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Music a Divine Ordinance

TO THE MEMORY

Of my NOBLE AND VENERATED FATHER, who, in the Morning and Evening Worship of a HAPPY HOME, taught me to love and to sing the Songs of Zion, this Collection of the HYMNS OF THE CHURCH is affectionately

INSCRIBED.

Prefatory Note.

It is not the intention in offering this collection of Hymns to the Church to supersede or interfere with the books used by the several denominations of Christians, but to supply a want felt by many Pastors in these various portions of the Church. There are a large number of Hymns, both ancient and modern, of the highest order, some of which are found in all the Hymn Books in use, but very many of which are not in any of those books. These hymns are eminently adapted both to excite and to express devotional feeling. And are suited alike to the Family Circle, the Prayer Meeting, the Sabbath School, and the Assemblies of the whole Congregation. It has been the object of the compiler of this volume to bring together some of the choicest of these hymns in a form suitable to general use. In addition, a Tune has been carefully selected as adapted to the style and sentiment of the Hymn to which it is appropriated. The aim has been to find tunes plain, substantial, and of an elevated character, and easily learned by the people. How far success has been attained in this very difficult part of the work, those who may use the Book will be able to judge. No doubt some changes for the better will be suggested by experience. But when once a Tune is found to be well suited to a Hymn, *let it be always sung to that hymn.* Thus, Tune and Hymn become identified with each other, and the result will be most happy in promoting good singing by the whole body of worshipers in the Church. Most certainly must this so desirable a result follow if the same hymns and tunes used in the Prayer-room and the Church shall be sung around the fireside of Home, and in the Sabbath School. Both parents and children will then learn to speak the same language of praise, and the voices in harmony go up from all in the House of God. The hope of promoting, in some degree, this desirable end, has prompted to the undertaking this work. And should any success, by the blessing of God, be granted to the labor, this will be esteemed a sufficient reward.

MUSIC

AS A

DIVINE ORDINANCE OF WORSHIP.

PSALM XXXIII: 1-3.

Rejoice in the Lord, ye Righteous :
For praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the Lord with harp :
Sing unto Him with the psaltery,
An instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto Him a new song ;
Play skillfully with a loud noise.

THE religion of the Bible has its origin in the love of God, and in its effects makes manifest His infinite benevolence. In "bringing many sons unto glory" through Jesus Christ, God has designed to show forth His own perfections and promote the highest happiness of man. The Redeemer not only saves from death in sin, and gives shelter from "the wrath to come" to those who flee to Him for refuge, He also secures them to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. He not only sets before them "many great and precious promises," but He also gives to them a present earnest and foretaste of these glorious things. He calms the restless spirit with peace, inspires the heart with hope that can not make ashamed, causes man to be joyful even in the midst of sorrow, and puts a new song into his mouth, even praise unto the God who saves. The Christian receives the oil of joy instead of mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Though he still must suffer, he rejoices; though he sighs, yet for all that he sings.

So far, then, from this holy religion having anything either in its principles, nature, or tendency to diminish the happiness of men, it is quite the contrary. Wherever it is truly received "in the love of it," it cherishes and elevates the social affections, expands the intellect,

and refines the taste. It sanctifies every lawful enjoyment and ennobles every useful occupation, whilst it calls into full play all the faculties of the soul and gives ample scope for the exercise of all the powers of mind and body.

Among those faculties with which God has endowed his creature man, in the use of which he can honor God and derive enjoyment to himself, the faculty of speech takes a foremost place. And no instrument can be compared to the tongue and voice in their adaptation to show forth the praises of the Creator and minister to the delight of man himself. Indeed, the organs of the human voice combine all instruments in one, and far surpass them all. It is for this reason that David, the royal poet and sweet singer in Israel, so frequently speaks of his voice and tongue as his "GLORY." Take for example the following: Psalm xvi: 9. My GLORY rejoiceth. Ps. xxx: 12. That my GLORY may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent. Ps. lvii: 7, 8. My heart is fixed; oh God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise. Awake up my GLORY; awake psaltery and harp. Ps. cvii: 1. Oh God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my GLORY.

