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*Mode of Singing.*

When we approach the altar of God, attention is due to the form, as well as the matter, of every ordinance. To this rule the celebration of praise does not constitute an exception.

We have no evidence of the formal institution of instrumental music, before the time of David. It would seem to have been ordered, preparatory to the service of the Temple to be erected in the reign of his successor (as God gave to David the pattern of the structure and its furniture), and with the service of the Temple to have passed away. It never was recognised as a part of the synagogue service, after the order of which Christian churches were regulated. Our Lord, with his disciples, celebrated praise in a song, and the primitive Christians sung praise by his authority. Yet in all the minute instructions furnished by Paul, on the subject of the public service, there is not one word that implies the use, or authority to use, instruments under this dispensation. It is not improbable that, as circumcision was observed after the day of Pentecost, in conformity with one of the most excusable prejudices—that founded on a previous divine institution,—so instrumental music may have found a plea upon the same principle: but Romaine informs us that “in the time of Justin Martyr, instrumental music was abolished; and he highly commends singing with the voice, because Psalms, with organs and cymbals, are fitter to please children than to instruct the church.” In Hall’s “Gospel Worship,” the following occurs: “The use of musical instruments in the worship of God, is but a modern innovation. Their warmest advocates cannot pretend to find them (revived) in the Christian church, before the year 660. And Thomas Aquinas, who lived about the year 1250, says, ‘the church does not use musical instruments to praise God, lest she should seem to judaize.’ Upon which place Cardinal Cajitan gives us this natural comment: ‘It is to be observed, the Church did not use instruments in T. Aquinas’ time: whence, even to this day, the Church of Rome does not use them in the Pope’s presence.’ And we have as severe a censure passed upon such instruments, when they are employed in this part of the divine service, in the homilies of the Church of England, as ever was passed upon them, perhaps, by any writer whatever. A fact which took place at the Reformation, is recorded and improved in these words: ‘A woman said to her neighbor, Alas, gossip, what shall we do at Church, since all the saints are taken away; since all the goodly sights we were wont to have are gone; since we cannot hear the like piping, singing, chanting, and playing upon the organs, that we could before? But, dearly beloved, we ought greatly to rejoice and give thanks to God