment. They believe that, in order to conduct properly the mass of uneducated and educated voice which constitutes the instrument of our congregational praise, something else is requisite than the treble of a precentor. They are fortified in this persuasion by the almost universal murmurs uttered against the *flattening, sinking,* and *bad time*, so painfully apparent in the performance of five or six verses of a psalm.

The *inward* of congregational praise ap-

pears to them to be the worshipful tendency of souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, and renewed by the Spirit of grace. The *outward* exhibition of this inward tendency will, they believe, be best secured by the following natural and mechanical provisions—

I. Poetry, to fix the form of the sentiment.

II. Musical cadence, to fix the mode of the utterance of the form.

III. An instrument to guide and sustain the expression of the mode; and,

IV. The educated living voice to express it.

These four articles of their creed the friends of the organ would humbly submit to the thinking Christian public. To the third of these articles grave objection has been taken, apart from the argument founded on conscience. This objection has assumed three forms.

1. It has been stated by many of the modern admirers of Dr. Porteous, and has been insinuated by the Doctor himself, that the friends of instrumental music are weary of the service of song, and wish to devolve that duty on the organ. The best answer in this case is an emphatic denial. The

friends of the organ *wish to sing*, and the demand they make is simply this, that a *distinct* and *unvarying* indication shall be given of the melody, time, and accent of the composition in the execution of which they are engaged; and their judgment is, as we have already seen, that, especially in large congregations, the organ is best fitted to perform this duty.

2. It has been said that the tendency of instrumental music in a church is to put an end to congregational singing. To this objection a simple but very sufficient answer is at hand. Has any of my readers, either in a strange land, or in any of our English homes from which music has not been banished, felt the effect on mind and body exercised by the instrumental performance of one of the simple airs peculiar to the home of his youth? Could he resist from indicating in the motions of his frame that the music had not in vain called upon the emotions of his heart to follow it? Could he wholly abstain from following the tread of the notes in the regulation of his breathing? Did he not actually with faint, low voice, seek to associate himself with the instrument in a harmonious fellowship?

It is in the nature of things that a distinct enunciation of a familiar melody should not put us to silence, but lead us out in song.

3. It has been fearlessly stated that the effect of the introduction of instrumental music into congregational psalmody has hitherto been to render the congregation dumb. This objection regards matter of fact, and must be handled accordingly. It can be shewn that in every case in which the organ has been employed to guide the singing of tunes familiar to the people, its presence has been productive of the very greatest improvement. In churches of the English Establishment, of the Independents and Baptists, where the organ is used to conduct music with which the congregation is acquainted, the singing is nearly all that can be desired. And assuredly the Wesleyans, who largely employ instrumental music, cannot with justice be written down as a people who serve the Lord in silence.

I grant that there are churches and chapels, both in this country and in America, where organs and choirs are employed, in which there cannot, with propriety, be said to exist a true service of song. And this is nothing

to be wondered at, when we find that the musical compositions there *delivered* are elaborate ecclesiastical services, or extracts from oratorios, of which the mass of the people know nothing beyond this, that they are pleasing enough things to listen to.

It does not follow that, because the organ takes part in the performance of these compositions, it must bear the blame of their introduction into the service.

My transatlantic friend to whom I have already referred, thus writes on the subject of the decay of psalmody in the American churches—"I do not think that the organ can be blamed for this. It is not so much the organ that is listened to or admired, as the voices of the choir and the complicated pieces of music which they sing. I have heard in a church in Boston a solo sung by an exquisite female voice; it was certainly very enchanting, although very much out of place; the organ could not be blamed for this, as the organ did not at this time play at all. Besides, there is a reaction taking place in the States, and earnest efforts are being made by ministers and devout men to bring the people to sing; but, to secure this, they do not think it necessary to disband the organ,

but to make it an assistant, a leader, as it is already, in many of the churches in the States. The Church, especially in New England, has degenerated very much into the Lecture Room, and this is the root of the evil.

“One might, with as much justice, blame the organ for coldness in prayer, as for defect in singing. Depend upon it, there is a great deal of nonsense spoken about the organ in the American churches;”—a very great deal indeed, not only with regard to the organ in America, but also with regard to the organ in England; in fact, the attacks made on that instrument have hitherto borne an unfortunate likeness to nonsense from first to last: —“I see you are proceeding with your organ, and I presume by this time are using it regularly in your church. Well, I approve of that.”

And the writer of these sentences would be confirmed in his approval, if he could himself witness the improvement in congregational singing which the organ has effected in the church in question. The singing in St. George's Church, Liverpool, in which the organ has taken the place of the precentor, is to my mind the most congregational in its character of any with which I am acquainted in Pres-

byterian denominations. And this is not my own opinion merely—but the opinion of hundreds of individuals, many of them once strong opponents of the organ. A gentleman, of excellent musical ability and taste, who, while he resided in Liverpool, gratuitously acted at one time as precentor, and at another as leader of the choir, writes to me of the pleasure he experienced during a few days recently spent among his old friends; adding, “nothing gave me greater delight than my visits to St. George’s Church. I expressed my opinion pretty freely in opposition to the organ, when it was first proposed to have one; I would now wish to be equally candid, and at once admit that my opinion is now very much modified after hearing the immense improvement in the singing of the congregation. I have had some experience, as a precentor, of how difficult, nay, how impossible it is to get the people to join largely in the singing: again, when the session wished much to improve the psalmody, I consented to lead a choir; but, though I did all in my power, and the choristers did all they possibly could, we in the end found the people joining no better with us, and the few that did sing dragged us so much down in the pitch, and

sung such bad time, that I regarded it as a fruitless task to attempt any improvement.

“I see now that I was in error, for I could scarcely believe that I was in St. George’s whilst hearing the splendid singing on the two Sabbaths of my stay in Liverpool.”

What had been earnestly sought after by means of precentors, classes, choirs, etc., was completely and at once attained when the organ for the first time led out the voices of the congregation in the familiar music and words of the Hundredth Psalm. That day brought to a close, within that congregation, the organ controversy. The organ has proved itself, in these nine months bygone, the best and most reliable conductor of a large mass of voice in the service of congregational praise.

“But,” we are told, “in process of time you may come to listen in silence, like some of the American churches.” This *may* take place, just as Dr. Candlish’s choir may one day monopolize the music of Free St. George’s. But we do not anticipate any such result while the Scottish Psalmody and the familiar household words of our psalms and paraphrases are the channel of the conveyance of the people’s offering of song. The organ

will be found a most obedient servant, and, while the hearts of the people continue alive, under the earnest preaching of the Gospel, and by the presence of the Spirit of grace, will, in accordance with the promise, the fulfilment of which is soon to be the Church's blessed possession, have inscribed upon it the words, "Holiness unto the Lord."

Episcopalians and Independents may, with some shew of reason, object to the organ on such a ground, inasmuch as their congregations may do very much as seemeth good in their own eyes. It is different with Presbyterians: were the organ thus *to cause one of the most important parts of public worship to cease, it would afford a legitimate opportunity for the interference of the Church Courts.* If our Presbyterianism be not a dead letter, the abuse of the organ in congregations under its influence is an impossibility.

The friends of this movement feel constrained to do all that in them lies to improve the service of praise; they have judged that the introduction of the organ would effect this; a fair experiment has been made, and the result has been all that could be desired. The question now arises, Are congregations,

animated by the same desire of improvement, to be denied the use of an instrumentality productive of such excellent results; and are congregations, which have successfully made the experiment, to cease lifting up their voice to God in gladness, and to sit down in the silence and discomfort of the former system?

The friends of the organ answer, "We feel bound in conscience to praise God in the best possible way; we are persuaded that the organ's guidance will secure this, and therefore we at once must make trial of it, and insist on having permission to do so. We deny that any man has a right to fix us down to any external form of worship in which we have long felt the absence of general order and decency, and of personal liberty and comfort, especially when the proposed alteration touches no doctrine or standard of our church." The opponents of the organ have also replied, "We cannot permit you to reach your end by any such means as you propose—let the organ be ever so well fitted, to your mind, for the purpose in question, it can have no place in the house of God. It is a carnal, formal, and unspiritual thing, consigned to destruction with the other component parts of the Mosaic dispensation.

It is against the spirit and practice of the New Testament. It acts as a finger-post on the road to Rome, and, as an innovation, shews the greatest disrespect to the judgment of our Reforming forefathers." Such, on the English side of the Tweed, have been the utterances of the friends of the old system, and they have, by the great mass of the people, been most irreverently laughed at—but now, to cheer his friends in the midst of the repeated failures which have attended their efforts to check the movement, Dr. Candlish uplifts his voice, and, in the hearing of all his admirers in the English Synod, shouts southward his thunderous Amen.

The conscientious objections of these opponents I shall now briefly consider.

CHAPTER III.



OBJECTION FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE organ movement has been characterized as an effort to return to the "beggarly elements" of the Jewish dispensation. If it can be shewn that the instrumental guidance of the congregational praise of God is a part of the Hebrew economy, which has for ever been abolished by the establishment of the economy of Christ, then it must at once be conceded that this instrumental guidance should have no place in the services of the Gospel church. But if this cannot be shewn, I humbly submit that worshippers under the present dispensation are at liberty to adopt this mode of guidance if, on experiment, they find it conducive to the decent and orderly praise of God, and to the liberty and comfort

of the worshippers in taking part in the service of song, provided that in the New Testament there is to be found no prohibition of it. But that we may clearly understand the objection under consideration, let us view it in the very language of those who conscientiously press it.

Dr. Porteous (page 87 of the reprint) thus expresses his mind, very much after the fashion of Dr. Candlish, by telling us what other people think on the subject:—

“It seems to be acknowledged by all descriptions of Christians, that among the Hebrews instrumental music in the public worship of God was *essentially* connected with sacrifice—with the morning and evening sacrifice, and with the sacrifices to be offered up on great and solemn days. But as all the sacrifices of the Hebrews were completely abolished by the death of our blessed Redeemer, so instrumental music, whether enacted by Moses, or introduced by the ordinance of David—or, if you will, of Abraham, or any other patriarch—being *so intimately* connected with sacrifice, and belonging to a service which was ceremonial and typical, *must* be abolished with that service.”