And that, in thus speaking of the organs of speech and song, David uttered what God approved, is evident. For not only has God declared His complacency in praises offered to Him in hymned words—but He has put the highest honor upon the tongue and voice in the consecration of them to His special service in proclaiming His Truth and celebrating His worship. And then, on the other hand, no sins are more distinctly condemned than those of the tongue, and no social vices are more abhorrent to God than those which are accompanied and stimulated by the degradation of music and turning man's GLORY into shame.

In order to learn the high estimate that the God of Christianity has set upon Music and Song, and the claim He makes to their use in honoring and worshiping Him, we have but to open the Bible and read. In every part of it we find the same testimony touching the use or abuse of these admirable gifts. From the Genesis to the Apocalypse—from the first Sabbath song when "the morning stars sang together," and all the sons of God shouted for joy over the finished creation, down to the opening splendor of the Eternal Sabbath when the Sons of Glory shall break forth into singing over the perfected new Creation. Everywhere in these holy oracles the Spirit of God, by Prophet and by Apostle, has condemned the maxims and the practice of those who indulge in inconsiderate gaiety and yield to the seductive influence of licentious melody. And everywhere the

voice of the same Divine Paraclete has taught the Children of Zion to make "a joyful noise unto their King," to "serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with singing," to "praise the Lord with harp, to sing unto Him a new song, and play skillfully with a loud noise."

Thus the Christian is to offer unto his Redeemer God, the sacrifices of praise, even "the calves of his lips," and to aspire to the pure and exalting pleasures of sacred harmony.

It is upon this theme I make a few observations, as one of the greatest practical importance to the whole church. And what I desire at this time to say upon this subject will relate chiefly to the ORIGIN, OBLIGATION, and EFFECTS of Sacred Harmony, or MUSIC as an Ordinance of God.

It is of this that the Psalmist is speaking in the precept of the text. For his words have more immediate respect to the music than to the song. This will appear plain from a glance at the verses as they stand at the head of this Discourse. They call upon the Righteous to "praise the LORD with HARP;" "to SING unto Him with the PSALTERY of ten strings;" to "SING unto Him a new song;" to "PLAY SKILLFULLY, with a LOUD NOISE."

I. THE ORIGIN OF SACRED HARMONY IS FOUND IN THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

The organization both of his body and his mind renders Man capable of cultivating and enjoying the melody and harmony of musical numbers. The beautiful structure of the ear affords access for those harmonious sounds by which the delicate nerves are thrilled with sensations of delight. The marvelous structure of the vocal organs gives power to express the thoughts and emotions of the soul in the flowing numbers of poetry and song. And the soul finds the best expression of its deepest and strongest emotions, its saddest and its most joyous feelings, its purest and most elevated conceptions, in the cadence of words or of measured sounds. Hence, Music is a kind of universal language. All nations on the globe, however diversified in speech or manners, are alike sensible to its influence. The most rude and savage, as well as the refined and civilized, amongst men have exercised their powers to invent and to perform in this admirable art. And there are none so degraded as not in some degree to understand and relish its eloquent expressions. Whilst the higher men have risen in the scale of mental and moral improvement, the more has their capacity for the enjoyment of melody been increased, and the more have they striven to render music subservient to culture and

happiness. In the tent of the shepherd, in the palace of kings, in the schools of philosophers, amidst the shock of embattled hosts, and in the peaceful worship of God, the whole current of human emotion has ever been wont to yield itself to the stirring or soothing influence of pipe and harp, of voice and song.

The exercise of the religious faculty, more than any other, draws after it all the emotions of the soul. In the contemplation of the wonders of creative energy and the beauties of the works of God; in meditating upon the power, justice, and goodness displayed in His government of creatures, and in striving after some true conception of the Divine nature, the reason is expanded, full play is given to the imagination, and the soul is roused and fired with the emotions of hope and fear, of love and adoration, toward the Great Author of nature and source of all good. And the adoration thus excited spontaneously bursts forth in poetry and song. Thus, Milton has struck upon the true source of sacred harmony in depicting the devotions of the first pair:

Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In fit strains, pronounced or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flowed from their lips.
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness.

The minds of our first parents, pure and untainted by sin, were no doubt filled with rapture as they surveyed the works of their Creator amid the holy splendors of Paradise. Their joyous and enraptured emotions would naturally overflow in strains of melody. The first use of music was to hail the Sabbath morn of creation and celebrate the praise of God who "spake and it was done," who "commanded and it stood fast." And so I may say of Music, she is the Offspring of Nature, the Daughter of Love, the Sister of Poetry, and the Handmaid of Religion.

II. THE OBLIGATION OF SACRED HARMONY, OR THE DUTY OF EMPLOYING MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

This obligation is manifest, and may be enforced by a consideration of the origin of the Musical Art itself. That origin has been traced to the powers and capacities with which man has been endowed, of showing forth the praise of God his Creator in harmonious sounds, and of deriving the most refined pleasure from this religious exercise. And has God gifted us with faculties which we must not or may not use in His service? Are the ear and the tongue and the voice not to

be sanctified to the praise of Him who has made them the glory of man's frame and the organs of unspeakable delight? Surely no one can assent to such a proposition unless he has already begun to say in his heart, "There is no God." The Theist and the Christian must both agree in the sentiment expressed by the sacred poet:

"With all my powers of heart and tongue,
I'll praise my Maker in my song;
Angels shall hear the notes I raise,
Approve the song, and join the praise."

The testimony of history confirms the correctness of the view I have expressed. The religious faculty has found a means of culture and a vehicle of manifestation amongst all nations in measured words and tones. Music has made a part of the religious worship of the rudest tribes, whilst it has adorned and enlivened and elevated the devotions of the most civilized nations. It is a deep-rooted and universal sentiment of mankind that hymned praise ought to be offered to the Deity. Why is this? I answer, either because it is prompted by the instinctive feelings of man's nature; or because reason has clearly announced its propriety, or because express revelation from God has enjoined it. Or it may be because of these three influences combined. In either case the obligation to worship God with song and harp is manifest and indubitable.

This duty is enforced by an authority higher than instinct, tradition, or reason—an authority to which every Christian will bow with reverent and unquestioning obedience. This authority is God speaking in the living oracle of Holy Scripture. The utterances of this oracle upon the subject we are considering are full, explicit, and abundant. Both by approved example and reiterated precept, the Spirit of God in the Word has inculcated the use of music, in all its varied forms, as a part of worship acceptable to God. This plain and direct sanction was necessary to secure this valuable art to the service of true devotion against a very plausible objection. This Art, it might be said, was indeed pure in its origin, but man has so perverted it by unhallowad abuse, as to make it no longer fit for the service of a God who abhors the polluted in sacrifice. "Sublime and celestial were the anthems of holy and innocent beings when nature had not yet languished at the sight of sin, but bloomed and glowed before them in the unsullied luster of its Eden charms. But at the presence of sin the beauty of Paradise faded; and the fall of man introduced a sad change in the music of mortals. Harmony soon shaped itself to the modulations of sorrow, learned to waft the sigh of the wretched, and poured forth the melting strains of pity and of grief. Music was no

longer the sole companion of devotion. The warsong roused the courage of the hero and animated the sufferer to patience. The dirge wept at the tomb of departed friends. The pastoral cheered the watchful hours of the wandering shepherd, and soothed the solitude of the languishing swain." But the change went far beyond all this. Soon the divine art of music was degraded to the polluted purposes of folly, luxury, and vice. Poesy and song were made to serve at the altar of impure love and to speak the language and stimulate the ardor of guilty passion.

From this sad and sinful perversion of music it might have been argued that it was no longer fitting for the pure worship of a holy God. But the argument will not bear the test of sound reasoning, and the objection is sufficiently answered by the practice of the purest worshipers from the remotest times and the express command of God to honor Him with the praises of voice and of tongue.

The first glorious manifestation of the power of Jehovah in giving triumph to His chosen people over their mighty and implacable enemies was celebrated in that most ancient *Te Deum laudamus*, the song of Moses and Israel at the Red Sea. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord:

"I will sing unto the Lord,
For he hath triumphed gloriously!
The horse and his rider
Hath he thrown into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation!
The Lord is a man of war,
Jehovah is his name!"

"And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them:

"Sing ye to the Lord,
For he hath triumphed gloriously!
The horse and his rider
Hath he thrown into the sea."