In these sentences Dr. Porteous and his coadjutors state only what *seems* to be acknowledged by all descriptions of Christians; (hear, ye Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Independents, Baptists, and organ-patronising Presbyterians!) they do not formally advance these views as their own; that these sentiments are theirs we learn from the following extracts (page 86):—

“It is evident that the regulations relative to instrumental music in the public worship of God are as much incorporated with the Mosaic or Jewish constitution as circumcision, etc. . . . Therefore we are entitled to conclude that circumcision, sacrifice, instrumental music, and the Temple—the whole of these institutions must stand or fall together.”

It is from these extracts, abundantly evident, that Dr. Porteous held that instrumental music, in the public worship of God, was *essentially* connected with *sacrifice*, and was *ceremonial* and *typical* in its nature.

Hear Dr. Candlish, as, waxing warm, he sinks the editorial character and says something for himself.

“I believe that it”—the organ question—“is a question, which touches the highest and deepest points of Christian

theology. Is the Temple destroyed? Is the Temple worship wholly superseded? Have we, or have we not, priests and sacrifices amongst us now? . . . For my part, I am persuaded that if the organ be admitted, there is no barrier in principle against the sacerdotal system in all its fulness—against the substitution again, in our whole religion, of the formal for the spiritual, the symbolic for the real.”

The name of Dr. Candlish sanctions all this nonsense,—or the temptation to consign the reprint to the embraces of the flames, which in my study grate now leap up and stretch forth their ruddy fingers as if to clutch it, would be too strong for me. These words of Dr. Candlish, to my mind, contain a piece of most vulgar strategy—an appeal to the prejudices of the groundlings of his audience, and cover, I strongly suspect, the unacknowledged cause of his forgetting to assign any reason for the belief which he has so very stoutly expressed. Still the reprint is before the public—it has been *pushed* into the notice of ministers and others within the territory of the English Synod—The “fear and the dread” of the editor’s name will fall on some of the good easy men who

tremble to think of a contest even for the truth ; will also overshadow, more or less, the approaching meeting of the Supreme Court of the English Presbyterian Church, and every similar meeting that is to come until the question is settled ; and therefore there is left to the friend of the organ nothing but, with spirit of endurance, to master every detail of the Jewish economy, and every incident in their religious history, whereby, on making his defence public, he will at once give a reason for the faith he holds, and supply to Dr. Candlish, at moderate charge and little trouble, the material out of which the Doctor may, in due time, elaborate a defence of his objections, grounded on the Old Testament dispensation.

It must appear to every one who reads the words of Dr. Candlish, though they in part assume the questionary form, that he holds that the admission of the organ, as an aid in congregational psalmody, is tantamount to a partial rebuilding of the Temple, a re-erection in part of the Temple worship, a partial restoration of priests and sacrifices, and that, in the nature of things, while the organ has a place in evangelic worship, there is nothing to prevent our ministry from be-

coming a perfect priesthood, nothing to preserve our entire worship from degenerating into a lifeless and unspiritual form, and nothing to hinder all we now have of real devotion from becoming either a symbol or a sham.

Dr. Candlish says harder things than Dr. Porteous, but they agree in the essentials of their creed; that to introduce an organ's aid into the congregational worship of God is, in a certain measure, to return to the sacerdotal, formal, and symbolical system of Moses.

As there is very great looseness evident in the language of the opponents of the organ when they talk of "sacrificial system," "sacerdotal system," "Jewish economy," etc., and as such looseness of expression is acknowledged by all who know anything of logical fence, as something which should be got rid of at the very commencement of any controversy, I beg of the reader to note with some care the following sentences:—

That economy of grace, which immediately preceded the one under which we now live, has with great propriety been designated the theocracy, the God-government, or the supremacy of God.

This theocracy was, from first to last, as instituted by the Almighty, a manifestation

of the prophethip of Jesus Christ : in other words, in its every institution, the Son, the eternal word, in the language of signs or symbols, revealed the purpose of the Godhead to redeem and sanctify the sinful sons of men, thus re-arranging the moral kingdom which, by the introduction of sin, had fallen into such disorder as was dishonouring to God, and productive of temporal and eternal evil to man.

This entire symbolic system was divisible into two parts—

1. The symbolism of Christ's priesthood, also divisible into two sections—The sacerdotal institution, the class or caste of the priesthood, which was a typic representation of the person and official priesthood of Jesus Christ : and the institution of sacrifice and offering, which was a figure of Christ's complete priestly work, his atonement and intercession ; and

2. The symbolism of Christ's kingship, divisible likewise into two parts—The governmental institution which typified Christ's mediatorial kingship over nations, and was a figure of the politics of the time, when "every knee shall bow to Him : " and the ceremonial law which represented

Christ's spiritual-moral government over souls, and was a figure of the ethics of the New Testament dispensation, a picture of the spiritual purity, righteousness, and charity, which were to be the fruits of the Gospel preached not in symbol, but in word, and of the Spirit dispensed not sparingly, but in all his affluence.

These were the components of the theocracy, of the dispensation of Moses. These have been abolished for ever, because Christ has assumed his priestly office, having once for all offered up himself a sacrifice to God, and being now engaged in interceding for us: these have been abolished because Christ as mediator now reigns, and is day by day subduing all things unto himself, and because those who truly call him King are careful to maintain good works: these are abolished for ever, because they were indications through a glass darkly of what the Gospel has revealed, of what the New Testament, the mind of Christ, has brought clearly to light.

Whatever has in it the *nature* of *these*, can have no place in Gospel worship. Whatever of the practice of the Jewish Church did not in nature belong to these, was not *shadowy*,

but *actual*; not *symbolic*; but *real*; and may, if not forbidden by the letter of the New Testament, and if found to subserve its commands, as interpreted by a mind whose consciousness is the work of the Divine Spirit, be still retained and employed in the church of the present time, for the furthering of God's glory, and the exercising of the graces of the saints.

Was the service of praise in the Jewish Church in nature connected with these—was the singing of the psalms of the son of Jesse to the stringed instruments which David the King had made, essentially connected with any of these four departments of the theocracy, so that the one must stand or fall with the other? Such is the question which we propose to answer in the following brief survey of the history of the rise and progress of the Jewish musical service of praise.

*The Tabernacle and its Service as instituted
by God.*

If we wish to obtain a complete view of the first division of the theocracy; that is, of the Jewish tabernacle, priesthood, sacrifices,

and entire religious service, according to the divine institution, pattern, and sanction, we must carefully read the context beginning with the 25th chapter of Exodus, and ending with the close of that book.

In this context we have *five times* presented to us the object of which we are in search. We discover the pattern of the tabernacle and its entire service which God shewed to Moses, from which Moses dared not to depart, and never did so, and from which, departures made by others, were visited with the displeasure of Jehovah. In contemplating this pattern, the enquirer must be struck by the absence of any command or provision relating to the service of musical praise. In the entire furniture of the economy, so minutely described by God Himself, we find no article capable of producing a musical sound, with the exception of the golden bell, which alternated with the pomegranate in the fringe of Aaron's robe, and which was instituted not for praise, but to indicate by its tinkling that the high priest lived, while he ministered before the great God in the holy place.

We find that Moses rehearsed these commands in the hearing of the people, calling

on them to give willingly, and to labour according to their gifts, that the tabernacle and its service, instituted by God, might be erected and established; but in this recital no mention is made of music.

The record enables us to survey the operations of Bezaleel and Aholiab, and the artists and workmen, who, under their superintendence, were employed in constructing the tent, with its furniture, and in fashioning the garments and decorations of the priests; but among the many articles produced we find no instrument of music. Notwithstanding, it is said, "Moses did look upon all the work, and behold they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them."

We likewise find that God, in instructing Moses to erect the tabernacle, again named the various parts of its furniture, indicated the proper disposition of them, and gave command concerning the consecration of the tent, its accessories, and the priests who were to officiate in and about it; but here again no reference is made to music.

We have, last of all, an account of the erection of the tent of the congregation, the consecration of the priesthood, and the in-

auguration of the full tabernacle service. "So Moses finished the work." On the first day of the first month the tabernacle service began, and its silence was broken by no sound but the faint chime of the bells that hemmed the garment of the high priest, as, for the first time, with awe, and not without blood, he glided out of the sunlight into the dim, holy place, amidst symbols, all of which, with his own office and ministry, were to vanish for ever before the better things of Gospel times. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." God received the work as perfect at the hand of Moses, and manifested his approval of it by exhibiting his glory in and upon it.

I think that I may now safely conclude that nothing essential to the existence of the true system of priests and sacrifices, nothing *with which priests and sacrifices must necessarily stand or fall*, was wanting in the services of that solemn day of inauguration. That the sounding of trumpets by the priests


was thereafter added to the performance of *certain* sacrifices, and was, for various purposes, used in the general theocratic economy, we shall soon find; but that this addition to certain sacrifices took place in order to supply an *essential*, either to sacrifice or the priesthood, who is bold enough to say? Nevertheless, if these trumpet-sounds *were essentially*, or, *in principle*, part of, or connected with, sacrifice and the priesthood, the introduction of them must have been to supply a deficiency in that work which Moses finished and God accepted. It is thus clear that musical praise had no place in the Jewish tabernacle service, as it came from the mind of God and the hand of Moses, and that it had of necessity no connection in essence or principle with that service.

The Institution of the Silver Trumpets.

The tabernacle service, as thus inaugurated, continued to be performed for a considerable period. The tarrying of the cloud over the tabernacle indicated to the people that they were to tarry; the departure of the cloud, either by day or night, taught them

that they must depart. "Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents and journeyed not; but when it was taken up they journeyed." It would appear from these words that the tabernacle service, as initiated, was performed for a considerable time.

We find, in the 10th chapter of the book of Numbers, that, by the command of God, two silver trumpets were added to the implements already supplied to the priests, to be used by them—as the only appointed ministers in the four departments of the theocracy—for purposes which, we shall find, had no relation in principle to the symbols of the atonement and intercession, or person and priestly office of Jesus Christ. The institution of trumpets was politico-religious, or belonged to the entire theocratic economy. It was, along with the priesthood and sacrifice, a constituent part of that system. It had a place with them in it, but formed no part of their nature. It was, as we shall discover, an exhibition of the prophetic office of Christ, inasmuch as its end was to instruct and admonish the people.



The trumpets were to be used by the sons of Aaron, the priests, throughout their generations for the reason above stated, that the priests were God's appointed officers in every department of the theocracy. With these trumpets the priests were to summon the assembly of the people, to command the journeying of the camps, to call together the princes which were heads of the thousands of Israel, to indicate by one note of alarm that the camps which lay on the east parts should go forward, and to announce by two notes of alarm that the camps which lay on the south side should take their journey.

In all this we have simply an exhibition of Christ, the prophet, uttering his will as the sovereign ruler of the Hebrew church-state.

They were to be used also when the people went to war in their land against the enemy that oppressed them, in order that the people might be remembered before the Lord, and thereby saved from their enemies. In this we discover the prophetic voice of the great King, the God of battles, calling on His host to follow Him in confidence, that thereby they might be led to assured victory.

The trumpets were likewise to be employed in connection with burnt-offerings,

and sacrifices of peace-offerings, on *certain special* occasions, namely, on days of rejoicing, on the solemn days, and on the beginnings of months; this use of them was to be for a memorial before the God of Israel. We have here a clearly evangelic appliance introduced into the theocracy on those great occasions. When, as on the Lord's Day in Gospel times, there was a great assembly of the people; the sounding of these trumpets admonished the congregation to lift up their souls to God in faith, love, and praise of his ever-enduring mercy, that thus before his throne they might have a memorial, and might be accepted and forgiven through the merits of the great anti-type of priest and sacrifice. In this occasional addition to sacrifice and the functions of the priesthood, the great Teacher sought to impress on the Jewish mind the symbolic nature of the services then existing, to cast light on their shadowy intimations, and to lift the soul, through their medium, into faith's communion with God, who is a Spirit.


The priest and the sacrifice remained unchanged; there was added to them a commentary on their spiritual meaning. This addition was only occasional, according to God's institution. The trumpet accompani-

ment to sacrifice and offering was a rare thing; the exception, not the rule, of the Jewish practice. Sacrifices performed in silence were not the less sacrifices on that account; and sacrifices with the accompaniment received from it no accession of the sacrificial element. Sacrifice and the priesthood existed in completeness before the institution of trumpets took place, and, after its establishment, they came in contact with it only occasionally. The priest had a place in the institution of trumpets, not only as a sacrificer, but as a civil and military chief of the chosen people of God. The trumpet was as much an implement of war as a vessel of the Lord's house; its sound as much a summons to a gathering of the people as the voice of teaching over the sacrificial symbols. The institution of trumpets was thus distinct from sacrifice and the priesthood, and though it had a place with them in the one theocratic economy, it had no connection with them in principle or essence. The institution of trumpets resembled nothing in the present dispensation but the ordinance of preaching. The call sounded by these instruments was the intelligible voice of the Master of assemblies; their battle charge was the

recognized shout of the Captain of Israel's salvation exhorting his faithful followers to quit themselves like men, and be strong in the Lord and the power of his might; and their shrill notes, piercing the air thickened by the smoke of the burning victim, fell on the ear of the congregation as the voice of the very Jehovah demanding man's faith in a better sacrifice than that which then flamed upon the altar.

The trumpets called on men to believe in a spiritual God, and to render to him their service; they exhorted men to praise and worship, but they were in themselves neither praise nor worship rendered by man. For ages no response was given to their command by the early Jewish saints, save the silent worship of heart and conduct. It was not till the days of the gifted and gracious David, that this silent obedience to the exhortation of the trumpets was translated into the audible and harmonious service of praise.

Whether the sounding of these trumpets was *music* or not, the reader will learn on referring to Dr. Anderson's able "Apology." It was, as we have seen, very different from congregational musical praise, inasmuch as it imparted the mind of God for the instruction



of his people, and inasmuch as his people took no part whatever in its production—the whole performance being confined to the priesthood.

We have thus found that, up to this point in the Jewish religious history, the service of praise, which consisted of the singing of psalms to instrumental guidance, had no connection, *essentially* or *otherwise*, with sacrifice or the priesthood, for the very sufficient reason that it had no existence.

We have now before us a wide field, extending from the 11th verse of the 10th chapter of the book of Numbers to the end of the Old Testament Scriptures, in which to seek and discover the place and time of the birth of Hebrew social praise, and its introduction into the congregational service of the sanctuary.

Origin of Hebrew Service of Praise.

Moses had slept in his mysterious grave upwards of four centuries before the service of song, or even music, had any place in the tabernacle worship of the Jews. Between the beginning of the presidency of Joshua and the time of the elevation of Samuel to

the ruling prophetship, a period elapsed, of which, in its religious character, we know little beyond this, that it shewed a general decay of faith, and a neglect of the orderly worship of the Most High. In their forgetfulness of their God, the Israelites shewed forgetfulness of their King. Religion and patriotism were almost extinct when Samuel made his appearance among the benighted and down-trodden Hebrews. His coming, however, initiated revival and reformation in the church-state.

He had but for a brief period exercised his office, "when the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only;" and this turning from idols to their covenant God resulted in mighty temporal deliverances, wrought for them by their Almighty King; "so the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel."

It must appear to the most superficial reader of the Jewish history, that the period now under review was the first of the great times of refreshing from on high with which God's ancient church was visited. The sins and errors of the people were doubtless great and many; notwithstanding, it must be con-

fessed that it was a time of true religious revival.

That social religious exercises were practised, we have evidence in the following incident recorded in the 10th chapter of First Samuel.

The prophet had anointed Saul to be captain over God's inheritance, and was about to send him on his way to his father's house, when he thus addressed him: "Thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them; and they shall prophesy: and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.' . . . And it was so, that, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day. And when they came thither to the hill, behold a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them."

No one, whose opinion is worthy of notice, will be found to hold that the prophecy here

spoken of was either the prediction of future events, or the exhortation of preaching so named in Gospel times. The most popular of our commentators has very happily expressed the true sense of the word: "These prophets," he remarks, "had been at the high place, probably offering sacrifice; and now they came back singing psalms. We should come from holy ordinances with our hearts greatly enlarged in holy joy and praise."

That this is the true interpretation of the religious service of these prophets, is apparent from the 25th chapter of the first book of Chronicles, in which we find, that "David, and the captains of the host, separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should *prophesy* with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals"—the prophesying of these sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, simply consisting in this, that they by their instrumental performance conducted and regulated the singing of the psalms, which had either been collected or composed by David the son of Jesse.

The context of the narrative confirms this view of the prophetic exercise. We are told that God gave Saul another heart. . . Of what

sort was his heart on the day previous? Precisely the same in kind as on the night before his death. On both these occasions he went, like a mere superstitionist, as he was, to Samuel; in the one case holding in his hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver, wherewith he might induce the seer "*to tell him his way,*" in the other, bowing to the dust before the supposed phantom of the departed prophet, and saying, "God hath departed from me,—therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me *what I shall do.*" If the heart of such a man was, even for one hour, changed, what sort of heart would it be? It must at least have been a heart impressed by some sense of the true nature of God; a heart looking beyond mere ministers and instruments; a heart rising into immediate, prayerful or praiseful, intercourse with the Most High; precisely such a heart as could not for a moment resist the inducement of the prophet's song, but must at once rush into concert with theirs, "lifting itself up unto God with joy!"

We have in this episode presented to us a company of men who know and serve the Lord; we look upon them as they return

from the high place, the sacrificial and offertory rites of which they spiritually comprehend ; we hear them uttering, by the guidance of psaltery, tabret, harp and pipe, such hymns of praise to God as Moses and Miriam sung ; hymns which had never, by divine command, been raised in tabernacle of the Lord, or dwelling of His chosen people ; hymns in which no priest had ever officially taken part ; hymns which rose from the lonely highway, far from the altar, and when no priest was near ; hymns that were the irresistible outflow of hearts in which the Spirit of God dwelt ; and in all this we recognise the first recorded example of the Jewish social service of song.

These members of some prophetic college, in the vicinity, must be regarded as of the best educated class of their time : they had given themselves to the good work of the study of God's word, and of instructing the people therein ; and, spending their lives in these exercises, they awaited any special communication which God might see fit to make, through them, to the nation and church which he had named his own. In this company we have an example of the educated, religious society of the days of

Samuel. These men come before us in their exercises of devotion ; and lo, their service of praise is precisely that which the friends of the organ regard as the nearest approach to perfection,—the living soul breathing itself out to God through the living voice, in intelligible words, accentuated by musical rythm, and led by instrumental sound. In this first recorded exhibition of Hebrew congregational praise we have presented to us a service which grew out of minds enlightened and hearts sanctified ; which was not copied from anything in any of the four departments of the theocracy ; which was enjoined in no article of the Mosaic constitution ; which was, in one word, a free-will offering, a spontaneous consecration unto God of the heart's love, the mind's gifts, and the body's skill possessed by the worshippers.

This service of song had no connection of any sort with sacrifice or the priesthood ; it was not symbolical of the *real* service of praise belonging to Gospel times, for that service is now almost universally identical with it ; its instrumental was not symbolical of its vocal part, for “ what a man hath why doth he yet hope for ? ”—it was not formal, but spiritual, inasmuch as Saul, the formalist,

had to be changed in the spirit of his mind before he could take any part in its performance.

We have found the fountainhead of the Jewish service of song: it gushed out of the human heart, quickened by grace, and filled with the love of God. Its progress, right direction, and proper form were regulated by no new statute, but by the power of the Spirit of God, within the human soul, in the nature of which there had always been, though long neglected, misapprehended and abused, the law of praise written by the finger of God himself.

We shall soon find that this service, which was *man in reality raised up to God*, strongly contrasting with the theocratic religious service, which was *God actually condescending to man*, was, in its every part, erected by King David into an ordinance of the Hebrew Church.

Introduction of Musical Praise into the Tabernacle Service, and the Divine Sanction of the Innovation.

When David, with whose gifts and proficiency in poetry and music we are all well

acquainted, found himself established in his kingdom, he, in expression of the abundant grace which animated his soul, "said unto all the congregation of Israel,—Let us bring again the ark of our God to us : and all the congregation said that they would do so : for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. So David gathered all Israel together from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim. And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab : *and David and all Israel* played before God with all their might, and with *singing*, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets." (1 Chron. xiii.)

On this extraordinary occasion David sought to pay, on a more magnificent scale, to the ark of the God of his salvation the same honour which had been rendered to himself on his returning triumphant from the slaughter of the Philistine.

This service was at once special and congregational, and its chief element was the vocal praise of God under instrumental guidance.