From this dark night of Egypt's doom and the morning dawn of Israel's unfading glory, music was consecrated by the people of God to its highest and noblest uses, and became forever after a principal part of the worship of Jehovah, their Redeemer. If, under the former dispensation, the Church celebrated some signal deliverance from trouble and danger, or came with devout adoration into the sanctuary, or kept holy day and solemn feast before the Lord, or gave lessons of wisdom,

or with prophetic foresight declared the counsel of God concerning things to come, she never failed to call in the aid of vocal and instrumental harmony "to give energy to her instructions, expression to her joys, and life to her devotions." Listen to these stirring strains in which the Church calls upon all to unite in the chorus of her praises: "Make a joyful noise, all ye lands; serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing; enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise; for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely. Sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise in the congregation of saints; sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God." "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King; let them praise his name in the dance; let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp!"

And when we pass over from the former to the present dispensation, we do not find that the Church has left behind her the voice of praise. When from desolate Jerusalem she went forth to bear the glad tidings of her Redeemer's love to the Gentiles, and invite them to the feast he had prepared, she took with her her timbrel and harp and tuneful voice, that with them she might teach the nations to sing the New Song:

"Unto him who hath loved us
And washed us from our sins
In his own blood;
And hath made us
Kings and priests unto God
And his Father,
To him be glory and dominion
For ever and ever. Amen."

In the New Testament scriptures example and precept unite, as in the Old Testament, to inculcate the use of sacred harmony in the Church as an abiding ordinance of God and means of grace.

When Jesus made his entry into Jerusalem, six days before his crucifixion, the people met him with palms and with songs of exultation, while the children in the temple took up the chorus of praise, and sang:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
Hosanna in the highest!"

And when it was demanded of him by the Pharisees that he should rebuke their singing, he refused, and said to them: "I tell you that if these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." Our blessed Lord himself led the choir of the holy Apostles at the close of the Last Supper. "And when they had sung an

hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." Paul and Silas soothed their sufferings, and cheered the gloom of their prison at Philippi by singing praises at midnight, so loud and sweet that the prisoners heard and wondered.

It is this Apostle, whose voice first broke the dreary stillness of a Roman dungeon with the music of sacred melody, who writes to the Christians of Colosse: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord;" and to the saints at Ephesus, "Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing, and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." And to the Hebrews he writes, "By him (Jesus) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." And James echoes and confirms the words of Paul, "Is any merry, let him sing psalms."

Surely no one with such an array of Scripture proof before him will question the propriety or duty of praising and worshiping God with audible harmony.

But perhaps some one may ask: Is this harmony to be made by human voices alone, or may instruments be also employed in the worship of Jehovah?

At what time Instrumental Music was first introduced into the worship of the true God we have no certain knowledge. We have seen it already used in celebrating the praises of Jehovah, the Warrior King of Heaven, who had triumphed over the pride and power of the Egyptian oppressor. And from that time forward instruments of music continued to be employed, both in the public and private devotions of the sincere worshipers of God, as calculated to enkindle religious emotion, and add to the pleasures of a hearty worship.

The Prophets of Israel assisted their meditations with the skill of the musician, and gave instructions, or uttered predictions in poetic numbers to the sound of the tabret or pipe. We read of a college of prophets who prophesied "with a Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Harp." And when Jehoshaphat came to Elisha that he might inquire of Jehovah in his distress and danger, it is recorded that Elisha said: "Bring me a Minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him," and he announced the victory of the allied kings over the Moabites.

Under David, music in the worship of God reached its highest degree of perfection. As the Shepherd son of Jesse, he had already won for himself a name as the sweet singer and the skillful player.

As the princely Hero of Israel, the father and founder of the most royal and enduring of all dynasties, he not only gave to the Church her inspired psalmody, but was the composer of music and the inventor of instruments with which to praise the Lord. Much of his time and labor were employed in the work of perfecting this part of the worship of God. When he brought up the Ark of the Covenant from the house of Obedom to the royal city, he selected some most skilled, and appointed them under the direction of Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God, "to give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever." And before he was gathered to his fathers, David had completed the organization of that magnificent orchestra, unequaled by anything of a similar kind before or since, in which not less than four thousand Levites were appointed "to praise the Lord with the instruments which David had himself made." This did not belong to the original service of the tabernacle, nor make a part of the typical ordinances which were fulfilled, and thus abolished by the sacrificial death of Messiah. If typical at all, it was like the Jubilee Sabbatism, a type of the splendid worship of the New Jerusalem in her final and eternal glory, when the groans of the creature shall give place to the melody and harmony of the choir of the redeemed in the Sabbatism of the New Creation.

Instrumental music is several times mentioned in the New Testament, but nowhere, I think, with disapprobation. The words of James imply the contrary. The word which is in the English translation rendered, "let him sing psalms," is literally, "let him play upon an instrument of music." To the Christian Jews, to whom James wrote, it would at once suggest the chanting of psalms or hymns to the accompanying harmony of harp or psalter. And so in the visions of the Apocalypse, as the advancing victories of Christ and his Church are celebrated in the hearing of the Holy Seer, instruments of music accompany the voice of anthems, and swell with their dulcet chords the grand diapason of praise. "And I looked, and lo! a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty and four thousand having His Father's name in their foreheads; and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps, and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." And again: "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the Beast and over his image, and over his mark and over the number of his name, stand

on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

With these Scriptural testimonies before me, I can not doubt for a moment the lawfulness, propriety, and utility of instrumental music both in the private and social worship of God. It stands with those things in which God's people have always and do still enjoy liberty. To sing with the voice is a commanded duty to the Christian; to accompany his singing with a well-tuned instrument is a privilege to be used as convenient. The Christian Church may, I think, still sing as the Holy Ghost has taught in the closing anthem of the Book of Psalms:

"Praise ye the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary!
Praise him in the firmament of his power:
Praise him for his mighty acts;
Praise him according to his excellent greatness!
Praise him with the sound of the trumpet;
Praise him with the psaltery and harp;
Praise him with the timbrel and dance;
Praise him with string'd instruments and organs;
Praise him upon the loud cymbals;
Praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals.
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.
Hallelujah!
PRAISE YE THE LORD.

III. THE EFFECT OF SACRED MUSIC.

All that has been said upon the origin and obligation and use of vocal and instrumental harmony will be illustrated and confirmed by a consideration of the effects produced by each alone, or by both combined.

Such is the frame of our nature that the different tones of music excite emotions in our minds congenial with themselves. Deep and grave airs fill the mind with awe and reverence; the elevated and sprightly inspire with joy and animation; the soft and languishing soothe and melt the heart; while the mournful and plaintive generate sorrow and melancholy. Music has the power of exciting all the passions; it is friendly to every affection which gives dignity to the nature and conduces to the true happiness of man, and only then becomes dangerous to virtue when perverted from its original purity and purpose. Music softens the asperities of temper, refines and ennobles the intellect, mitigates the cares and disquietudes of life, and exercises a surprising power over the depraved passions. And these effects are

often more happily produced when instrumental is joined with vocal music.

The popular conception of "the natural effects of music," says Lord Bacon, "is set forth in a lively manner by the ancients in that feigned relation of Orpheus's theatre, where all beasts and birds assembled; and, forgetting their several appetites, some of prey, some of game, some of quarrel, stood all sociably together, listening to the airs and accords of the harp: the sound whereof no sooner ceased, or was drowned by some louder noise, but every beast returned to his own nature."

There is a remarkable and striking instance of the salutary effects of instrumental music in the history of David and Saul. The mad fury of Saul was allayed and subdued, and the power of the evil demon over his mind was for the time broken under the charms of the shepherd minstrel's sweet-toned lyre.

The History of Medicine furnishes clear proofs of the beneficial effects of Music upon the nervous system, in the treatment of some forms of disease.