The trumpets mentioned among the instru-

ments were the trumpets of the sanctuary, and were, by God's ordinance, sounded by the priests, as on all days of public rejoicing, to exhort the people to lift up their souls to the great Jehovah, that thereby they might present their memorial before Him : and the song led by harp, psaltery, timbrel, and cymbal was the first audible response of a Hebrew assembly to the trumpet's exhortation.

We have here, on an extraordinary occasion, the introduction of the service of congregational praise into Jewish worship. For upwards of four hundred years had God, in trumpet-blast, called on his people to lift up their souls to him : and now, at last, in a time of temporal prosperity, advancing mental culture and spiritual revival, that people made answer to the theocratic summons in the loud outburst of their praise, clothed in the words of poetry, moving in the accent of music, and led and regulated by instrumental sound.

The end of this religious assembly was not perfectly attained until the close of three months, during which time, because of Uzzah's offence, the ark abode in the house of Obed-Edom. At the end of that time, David determined once more to bring up the ark of

the Lord to the place which he had prepared for it. On this occasion also, place was given to congregational praise. "And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be singers, with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy—thus *all Israel* brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord," etc. The musical service was precisely the same as on the former occasion, with this exception, that while the trumpets of the priests exhorted the people to lift up their hearts to God, the guidance of the congregational response was, by David's command, assigned to certain singers and instrumentalists selected from among the Levites.

After having established the ark in its appointed place, David proceeded to restore, in its perfect order, the tabernacle service, the sacrificial rites and the priestly offices: and the record informs us that the trumpets of the sanctuary were assigned to two priests named Benaiah and Jahaziel.

The new service of praise; which had grown out of hearts, influenced by grace and enlightened by the theocratic symbolic teaching; and which, on the two extraordinary

occasions, had been employed by David and the Jewish people, it seemed good to the man according to God's own heart to make a permanent practice in congregational worship.

That all things might be done decently and in order, he selected such of the Levites as were poetically and musically gifted, to conduct and regulate this new department of divine service. He found in the Levites, who were the ministers of the priests and the servants of the tabernacle, the very persons who might becomingly undertake this duty, inasmuch as, being freed from the necessity of common toil, and appointed by God to fulfil certain emergent, but unessential duties in connection with sacrifice and the priesthood, they were in circumstances to devote both time and ability to secure an orderly and dignified service of God.

The congregational service of praise we have hitherto seen to be perfectly distinct from any symbolic institution of the theocracy, and now, even when it is, by David's command, intrusted to the guidance of the Levites, no change has passed on its character: it is still the free-will offering of the people, having no connection, *essentially*

or in *principle*, with sacrifice and the priesthood.

In the restoration of the tabernacle service no change was made on anything essentially connected with the four departments of the theocracy:—the priest remained the same, and sacrifice was unchanged: the priest officiated, the altar smoked, the trumpet sounded as in the days of Moses.

The sacerdotal and sacrificial systems were God's perfect picture of the salvation through Jesus Christ: nothing could be blotted out of that picture, nothing could be added to it: because it was a symbol, it could not be changed, and thus no duty in religious worship which was unsymbolical, which did not typify Christ, could be added to those, which God in the original institution had assigned to the priesthood. Had David's innovation, the service of praise, been essentially connected with sacrifices and priests, then the priests alone could have performed it. But no priest, either in tabernacle or temple, ever did, according to David's appointment, lead a song of Zion, or guide its musical expression, either by psaltery, harp, or cymbal. Therefore the service of praise was not only not essentially connected with sacrifice and

the priesthood, but was so ordered, that no priest or sacrificer had any place in it.

The Levites, to whom David assigned the guidance of congregational praise, did not belong to the *priestly* branch of the descendants of Levi, and the duties which they were appointed to perform had no essential connection with sacrifice or the priesthood. The office of the Levites was a convenience belonging both to the priesthood and to the people.

1. The Levites could perform no priestly act, could execute no sacrificial deed (Num. xviii.),—they could not come near the vessels of the sanctuary, nor the altar: if they had done so, their doom was death, and the priest who permitted them to do so was also doomed to die: they were the servants—the menials—of the priests. The connection existing between the Levite and the priest was precisely that which now exists between the church officer and the pastor, and the service of the Levite bore the same relation to sacrifice, as the church officer's, in pouring water into the basin, bears to the dispensation of the sacrament of baptism.

2. They were also the servants of the sanctuary: they erected, took down, and

transported from place to place the materials of the tabernacle, they cleansed and otherwise tended the house of God, and they were the porters and police of the temple.

3. They were besides (Num. viii.) appointed to *do the service of the children of Israel* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel; that there might be no plague among the children of Israel when they came nigh unto the sanctuary: that is, they were appointed to receive, at the hands of the people, their victims and offerings, and to bear these to the priests in hands which were, by the necessity of office, ceremonially clean; or they were appointed, by administering instruction, to prepare the people in attendance for a right approach to the house of God. It was this feature in the constitution of their office which led David to nominate them the leaders of the people's voluntary service of song.

We have thus seen that the appointed officers in the system of the priesthood and sacrifice,—that is, the priests, the sons of Aaron,—had no place assigned to them in the service of song. And we have seen besides, that the men on whom the duty of leading

this service was devolved, were not priests, could do no sacrificial act, and were for the accommodation of the people, as well as of the priesthood. In David's restoration of the tabernacle service, we have found that he introduced one innovation, musical praise, and that that service, as established by him, had no connection *essentially* or *in principle* with sacrifice or the priesthood.

The temple service of Solomon was in every essential point identical with the tabernacle service of David. This was secured by special revelation made to David, and communicated to his son. The house and its furniture corresponded with the tent and its furniture, with this exception, that the former excelled the latter in magnitude and magnificence. Sacrifice and the priesthood were unchanged, though their accessories were more glorious. God shewed to David the pattern of the temple, as he had shewn to Moses that of the tabernacle. Solomon took the place of Bezaleel and Aholiab, and performed his duty with the same success. The priestly trumpets were correspondingly increased to the number of one hundred and twenty.

David's new institution of praise was also

on a grand scale perpetuated in the services of the temple of Solomon.

The truth of our notions regarding the relation between the trumpet institution and the voluntary worship of praise will become apparent on the careful perusal of the 5th and 7th chapters of the second book of Chronicles.

Whilst Solomon's sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep, was, hour by hour, consuming in the flames, the priests with their trumpets stood on the east (that is the people's side) of the altar: immediately behind them stood the Levites, "with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the King had made to praise the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry," and behind the Levites stood all Israel.

Stand for a moment behind the altar and look eastward, and what do you behold? You see immediately before you the priests engaged in their peculiar sacrificial work: the priests are the types of Christ in his person and sacerdotal office, and the smoking altar which they tend is the symbol of the death accomplished on Calvary:—beyond

the sacrificing priests and the altar, and standing not on ground restricted to priestly feet, you perceive a hundred and twenty men, also of the priestly order, holding the trumpets of the sanctuary,—the sounding of which, at such a time, was an exhortation to a spiritual faith in the great Atoning Lamb, and the very name of which, throughout the prophetic writings, is almost synonymous with exhortation and the preaching of the Gospel: and beyond these, the Levite singers and instrumentalists, backed by the thousands whose song of praise they were appointed to guide, waiting, only for the summons of these evangelic trumpets, to lead forth, by voice and instrument, the united response of Israel in faith and in praise of Him whose mercy endureth for ever; which living response would be to them a memorial before their God.

The trumpet-admonition on this occasion led the people to a right apprehension of the purpose and meaning of the sacrificial symbols, whereby a true evangelic worship was elicited from the great congregation; and the innovation of the assembly's musical response, devised by David, was accepted by God as a service well-pleasing to Him, and received

in a striking manner his gracious sanction. At that moment when the sound of human voice, led by instrumental music, blended with the trumpet-blast;—at that very moment, “the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.” The trumpet-sound said virtually, “Seek ye my face:” then the voice of praise replied, “Thy face, Lord, will we seek:” and at that very moment in which the ready obedience met the divine command, sanction was given to the innovation of congregational praise by the glory of the Lord appearing in the sanctuary.

We have thus found:—1. That music, vocal or instrumental, had no place in the original tabernacle service. 2. That the institution of trumpets was not essential to sacrifice or the priesthood, nor peculiar to them,—was in itself no musical service, and was intended for instruction and for the exhortation of the people to worship. 3. That the service of song by instrumental guidance had its origin in human nature, enlightened by the theocratic teaching, and quickened by the Spirit of God; was a voluntary offering

and an expression under divine guidance of an element of man's original constitution. 4. That the introduction of this service, into the worship of the tabernacle and temple, was an innovation of the gifted and gracious David ; and, 5. That God, at the dedication of the temple, signally manifested his acceptance of this innovation—the free-will offering of man.

In other words we have found that the singing of psalms to instrumental guidance did not belong to any of the four departments of the theocracy, which we have named, GOD CONDESCENDING TO MAN ; and had no connection *essentially* or *in principle* with sacrifice or the priesthood. We have also discovered that the singing of psalms to instrumental guidance (the one always accompanying the other), and which was MAN LIFTING HIMSELF UP TO GOD, was a voluntary service which God accepted with signal tokens of his pleasure.

We have seen that the theocratic symbolism of priest and sacrifice took its rise in the mind of the Divine Teacher and flowed in a continuous stream through all the Jewish religious history. We have found that the service of song sprung up in the spirit-

quicken soul of man, and flowed by the institution of David in an unbroken current through the history of Hebrew congregational worship; and that these two glided side by side, never commingling so that the one could be called an essential of the other.

We have also found in tracing the origin of this service, that it was neither symbolical nor formal, but spiritual and real.

The objection from the Old Testament, urged by Dr. Porteous and Dr. Candlish against the use of instrumental guidance in the praises of the Gospel Church is thus equal to nothing. And lastly, inasmuch as the theocracy and the Hebrew service of song were distinct from each other, and did not of necessity stand or fall together, the friends of the organ,—even now, when priesthood and sacrifice have been for ever abolished by the advent and work of Jesus Christ,—may, if they judge it necessary, make use of instrumental aid in the singing of the sanctuary, provided that no distinct prohibition of it can be discovered in the New Testament Scriptures.

CHAPTER IV.



THE ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IN opening this chapter, I may be allowed to refer to another of the famous questions which constitute the strength of the Preface to the "Organ Question." "Does the Old Testament itself point to anything '*but the fruit of the lips,*' as the peace-offering or thank-offering of Gospel times?" On reading this question, I was disposed to believe that Dr. Candlish had, somewhere in the Old Testament, discovered a prediction that, on the establishment of the New Testament dispensation, the instrumental aid which the Church then used with such seemliness and comfort, would cease to be permitted to give its support even to those who might feel it

to be indispensable. A discourse from the pen of the Doctor, which appeared in the *Psalmist* for February last, has completely undeceived me. Dr. Candlish has made no such discovery ; he has, by comparing some texts from the Testaments, Old and New, found, what we have all long known, that the most prominent part in the Gospel sacrifice of thanksgiving is the rendering, to God, the fruit, the calves of the lips ; that is, articulate speech employed either in telling of his goodness, giving thanks to him in prayer, or singing his praises in a musical composition. In this we are all agreed, and it is just because the friends of the organ believe this, that they are the friends of the organ ; they wish to have the peace-offering of praise presented with decency, the fruit of the lips laid before God with seemliness, and therefore make use of that art which God for such ends has implanted in their nature. That this offering of praise may be general in a congregation, instrumental guidance is employed.

Instrumental aid cannot destroy the essential character of the voice which it regulates—the voice is surely the voice still—the offering of the fruits of the soul's harvest

cannot surely be fatally vitiated by being gracefully disposed in a seemly basket. I presume that David imagined that he was *singing*, when his voice blended with the notes of harp and psaltery in such words as these, "O God, my heart is fixed; I will *sing* and give praise *with my glory*. Awake psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early:" and that he believed that he was presenting the calves of his lips, when to the guidance of the instruments of the chorus, he uttered words of this import, "Accept, I beseech thee, the free will *offerings of my mouth*, O Lord."

Dr. Candlish, in his discourse, has proved nothing more than this—which we all grant—that, in the Gospel Church, we should sing the praise of God; but he has so done this, that many of his readers will be under the impression that he has proved a great deal more; namely, that the psalmody of the new dispensation should, by authority of the Old Testament, have no instrumental accompaniment. Speaking of the offerings of the old dispensation, he says, "Such offerings were commonly accompanied with set forms of thanksgiving, singing of praise, sounding of trumpets, and other sorts of music. Now, in

the more spiritual economy of the Gospel, these sacrifices of thanksgiving are superseded, and, instead of them, there remains *only* THE FRUIT OF THE LIPS."

Now this is exceedingly characteristic, and is amazingly ingenious. The ingenuity will become abundantly apparent to the reader when he is informed that the foregoing conclusion has been arrived at after the study of the following words (Isa. lvii. 19). "I create the fruit of the lips : peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord."

According to Dr. Candlish's criticism, we are by the terms "the fruit of the lips" to understand vocal praise : *I create* is to be regarded as equal to *I appoint* : and the words, "peace, peace," etc., contain the subject of the song of thanksgiving. So that thus, out of a few words of the Old Testament, a very neat and compact ordinance of evangelic psalmody is constructed, which, if reduced to writing, would run somewhat as follows :—"I ordain that, under the Gospel dispensation, men shall with their voices render unto me sacrifices of praise, because of the Gospel of peace which I have proclaimed to them." Having reached this

point it is the simplest thing in the world to add such words as these:—"But as the offerings of praise of the old dispensation, which *were commonly accompanied* with sounding of trumpets, and *other sorts of music*, are superseded, therefore, we have in this text from Isaiah an Old Testament announcement that the peace-offering, or thank-offering of Gospel times is to be the *fruit of the lips without any instrumental guidance.*"

These are not Dr. Candlish's words—they are mine—but they give the meaning of his discourse without the mist of his language, as will be evident to any thinking reader who patiently follows him through the production in question.

We have already dealt with the Doctor's notion, that one half of the Old Testament service of praise belonged to *that* dispensation and the other half to *this* dispensation; we have seen that instrumental guidance in presenting the fruit of the lips had no such connection with sacrifice or offering, that they must stand or fall together; and that thus, while sacrifice and the priesthood have fallen to rise no more, instrumental music has still standing ground in the Gospel economy.

All that I have now to do, in order com-

pletely to demolish Dr. Candlish's newly discovered *Old Testament constitution of New Testament psalmody*, is to direct the reader shortly to the text out of which this ordinance, by the Doctor's command, has grown, "as if by the stroke of an enchanter's wand."

"I have seen his ways and will heal him : I will lead him also and restore comforts to him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips : peace, peace, to him that is far off and to him that is near ; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

These verses and their context treat, as Dr. Candlish states, of the reconciliation of sinners to God by the cross of Christ. God in these verses announces, 1. His gracious purpose of saving sinners : 2. The instrumentality by which this is to be accomplished—the employment by God's ordinance of human speech in proclaiming the Gospel of peace both to Jew and Gentile, with the assurance that through this instrumentality, God *will* heal the sinner : and 3. That those who remain unimpressed by this instrument-

ality of preaching *cannot* inherit the peace which it proclaims.

To translate the term "fruit of the lips," in this case, into the words "congregational singing" is to render these verses utterly unintelligible. These verses foretell the preaching of the Gospel and the consequent salvation of men, and have not the most distant reference to the duty of musical praise. This, I am confident, will be plain to every scholar, and clear to every man possessing an English Bible and English common sense to guide him in its perusal. The study of this context, by the simplest mind, must result in the conviction that Dr. Candlish has confounded singing with preaching.

The Old Testament ordinance, regulating New Testament praise, is thus found to be the offspring of a misconception ; an ordinance of Dr. Candlish's fancy, not of the word of God. There is no intimation given to us in the Old Testament, from beginning to end, of the mode in which the service of praise should now be performed, and if we find no prohibition of instrumental aid in the New Testament Scriptures, we are at perfect liberty to make use of it.

1. Do the New Testament Scriptures con-

tain any prohibition of instrumental guidance in congregational praise? They do not. Their silence is explained by Dr. Porteous thus: "It is not the ordinary manner of the writers of the New Testament to inform us what divine institutions were to be abrogated, but only what observances were to take place under the Gospel." Now, with all respect for this man, "mighty in the Scriptures," I am bold enough to announce, that the writers of the New Testament (whether in their ordinary or extraordinary manner, Dr. Porteous, if he were alive, could no doubt tell us) have most distinctly informed us what divine institutions were to be abrogated.

John, the beloved disciple, reports that Jesus Christ himself announced the approaching dissolution of the theocratic economy, the exponent of which was the temple at Jerusalem (John iv. 21). Paul informs us, once and again, that circumcision has ceased (Gal. v. 6; Col. iii. 11). The same Apostle gives us to know that the Passover is now no more (1 Cor. v. 7). He also informs us that the ceremonial law is abrogated (Heb. ix. 10).

The most superficial student of the Epistle

to the Hebrews must be able to shew that *one* New Testament writer has, under inspiration, stated at length what of the Hebrew service was by the advent of Jesus Christ for ever abolished. Paul in that epistle (chap. ix.), speaking of the Mosaic dispensation as a thing of the past, enters into detail, naming, among the things superseded, the tabernacle with its furniture, the priesthood, sacrifice, and offering. These, constituting the full theocratic service of the sanctuary, Paul tells us, are for ever abrogated.

While it can thus be shewn that every essential element of public worship according to the requirements of the theocracy has been declared by New Testament writers to be abolished, there is not in the entire New Testament any intimation that the Jewish service of praise—which was not enjoined in any theocratic institution, but was the free will offering of the sanctified human heart—should cease, in whole or in part. In other words, the entire theocratic economy is declared by New Testament writers to be abrogated, while the service of praise, always vocal and instrumental, is never once named among the things abolished by the establishment of the Gospel dispensation.

The friends of the organ are thus far free to exercise both their conscience and their taste.

2. Dr. Candlish, in his preface, demands of the reader—"Is the temple or the synagogue the model on which the church of the New Testament is formed?"

To which query the judicious reader will do well to give reply in the interrogatory form, thus—"Is there, with the exception of the sacraments, any department of the service of a Protestant church which was not performed either in the temple or by its ministers, the priests? Was there song in the temple? Was the temple the place of prayer? Did the priests ever read the word of God in the hearing of the people? Did they ever expound it? Did they at any time dismiss the congregation with a blessing? And were all these components of our present Protestant service to be found in the service of the synagogue?"

Whether the Reformers regarded the synagogue as the model of an evangelic church is a very different question. I believe that they did. Dr. Candlish evidently does so; if he did not, he would not attempt to stagger us by the question.

The word of God says nothing concerning the model of a New Testament church—it points us neither to temple nor synagogue, for the reason which will now appear, that to follow either of them closely, would be to fail in producing a service suitable to Gospel times. Good men, possessing knowledge of the Scriptures, have, on comparison, declared the synagogue to be, on the whole, the best known pattern of a church, and the consequence has been that the reformed churches have, in a large measure, ordered their service by the model of the Jewish meeting-house, in as far as that was practicable. Dr. Candlish's question is really equivalent to a statement that the synagogue is the only model of a New Testament church. Dr. Porteous is evidently of the same opinion, and, starting from this point, these doctors imagine that they have for ever settled the organ controversy, when they tell us (page 95) that, "Paul, in all his journeyings, could not find a single harp, or psaltery, or organ, in any of the religious assemblies of his countrymen, beyond the precincts of the temple at Jerusalem." We are thus informed that Paul, in all his wanderings, found in the synagogues of the Jews no musical instrument whereby

the service of song might be conducted. This I hold to be perfectly true. Rising from a perusal of the Acts of the Apostles, I confess, that there was no instrumental guidance of the service of song, for this reason (which will, I trust, be found sufficient to satisfy the majority of my readers), that in the synagogue *there was no service of song*. Relying on the evidence of the New Testament, I hereby deny that there was any musical service of praise in the worship of the religious assemblies referred to by Dr. Porteous. I deny that in the services of these assemblies any place was allotted to psalm or hymn, or spiritual song. In such circumstances, it is not to be expected that harp, psaltery, or organ, *could* have been discovered by Paul in the religious gatherings of his countrymen. If the synagogue, as it is described in the New Testament, must be regarded as the model of a Christian church, then the Christian church must have no music. But if music be, in the New Testament, set down as an element of Gospel worship; while no model of that service is presented; whither shall the New Testament Church turn to obtain a pattern of that service? Unquestionably to that example which

the holy men of old devised, which God sanctioned, and which, as the uprising of sanctified humanity to God, was not abolished with the theocratic system, in which God condescended to man.