But the Moral effects of this Heaven-sent Art are more interesting and important, and far surpass its influence upon the mere physical nature. As an Ordinance of God, to be used in our approach to Him in acts of devout worship, it addresses man as a rational being, and aims to carry home divine and saving truth to his heart through the medium of the senses, and by the union of sentiment and sound in agreeable cadence. The main design of sacred psalmody is to enlighten, to persuade, and to cheer. When a psalm or hymn, or spiritual song, expressing the truths of Christianity in their purity and simplicity, is rehearsed with rhythmical sounds, which correspond to the sense of the words uttered, the result will seldom fail to be a deep impression of the reality and importance and beauty of the religion of Christ. The Apostle recognizes the value of this ordinance and its effective influence, when showing the uselessness to the Church of praying or singing in an unknown or inarticulate tongue, he says: "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also." And as a most valuable vehicle of conveying truth to the mind, he commends Christians to employ the voice of melody in teaching and admonishing one another. And he teaches us that the most powerful and blessed results are to be expected from the skillful and constant use of music in the churches of Christ. The experience of centuries has attested the wisdom of the Apostle. The best influences of the Holy Spirit have ever accompanied the study and use of sacred

harmony in the worship of the Church Catholic. It is, indeed, the Holy Comforter who gives saving efficacy to the Word and Ordinances. And it is through the Truth that men are renewed and sanctified. But the truth is most effectually brought into contact with the soul when uttered with the living voice. And when prompted and accompanied by the inward working of the Spirit, sanctified music has a divine power to awaken the soul to a perception of the truth, and to excite, expand, revive and strengthen every holy affection. Not a few are the instances of persons who have traced their first serious impressions of gospel truth to hearing others sing a few verses of some hymn or psalm. The case of Jack the Sailor has often found its parallel. Dissatisfied in the midst of his wild and roaming life, he passes the door of an humble working-woman, and hears her singing cheerily at her work the simple refrain :

“I'm a poor sinner,
And nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ
Is my All in all.”

The melody and the words penetrate deep into the weather-beaten seaman's heart. The Holy Spirit fixes them there, and quickens the good seed into life. And Jack, the wild sailor lad, is soon joining the chorus of that vast multitude who have learned to sing the same humble song:

I'M A POOR SINNER,
AND NOTHING AT ALL,
BUT JESUS CHRIST
IS MY ALL IN ALL.”

Another example to the same effect I take from a recent occurrence in a far different circle of life. The daughter of an English nobleman was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. Her father, by threats, temptations to extravagance in dress, by reading, by traveling in foreign countries and to places of fashionable resort, took every means to divert her mind from things unseen and eternal. But her heart was fixed. She was determined that nothing should deprive her of her eternal portion in her Redeemer, or displace Him from the centre of her heart, or lead her to discredit her faith and joy in the profession of His glorious name.

At length her father resolved upon a final and desperate expedient by which his end he hoped should be gained. A large company of the nobility were invited to his house. It was so arranged that, during the festivities, the daughters of different noblemen, and among others, this one, were to be called upon to entertain the company with singing and

music on the piano-forte of a *special*ly light and *world*ly character. If she complied, she forfeited her good conscience and returned to the world; if she refused compliance, she would lose, beyond the possibility of recovery, her position in society. The ordeal was indeed fiery. Different individuals, at the call of the company, performed their parts with the greatest applause. At last the name of this daughter was called. In a moment all were in fixed and silent suspense to see how she would act. Without hesitation, and with a calm and dignified composure, she took her place at the instrument. After a moment spent in silent prayer, she ran her fingers along the keys, and then, with sweetness, elevation, and solemnity, sang—accompanying her voice with the notes of the instrument—the following stanzas:

No room for mirth or trifling here,
For worldly hope, or worldly fear,
 If life so soon be gone;
If now the Judge is at the door,
And all mankind must stand before
 The inexorable throne.

No matter which my thoughts employ,
A moment's misery or joy;
 But oh! when both shall end,
Where shall I find my destined place?
Shall I my everlasting days
 With fiends or angels spend?

Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
 That never, NEVER dies!
How make mine own election sure,
And when I fail on earth, secure
 A mansion in the skies!

Jesus, vouchsafe a pitying ray;
Be thou my Guide; be thou my Way
 To glorious happiness.
Oh! write my pardon on my heart,
And whenso'er I hence depart,
 Let me depart in peace.

The minstrel ceased. The solemnity of Eternity was upon that assembly. Without speaking, they dispersed. The father wept aloud, and, when left alone, sought the counsel and prayers of his daughter for the salvation of his soul. He at length found that salvation, and his great estate was consecrated to the Saviour.