Reference to the service of the synagogue can only fortify the friend of the organ in his already impregnable position.

3. The 18th and 19th verses of the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians have afforded matter for a sore struggle between the friends and the adversaries of the organ. If we believe the former, these verses are a direct New Testament sanction of instruments; if we give credit to the latter, they are a direct prohibition of them.

Dr. Anderson of Glasgow is perfectly convinced that these verses legalize instrumental aid in Gospel praise: Dr. Candlish of Edinburgh is as thoroughly persuaded that they denounce the practice and defends his conviction by very consistently telling us what Conybeare and Howson have said on the subject.

How fortunate a thing it is that we Presbyterians are not bound to receive the opinions of fathers, reformers, and leaders of

the church, for more than we judge them to be worth!

The verses run thus: "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

The cause of all the contention is in the fact, that the word *psalm* and the word translated *making melody*, suggest at once to the mind the idea of instrumental music. A *psalm* is with propriety defined, a sacred ode designed to be sung to the accompaniment of the lyre, and the word rendered *making melody* literally signifies, to strike the string of the same instrument. Taking the words in their simplicity, the passage, as far as music is concerned, seems to consist of two parts—the one enjoining the *general* duty of praise in compositions sung either with, or without, an instrumental accompaniment; and the other *particularly* stating that praise, whether it be *with* or *without* instrumental guidance, must always be of true Gospel character, that is, must be an exercise of *the heart*.

If this, the most *probable*, be also the *true* sense of the passage; then we have in it

what the friends of the organ believe to be the Divine Mind in the matter. It is worthy of notice that the *psalm* takes its name, not from its literary structure, but from its association with a musical instrument.

It is also worthy of notice that Paul and Silas in the dungeon, of the furniture of which, it is to be presumed, harps and psalteries formed no part, at midnight sang praises to God ; but the praises they sang were in the form not of *psalms*, but of *hymns*. From this it would appear that words, arranged in the *psalm* form, unlike words arranged in the *hymn* form, had to be expressed in a music, the difficulties of which rendered instrumental support necessary. Both *hymns* and *psalms*, representing the simpler, and the more elaborate musical forms, together with spiritual songs, of which we know little, are thus, in this strife-engendering passage, declared to be parts of evangelic service. Poetry in various shapes and music, vocal and instrumental, are hereby enjoined : and the *all* of art, poetic and musical, is thus demanded of those who would aright serve the God of the Gospel.

But this viewing of the words in their simplicity is distasteful to many. Some men

have resolved that the New Testament psalm shall no longer be a psalm in reality, but a psalm only in name: they allow it to be called a psalm, but they insist that it shall be a hymn, while the divine command is to sing psalms *and* hymns.

Let the voice of Dr. Candlish be heard. "The following is the translation given in Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of Paul*:—'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 note it is said:—'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,' " etc.

According to this commentary, the words which literally run thus, "*singing and lyre-playing* in your heart to the Lord," are to be understood as if they were "*singing, with no accompaniment of the lyre, but of the heart,* to the Lord. The *lyre-playing*, when qualified

by the words *in your heart*, ceases thus to be lyre-playing, and the text becomes a prohibition of instrumental guidance. Conybeare and Howson would thus teach us that, because we are to play in our heart, the playing must be an exercise of inward emotions, not the external expression of these in an instrumental performance.

It has been urged against this view, that the words *in your heart* qualify the *singing* as well as the *lyre-playing*: and that thus, if we adopt Dr. Candlish's view, the singing is to be internal as well as the harping—a spiritual service at once commending itself to the Quaker community. Had the words, *singing*, and *lyre-playing in your heart*, stood alone, one might by a trick of punctuation, have restricted the influence of *in your heart* to *lyre-playing*, and thus have arrived at what would appear a sort of prohibition of instrumental aid. But, unfortunately for Dr. Candlish, it is not so. The foregoing member of the sentence names the kinds of music to be employed, mentioning not only the *hymn*, made for vocal expression, but also the *psalm*, composed for an instrumental accompaniment. So that, according to this commentary, the *psalm* must have the heart's

accompaniment, while the *hymn* may remain a mere utterance of the lips : in other words, we are to praise God sometimes with, and sometimes without, the heart :—when our lips alone are exercised, the song will be a *hymn* : when the heart also is engaged, it will be called a *psalm*.

Such monstrous conclusion is the inevitable result of restricting *in your heart to lyre-playing* : such restriction is unsound : the only comment, which will bear a strict investigation, being to this effect, “Commune with each other in psalms, or hymns, or songs (with the voice unaided, or with instrumental guidance, as circumstances may demand), but, both in singing and in playing, render to God the service of your heart.”

Dr. Candlish, instructed by Conybeare and Howson, very properly considers the verses under examination to contain a contrast between a heathen festival and a Christian social assembly.

If the contrast be justly wrought out, the friends of the organ will lose nothing—but gain much.

In Dr. Candlish’s note we find, as belonging to the heathen feast, *singing with an instrumental accompaniment*. Where, in the

context, is this discoverable? In connection with the Christian assembly! Is this style of criticism permissible? Unquestionably—if the constituents of the heathen revel, necessary to the completion of the outline of the two assemblies, are carried over in the same way to the Christian social meeting. On this principle, which I maintain to be sound in criticism, the following paraphrase of the verses will express their meaning:—“At the feasts of the heathen, men become drunk with wine, yielding to it the supremacy of their souls and bodies:—be not ye so drunken, inasmuch as the Spirit of God alone should so fill and rule you. Drink, therefore, no wine to excess, or in debauchery; so that, by this temperance, ye may keep yourselves always under the influence of the Holy Ghost.

“At the feasts of the heathen, the art of poetry, and the science of vocal and instrumental music are used to express the praise of sinful pleasures and the worship of false gods:—in your social assemblies, let lyre and voice proclaim the praises of the Lord, and let their every sound express the emotions of the heart.”

The contrast of the two assemblies evidently

consists in this, that the one is characterized by debauchery, the other by temperance—the one by carnality, the other by spirituality—the one by musical praise of false gods, the other by musical worship of the Lord. The two assemblies have still much in common. The wine is in both; the lyre-led singing is in both; and the praise of a divinity is in both:—but in the Christian social meeting, the wine is that of temperance, the music, vocal and instrumental, is the expression of the heart, and the divinity, so worshipped, is the Lord.

The contrast of the two feasts is but another mode of exhorting us, whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God.

The art of poetry and the two-fold science of music incidentally make their appearance in the context, and thus obtain the sanction of God Himself, as means to be employed, in the Gospel Church, for the proper ordering of His praise, in the assembly of His saints.

A just criticism of this passage cannot but result in the persuasion that the use of instruments in Gospel worship is sanctioned, if not commanded.

In our New Testament inquiries, we have found no prohibition of instrumental praise; but have, on the other hand, discovered what is at least a sanction of it.

It may still be asked, "Is the *spirit* of the New Testament *for* or *against* instruments? What is the spirit of the New Testament? THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW IS THE SPIRIT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. The two dispensations differ only in *form* and *letter*. The veriest child in theology knows this, that the Old Testament and the New in *spirit* are *one*. If instrumental guidance of psalmody was according to the spirit of the old, it is also according to the spirit of the new dispensation; and if the New Testament has not in letter declared the abolition of instrumental aid, then the *one spirit* of the Old and New Testaments is in favour of the Organ.

CHAPTER V.



CONCLUSION.

THE opponents of the Organ have objected to such an innovation in Presbyterian service not only on the grounds already examined, but on others, the most notice-worthy of which I proceed very shortly to consider.

1. *The Road to Rome.*—Dr. Porteous is pleased to associate the Organ with Antichrist (page 130), and to denounce the doctrine that the labours of genius should be devoted to the service of God, inasmuch as the mind thereby may be hurried too far respecting the manner in which the service of God should be performed, and may be led into almost every corruption which has disfigured Christianity.

A theologian, of the type of Dr. Porteous, did, on a recent occasion, in a ministerial

assembly, with a distinctness and force, for which he is distinguished, deliver himself of Dr. Porteous's notion in the following striking words: "Bring back the organ,—and bring back the mass!" Whereby the majority of his hearers understood him to mean, that if the organ were admitted into a Presbyterian community, that community had secured tickets right through to the *terminus* at Rome. It is true that a younger brother, then present, commented on this rhetorical flourish, thus, "He might with equal justice say, 'Play on the bagpipe,—and bring back the Pretender!'" But this wretched attempt to reason by example on the part of the young man was, it is to be trusted, by every sober thinker little regarded. What this reverend father announced within a church court, his admirers have, without that court, most dutifully and strenuously repeated. This is no marvel, seeing that, with all our advancement, there still is a section of Presbyterian society in whose dialect *organ* is a term convertible with *Popery*. In fine, doctors of some theology have suggested, and men of no theology have affirmed, that to have an organ in the church is to be on the high-road to Rome.

Is the organ so intimately connected with Popery, that, to open the door to the former is to have no barrier to the entrance of the latter? Must the organ and Popery stand or fall together? No. Romanism, the theology of the unreformed church, and Popery, which is its ecclesiastical government, are complete without musical instrument of any kind. That Roman Catholic churches must have an organ, is a delusion entertained by the more superficial Protestants of our large towns. There are thousands of Popish congregations that have in their service neither organ, flute, nor fiddle,—but their mass is nothing the better on that account. The musical service in the Pope's own chapel is performed by the human voice alone, and Romanists think his mass nothing the worse on that account. In fact, Roman Catholics attach no religious value to instrumental music, and use it only as an expedient. If Romanism enter a Protestant church *after* the organ, it is not because they are related as cause and effect.

Can it be shewn that the presence of the organ in a reformed church must change the pastor into a priest—convert the communion elements into the wafer—translate *extempore*

prayer into the generally unintelligible fixity of a Latin liturgy—transmute the visitation of the dying into extreme unction—turn the scanty dividend of the Sustentation Fund into a statute enjoining the celibacy of the clergy—or cause the Memoir of Chalmers to be regarded as a *Bull* instituting the worship of the saints? I ask these questions, and, like Brutus, Dr. Candlish, and the men who ask hard things at municipal and other assemblies, “pause for a reply.”

Has the introduction of the organ into the Congregational and Baptist Churches been followed by one Romish element in doctrine or church polity? In regard to doctrine, these churches are the incarnation of English Calvinism to this day. The Baptist still stoutly denies that Dr. Candlish is a baptized man, which is not the case with Popery; for, on account of his sacramental sprinkling, Rome still claims him as one of her dear, though erring sons. The Independent, like a dogged Saxon, as he is, not knowing when he is beaten, sticks fast by his Congregationalism still, and maintains that *Dr. Candlish, presbyter*, is only a modern variety in the spelling of *Dr. Candlish, priest*. In fact, since the adoption of the organ by

English Nonconformists, things doctrinal and ecclesiastical remain just as they were before. No visible change has taken place, unless that in congregational committees of discipline, and in associations of churches for particular objects, they seem, in some degree, to look towards Presbyterianism: whether this be a looking towards Popery, let the men who ride on the high places of Presbyterianism inform us.

How *did* Popery at first come into the Church? (So again will it enter.) By music? Nay. By any art dedicated to the service of God? Nay. These gifts religion renders, whatever name may be inscribed on the shrine. Art did not make Popery. Popery did not make Art: but it laid hold of it, and often used it for bad ends. Popery grew out of the positive evil of human nature; just as the dedication of mind, body, and estate to religion grows out of the imperfect good lingering in our constitution.

How did they manufacture the first prelate? Why, they very properly revered the pastor of some long established congregation: they called on him to preside in their assemblies: in difficulties, his advice was as law: and when he died, good men mourned.

His place was not long empty, and lo, his successor, a youth, talented, but not overburdened with humility, challenged all the respect paid to his predecessor, and men listened to the bishop of the influential congregation,—and when they did so, he became a prelate, and the father of all such as wear the mitre and carry the crosier.

If I wished to introduce Popery into a Presbyterian community, such as the Free Church, I should not begin with the organ: I should not even anticipate the fulfilment of my desire by building cathedrals in the form of the cross: I should do neither of these things; but I should select two or three men, of such eminent talent and moral worth, that every man must respect them; I should arrange that they should, *in* their own order, and *out* of their own order, appear in the General Assembly of the Church; I should secure thus a *bench of prelates* in an *assembly of presbyters*; I should thus, by destroying presbytery's distinguishing feature, the parity of pastors, break up the constitution of the Church, though this might appear, at the time, only to that class of people who are continually finding fault; and in all this I should inaugurate, under another name, the

lordly hierarchy of a future time. I should thus have accomplished an evil, which, unless God prevented, would survive me for ages, and furnish the Church with prelates and popes to the end of time.

If the Free Church be truly filled with a hatred of Popery, she should "have mind upon herself:" and the men, who, within her, already constitute a Popish element, should either at once descend to the place assigned to them by Presbyterianism, or be of all men the last to affect horror of innovations.

But, to render a Presbyterian community Popish, I should have to introduce the element of priesthood. Prelacy and priesthood are not necessarily coexistent. A prelate is the bishop of bishops—a priest is a medium of communication between God and man. How in the early Church did they manufacture the first priest? If I mistake not the priesthood made itself; "was the architect of its own fortunes."

When the minister of the influential congregation was felt to be a prelate, by the men who justly were his peers, these men consoled themselves by saying, "Well, if he is above us, we are still above the people:" and, while

they bowed to their spiritual superior, they demanded of the people that they, in spiritual subjection, should bow to them. Thus, in due time, men, once named the ministers of the sanctuary, were acknowledged mediators between God and man. If I were desirous of re-establishing the priesthood in the Free Church, I should become an earnest advocate of the claims of the Sustentation Fund: I should, in the Church Courts, press the necessity of officially exhorting the people to greater liberality: I should strive to have it declared by authority that men should not altogether be left to their own notions of what duty, in such a matter, is: I should seek, in some form or measure, to *assess* the people, thus no longer acting as a Protestant pastor, who *exhorts* to liberal and conscientious giving, but as a priest, who, assuming something of God's prerogative, *fixes the proportion* of that liberality. To carry such a measure through the Assembly of the Free Church would be to introduce into that Church the priestly element. Having thus brought in a prelacy and a priesthood, I should leave them; perfectly assured that human nature and the devil, if unrestrained by God, would in time work out of them an unmistakeable Anti-

christ. Once more I say, "Let the Free Church have mind upon herself!"

The organ is better than, to Scotchmen, it seems; and some things which Scotchmen admire are very much worse than they appear.

Popery never grew out of art; it grew out of the evil of human nature. Popery never sprung from art, because art is the expression of a principle in the human constitution which has not been "abrogated," and which, though often misapplied and abused by man's vitiated moral nature, is still, as at the beginning, "very good" in the sight of God.

To talk of the organ bringing back Popery, is to talk very much as a fool doth.

2. *The Fathers and Reformers.*—It has pleased Dr. Porteous to call in the fathers and the reformers of the church to aid him in the demolition of the organ. He exhibits, in doing so, what all the opponents of the organ more or less shew, a real and undeniable Romanistic tendency, a hero-worship, which, if left to itself, must in due course become a worship of the saints. When Dr. Candlish talks of a "common

reverence for the memory of the reforming fathers of the Church of Scotland, and the puritan divines of the Church of England," he lets out his incipient saint-worship. At the same time he shews his knowledge of the opinions held on the Organ Question by the reforming fathers in Scotland, and his ignorance of the views entertained, on the same subject, by the English Puritan divines; from the writings of whom we can still draw a defence of the organ, which I regard as unanswerable, even after Dr. Candlish has entered the field against Richard Baxter.*

Are the fathers and the reformers of the church the authors of our faith—are their views on any subject the rule of our creed or morals? All Protestantism answers in one indignant "No." What place have these men in this matter? The place which the reader occupies, the place which any one may occupy who chooses to push his notions into public notice.

The word of God is our rule of faith and manners. And while we admire the wisdom of the ancients, we claim the right of giving

* *Organic versus Inorganic Music.* By J. W. Lamb. London, Ward & Co., 1856.

their nonsense its own name: and assuredly the trash attributed by Dr. Porteous to the fathers and reformers, and the judgment of the Doctor in building his defence upon it, are a lesson to us, as long as we live, to put no confidence in man. A review at length of Dr. Porteous's extracts from the fathers and reformers would be one of the most laughter-exciting productions of modern times. I judge it best to enter into no examination of Dr. Porteous's extracts, because the majority of these have no reference whatever to instrumental music,—because in some of them vocal music itself is condemned,—and because I wish to preserve the solemnity with which the conscience of Dr. Candlish has invested the Organ Question. Where is this reverence for dead men to end? The editor of the reprint is filled with reverence for the man whose *sternest condemnation* of the organ was, his naming it, the “kist o’ whistles:” may we expect, speedily to be published under his editorship, a reprint of the “First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women,” dedicated to her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria?

3. The use of the organ in Presbyterian Church service is more or less an *innovation*

“within these realms.” Is it to be condemned on this account? No. If the innovation subserve improvement, it becomes an imperative duty. Do we hold that whatever is *must* be right? I trust we do not. Has the Church in its standards pronounced against such a change? No—neither in spirit nor in letter. Why should we not change, if we feel that we shall profit thereby? Let the men answer, who are possessed of a conscience which appropriates to itself all Christian privilege, and portions out nothing but Christian duty to its neighbours; let the men reply, whose tender conscience, clamorous for its rights, would sway the mass of Christian men as with a rod of iron; let the men reply, who, in their utter selfishness and unsubdued self-sufficiency, demand of their fellow-men that they shall become conformed to their likeness; let the men reply, who having no natural capacity to form a judgment, do nevertheless decide in things musical; let the Free Church reply, if it can take such a liberty in the face of the “Organ Question;” and let Dr. Candlish reply, if he can.

4. We have been told that the service of God, under the Gospel, must be spiritual, and

that, therefore, the aid of the organ is inadmissible. Why so? Was David's singing rendered unspiritual by its instrumental guidance? Was his soul dead and dark, when with his lips he followed its movements in the utterance of those psalms, which still most perfectly express the worship of the Christian heart? No; else the Bible is self-contradictory, and truth a lie. Would that both the friends and foes of the organ were largely possessed of the spirituality of the man who said, "Wake *psaltery* and *harp*—I *myself* will awake early: I will praise thee, O Lord, with my *whole heart!*"

An objection, the same in nature, has been made to the *reading* of discourses by ministers of the Gospel. And even in these days of progress there are Presbyterians who believe, that no sermon, written on Saturday and read on Sabbath, can be a direct communication of the mind of God through his appointed prophet. No place, they say, in such ministrations is given to the spirit of God; they are under the impression that, according to the Divine institution of preaching, the mind, heart, and lips should be under the Spirit's immediate influence. They thus deny the spirituality of a sermon read from a paper,

simply because it is a piece of preaching by instrumental guidance.

I pass no opinion on this judgment. I do no more than announce, that the minister, who preaches with the aid of what is technically called a skeleton, does the very same thing as his congregation, when they take the first note of the singing from a pitch pipe ; and that the minister who reads his sermon, word by word, from his *own* manuscript, does precisely the same thing as his congregation, when they express their praise according to the melody and time indicated by the organ. We have pitch-pipe preachers, and preachers with a full organ accompaniment. Whether the former alone are the spiritual preachers, I shall not take upon me to determine ; contenting myself with saying that, if a minister cannot decently fulfil his duties as a preacher, without the support of his manuscript, he should have permission to use it : just as a congregation that cannot with decency praise the Lord without an organ, should not be denied the use of that instrumental aid.