Under the benign influence of sacred harmony, the hardened spirit is melted with penitential sorrow; the penitent believer rises upon the wings of hope from the depths of despair; the Christian

soldier burns with generous ardor in the warfare with sin. The prophet connects the joy and melody of Zion when he says:

Joy and gladness shall be found therein,
Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

The darkness of affliction is cheered and the weariness of his journeying is lightened to the Christian by those "songs in the night" which his Redeemer gives him in this "the house of his pilgrimage." Nor does the singing of the ransomed sinner cease with the parting breath of this life. It indeed only then begins in its true perfection, sweetness, and purity. The Harp and Song he has laid down beside the grave shall be taken up again with sweeter chords and more tuneful notes, when bursting the bars of the tomb he shall come forth more than a conqueror over death and the grave. In that world to come, the undimmed eye of immortal youth shall gaze with rapture upon the unsullied beauties of the new creation; the untired ear shall catch the notes of its seraphic music; the unwearied voice shall break forth into singing the Eternal Anthem.

To the general views now presented on the interesting and important subject of Music as a divine ordinance of the religion of Christ, I will add two or three suggestions bearing upon the best method of promoting the use of sacred harmony in the services of the Church.

1. Music, and especially music in the worship of God, ought to be simple and adapted to the contents of the psalm or hymn to which it is sung or played. Where this simplicity and adaptation are wanting, a vain fancy may be tickled or a corrupt taste for the moment be gratified, but no permanent impression for good can be made. "Simplicity in music," says an excellent writer, "is not at all incompatible with that variety of modulation and expression which are necessary to its full effect. But it stands opposed to complex and fantastical compositions, to useless repetitions, drawling syncopations of several bars, long slurs, and quick bandied notes. In such tunes there can be no just regard paid to the proper emphasis, cadence, or pronunciation. And thus the proprieties of language and the graces of poetry are marred and destroyed." The Apostle Paul, with his usual good taste and felicity of illustration has set this fault in its true light. "And even things without life," says he, "giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?" Much more may it be asked when the words of a hymn or psalm are so intoned or mouthed as to destroy all distinctness, "How shall it be known

what is said or sung?" No matter how excellent the words or how well adapted the tune to the sentiment they express, if good pronunciation is wanting the real design of church music is defeated, and its moral effects lost. And so, when instrumental music is combined with vocal, it should never be allowed to drown the voice of the singers so that the words of the song can not be distinctly heard. Let it then be constantly borne in mind that it is a rule of first importance in sacred harmony that they who sing, and especially they who lead the music, shall pronounce in a clear, articulate, audible manner, so that all may understand what is sung.

Those tunes called solos have sometimes the very finest effect. No one that had the pleasure of hearing the "Swedish Nightingale"—Jenny Lind—could ever forget her singing those words of believing hope, once chanted by Job amid the ashes of affliction: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And all can recall the thrilling effect of the sad song, "Too late! Too late!" as sung in this place by one of our own sweet singers. The duet, too, especially in responsive pieces, may be used with admirable effect. Nor ought the Anthem or the Chant to be left out of the music of the Church. But those compositions which include all the four parts are in general best adapted to the worship of the Church, so that the whole congregation may join in the singing—the organ playing and the choir leading in harmony the several parts, whilst the congregation take up the melody in unison. And it is one of the great advantages of combining the choir with the congregation, that it affords the fullest opportunity of bringing into the service of the Church all those varieties of sacred song which God has approved in His worship.

I am persuaded, too, that it would be greatly promotive of good congregational singing if the Hymns and the Tunes sung in each church were so uniformly joined together, as that it should come to be that the words of the hymn and the tune attached to it being associated in the mind would mutually suggest each other.

2. It is a Christian duty to endeavor to acquire so much knowledge of music as to be able to practice it with ease and propriety in the praise of God. It is rare to find any one so destitute of ear and voice as to be quite unable to learn to sing correctly. The capacity to enjoy and execute sacred melodies is a gift of God, to be consecrated to His glory. It is not a talent to be used merely for our own personal gratification. It is a trust to be improved for His honor, in doing which we promote our own enjoyment.

But what if we suffer this noble gift to lie unimproved? Or what, if worse than this, we pervert it to improper purposes, or make use of it

only for idle amusement? Will we not stand condemned with the unprofitable servant? Will we not be in danger of being banished to the world of darkness, where no voice of melody is ever heard, but only the awful discord of wailing and of remorseful woe? Let those who have hitherto thought lightly of this subject, or who have not thought of it at all, now consider it. Let them no longer slight the praises of God. Let parents see that their children are taught sacred music, and let the young improve the privilege of learning to sing in the worship of God, both in the family circle and in the sanctuary. And if any have grown too old in their negligence of this culture now to begin, then let them repent of their sinful neglect, and bring forth the fruits of repentance by encouraging and aiding others in endeavoring to improve this part of Christian worship.

And here I can not forbear calling attention to what seems to me a very serious error, and one which, so long as it is persisted in, will continue to render good singing, by congregations in public worship, utterly impossible. The error consists in having one style of songs and tunes for the children and youth at home and in the Sabbath-school, and an entirely different style, both of hymns and tunes, in the worship of the congregation. The result is somewhat the same as if the children should learn to speak one language and the men and women quite another. I do not enter into the question, whether the style of Sabbath-school music and songs now most in vogue is such as accords with correct taste. It is a question, however, that might well claim discussion. But this much will hardly be denied, that if the body of our congregations are to unite in singing the hymns sung in the church, the children and youth of Christian families must be both taught the tunes to which those hymns are sung, and also made familiar with the hymns.

3. A very large portion of the Church, it is to be feared, undervalues Music as an Ordinance of God and a Means of Grace; and of necessary consequence, treats it with indifference and neglect. Contention, strife, and complaint about organs and choirs and singers there is enough, and more than enough. But united, earnest, steady effort to help in its improvement, but very few are found disposed to make. On this point, much might be said, and not without profit. But for the present I shall only ask a few questions. Why is it that singing in private devotion is so seldom thought of by professing Christians? Why so rarely is it that worship in the family is accompanied and enlivened by the harmony of holy song? Why so much time found for worldly recreations and amusements, and none for cultivating the divine ordinance of sacred music? Why can mem-

bers of the Church, both in country and city, lavish so much expenditure upon ornament and so-called accomplishments—upon the dress-maker, the music-teacher, and the dancing master—and yet have nothing, or next to nothing, to give for securing and sustaining such music in the House of God as would make it, in some measure, an honor to His glorious name and exalted worship, and render it effective in giving force and power to the preaching of the Word?

Surely no one will deny that these questions are warranted by the most notorious facts. Then put them not aside with a frown, or a jest, or indifferent forgetfulness, but ponder them thoroughly and prayerfully, and resolve that you will help to roll away this reproach (if it exist) from at least the particular church of which you may be a member; and strive to make this part of worship more attractive to the many who now pass by the assemblies of the House of God.

4. In conclusion, remember the exhortation of the Apostle: "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." This is the Christian's best recreation. This his solace in his affliction. This the enlivener of his sadness and loneliness. This the purest and most worthy way of expressing his gratitude and joy. "Is any merry, let him sing psalms." This is primitive—this is Apostolic Christianity indeed, at least in one of its most beautiful and attractive features. Shall we ever return to it? How happy the day, if so it might be. If, instead of those scenes of midnight mirth and dissipation, where the Christian "treads unhallowed ground, and breathes an air that chills the fervor of his piety," the dwellings of God's professed people resounded with holy song and gladness, how delightful, how Heavenly! How sorrow would be assuaged, how strife would be silenced, how revelry would skulk into darkness, how vice would cease to ruin the souls of the children and blast the fair hopes of fathers and mothers! How soon our holy religion would shine forth in her beautiful bridal garments of purity and praise! The admiration even of her foes. The beauty of the nations. The delight of angels. The joy of her God!

And my heart's desire and prayer to God this day is that you, the people of my charge—this flock of God—may all so learn and love the songs of Zion now that, in the COMING GLORY, at the appearing and kingdom of our Lord Jesus, ye may, every one, be prepared to join the full Choir of the Redeemed out of every kindred and tribe and tongue, who, with the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, shall sing: "AL-LELUJAH! FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH!"

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