In order to secure spirituality in the service of song, organs avail nothing, neither precentors, *but a new creature.*

We have found in this review that there is throughout the Presbyterian Churches a movement in favour of instrumental guidance in the service of song;—that this movement is the operation of a principle in the human constitution, which in these last times of progress and development cannot but strive to express itself in the service of God;—that the organ is, upon the whole, the best guide of congregational singing;—that congregational praise formed no part of the theocratic economy, which has been for ever abolished, but was the free-will offering of sanctified humanity under the old dispensation, and was, under that economy, accepted by God with signal tokens of his approval;—that the Jewish service of song was not abrogated with the theocracy, of which it formed no part;—that, on the establishment of the Gospel dispensation, no model of the service of praise, unless that which the Old Testament saints employed, was furnished to worshippers;—that the New Testament Scriptures furnish no prohibition of the Old Testament musical service, which was both vocal and instrumental, but, on the other hand, convey a sanction of it; that the use of instrumental guidance in the praises

of the Gospel Church affords no necessary opportunity for the entrance of error, and has no tendency to unspiritualise the mind of the worshipper;—and that thus, the men who now seek to render to the mediatorial king the tribute of a comely musical service, are at liberty to make use of every appliance which the time affords, in order to present the thank-offering of their lips in a dignified manner, and in a way consistent with the advancement of the age in which they live;—that, finally, the friends of the organ are more than justified in their pressing on the Church the employment of that instrument as the guide of congregational psalmody.

Before bringing this review to a close, I must record my protest against the spirit of the Preface to the “Organ Question.” As an English Presbyterian, as an office-bearer in a Church which has no connection with that in which Dr. Candlish is a ruler, unless in doctrinal and ecclesiastical *likeness*, I feel aggrieved by this exercise of Scottish influence on English ground. I am content that Dr. Candlish should still lead the counsels of that Church whose circumstances he comprehends, and which owes so much to

his zeal and wisdom. But while I have a voice in the English Church Courts, no ruler of a foreign Church, utterly ignorant of the requirements of ours, shall, unchallenged, lay down to us what we are to do or what we are to undo in the internal regulation of our affairs. Is the English Synod to be annexed to the Scotch Assembly? Is the organ conflict to be the struggle of a few English congregations to maintain their ecclesiastical independence against a Northern Potentate, a Free Church Czar, who insists, in his great goodness, on being the Protector of their little Principality? If so, let the campaign at once open; the friends of the organ are determined calmly, *constitutionally*, fearlessly, and persistently, to fight until their liberties are secured. Whether the contest be brief or protracted, the end will be the liberty of the English Church.

The great majority of Presbyterians, I am confident, are in favour of congregational liberty in such a matter. Praise is a precept of the kingdom of Christ, but the law of the kingdom contains nothing regarding the musical art or appliances of the service. Why should man shut up a way of liberty which God himself has left open? Leave

the organ alone while it does good,—when it has done evil, you may call it into court, as you would any other offender.

Christ's kingship, the grand distinguishing doctrine of Presbyterians, should suggest to every meditative mind the likelihood of all talent, skill, power, and zeal; all things in private conduct, in domestic life, and in the economies of nations, and all arts, being one by one brought under Christ's rule, subjected to his service, and consecrated to his honour. Men who only *know*, and can comprehend thus the *past* alone, may never have been impressed by this probability of the present time; but those who *think*, and thus mastering the past, become masters in large measure not only of the present, but of the things to come, cannot but conclude that all that is *really old* in our churches, all that has not in it the perennial life of truth, must give place to higher forms peculiar to the age of the world's highest civilization and the era of Christ's highest honour upon earth; and that all of talent and art which can add to the seemliness of the service of God or to the comfort of his worshipping people must have a place in the sanctuary of the Church's highest development.

Christ reigns. Bow to him—obey him—
glorify him—make a joyful noise before the
Lord, the King—awake organ—awake voice
—heart of man awake early!



APPENDIX.

THE mind of the English Presbyterian Church on the Organ Question may be discovered in the following extract from the Narrative, published by the Session of St. George's Church, Liverpool, of their proceedings in connection with the introduction of an organ into that church.

“The result of the introduction of an organ has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the promoters of the movement. The singing has become truly congregational; the entire assembly now takes part in the service of praise; and, to use the words of one who opposed the admission of the organ, ‘To hear the singing of St. George's congregation, is to hear an unanswerable argument in favour of a judicious use of the organ in the Public Worship of God.’

“It is to the Session a matter of sincere pleasure, as it will be to all who desire to see our Church polity naturalized in England, that at a meeting expressly convened to discuss the organ question, the Reverend the Presbytery of Lancashire, constituting more than one-fourth of the

whole Church, resolved, by a majority of fifteen to four, that the mode of leading their psalmody should be left to the Christian wisdom and discretion of individual congregations.—*See note.*

“The Session await the decision of the approaching Synod with confident hope that their every act in this business will, on due examination by judges freed from local prejudices, which warp the judgment of many who take upon them to pronounce on the matter, be found all that the statutes and practice of the Church and the exigencies of the case demanded.

“For the issue of the discussion of the general question they have no apprehension. The time is passed for confounding peculiarities of detail, or the accidents of things, or local practices with great leading principles. And the Church in England, freed as much from the influence of mere Scottish tastes and habits, as from that of Scottish Ecclesiastical control, will, entering now fully on its great Missionary career, wearing the garments and speaking the language of the people amidst whom her work is to be done, become in England a mighty power for the preservation of the purity of Gospel doctrine, and for the introduction and establishment of that form of government and discipline, by which is best subserved in the Church the glory of her Saviour King.”

NOTE.

Extract from the "Messenger" for December 1855.

"Manchester, November 22.—A special meeting was held to consider Mr. Cleland's overture anent the use of Organs.

"Mr. Cleland moved the adoption of the following overture:—'Whereas, the use of organs in the service of God is viewed by many among us, both members and office-bearers, as being inconsistent with the spiritual simplicity of the New Testament Church; and whereas, it is a departure from that uniformity of worship which has hitherto been maintained in Presbyterian bodies in these lands, and, consequently, an innovation which is calculated to give great offence, it is hereby humbly overtured to the Very Reverend the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England, by the Presbytery of Lancashire, to forbid the use of organs or of any other description of instrumental music, in connection with any one of the congregations of the Church.'

"The motion was seconded by Mr. W. Smith.

"It was also moved by Mr. M'Caw, and seconded by Mr. Inglis:—

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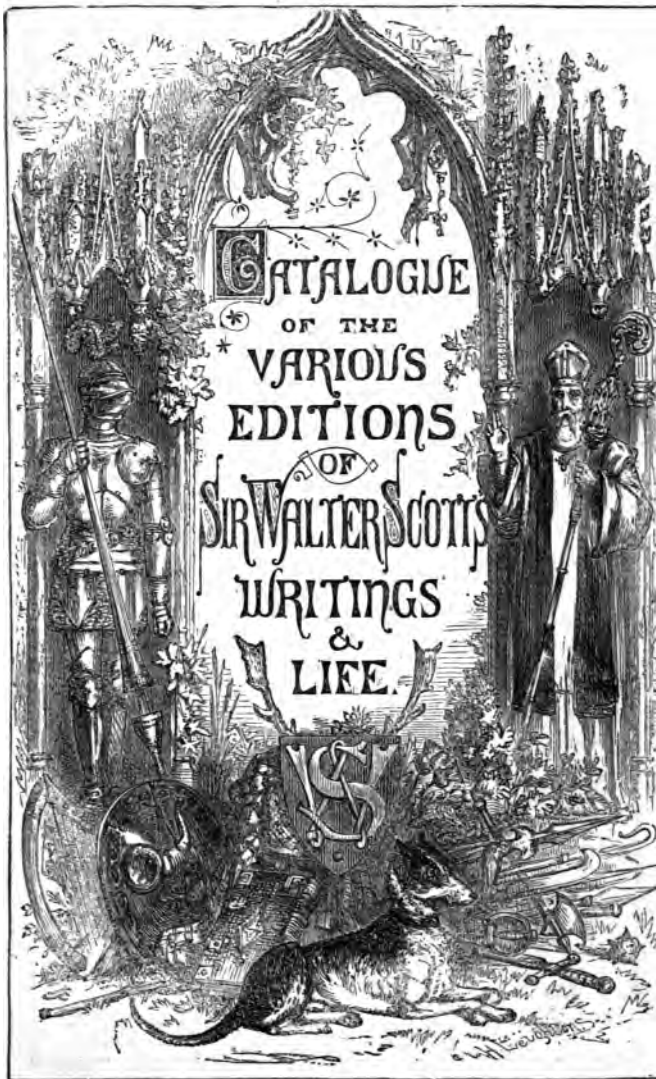
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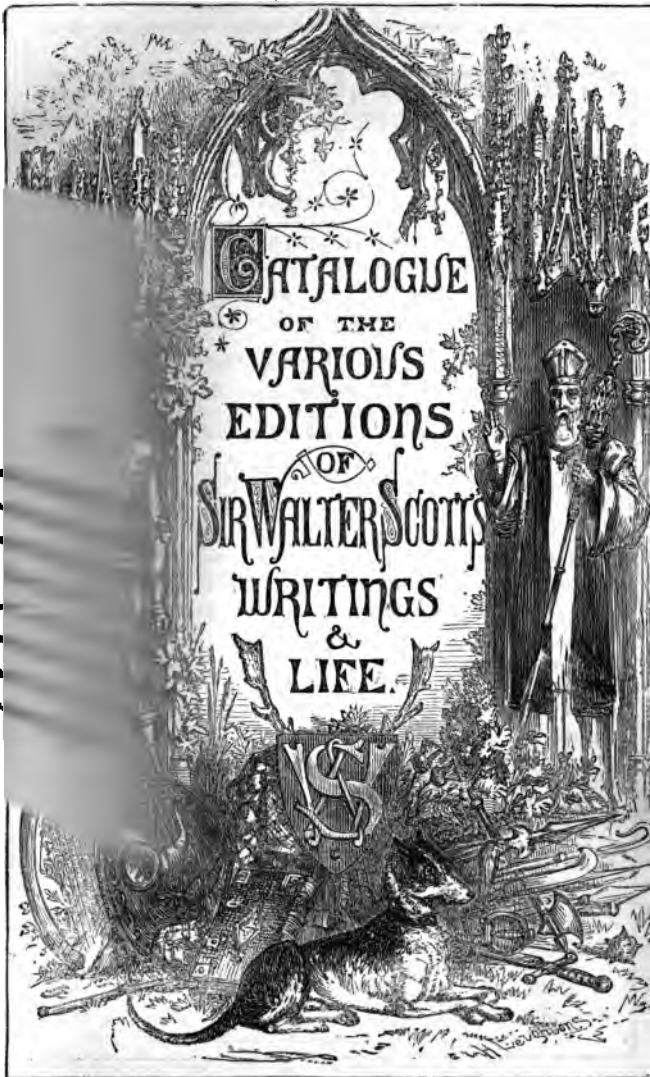
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