

castagnettes rattled, the kettledrum beaten. Gay carols are sung, and students go about town serenading under balconies. As no one has lunched or dined, all begin to sup, and all sit up until the sun rises. Formerly, it was held unlucky to eat any but gift food at the supper in the small hours of Christmas morning—presents having been sent the previous day from friend to friend, and corresponding gifts received. What remained over was given to beggars. Every family has its "Bethlehem stable," which is placed at the far end of an apartment arranged as a bail room. Children are invited to venerate the images and then to dance before them. Before leaving, they kneel down and vow before the Virgin to persevere in trying to be good for the next twelve months. These Bethlehem stables are very realistic, the dresses worn by the Virgin and child, and the wise men, being exquisite specimens of needlework—the work of great ladies.

IN ROME

Christmas Day is entirely sacred to the Bambino. All children are taken round the churches to see the infant Jesus in his cradle. At the Vatican, there is a waxen figure of a babe in a manger-like cradle. It is brought in for the Christmas pontifical mass, escorted by noble guardmen and monsignors. Christmas cakes which have been blessed at parish churches are universally exchanged. The ultimate fate of these great cakes is to be cut up and divided among the poor.

THE BRITISH ISLES.

Of the customs in these isles at the Christmas season I shall say little, as they are better known, perhaps, to the majority of our readers than they are to the writer. In England, most of the counties have practices peculiar to themselves. In Cornwall, for example, a sort of play is enacted called "St. George," in which several characters are represented, amongst them being Father Christmas, who announces himself, singing.

Here comes I, old Father Christmas,
Welcome or welcome not,
I hope old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot.

This is followed up with (in recitative), "I was born in a rocky county, where there was no wood to make a cradle; I was rocked in a stouring bowl, which made me round shouldered then, and I am round shouldered still" and so on.

In Ireland, in former times, the Christmas festival was a happy time, the young people going round giving and receiving Christmas boxes, any gift being termed a box.

In Scotland, Guizards or maskers used to form a conspicuous feature in the New Year festivities. These good old customs are no doubt salutary. Friendly feelings are revived by their recurrence, which might otherwise cease. An old author recommends the New Year observances thus: "If I send a New Year's gift to my friends, it shall be a token of my friendship; if to my benefactor, a token of my gratitude; if to the poor, which at this season must never be forgot, it shall be to make their hearts sing for joy, and to give praise and adoration to the Giver of all good gifts."

Then have every heart its chimes, men,
And while woman's voice is here
Well sing hopes for better times, men,
On the death of the poor old year.

Nice, Italy

T H

CHURCH MUSIC.

MR. EDITOR,—In two comparatively recent issues of the *Globe* the public have been treated to two sermons on "Church Music" by the Rev. Dr. Kellogg, in which he endeavours, among other things, to show that instrumental music is not only commendable and enjoyable, but that it is plainly obligatory and, in consequence, thus essential in the sacred services of the Christian sanctuary.

Now it is very noteworthy that in the New Testament record of the new or Christian economy there is exceedingly little said about music of any kind, and, in as far as memory serves me, I am not aware that music is ever even mentioned in connection with the most noted sermons therein recorded, such as that by Jesus on the Mount, Peter on the Day of Pentecost and Paul at Athens, etc., and a person would require to read the New Testament once and again ere he found even the shadow of an injunction or sanction for the erection or employment of what we call organs in the house or service of God. Nay

more, when David arranged the singers for the sanctuary, and when Solomon dedicated the temple, such an instrument as an organ is not once mentioned, far less employed. Further, in as far as I have read, there is not even such a word as organ in the Revised Version of the Bible, which in this respect is the more correct of the two. The original word is there translated "pipe," and this is said to mean the pipe of Pan, or shepherd's pipe, and far more resembling a penny whistle than a church organ. True, it may be said that in the establishment of the New Economy, when Christians were few in number and poor in circumstances, they were unable to purchase costly instruments for sacred service, but on the other hand it cannot be gainsayed that not only no regret was expressed at the lack of them, but that there is not the slightest symptom of a requirement on the part of any of the apostles that the worshippers should procure them as soon as they could in order that their services might be more scriptural and more effectual. On the contrary, so far from the Doctor finding even the semblance of an injunction for the procuring, or an example of the using of instruments of music in the New Economy, he points out that at the Sacramental Supper they sung an hymn, and in the prison Paul and Silas lifted up their voice in song, and that James exhorts believers to express their joy in singing, and it appears from his own showing that such simple service of song continued, for he says that the earliest notice of Christian worship we have outside of the New Testament is that given by Piny in the end of the first century to the effect, that Christians in their assemblies sang hymns of praise to Christ as God.

Seeing that the Doctor finds neither sanction nor support for instrumental music in connection with the apostolic origin and operations of the New Economy, he has, like a Jew, to resort to the Old, where he rambles at will under the "shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," and where others have gone to find a foundation for church establishments, endowments, etc., as well as to find wherewith to extend their sanctuary ordeal and increase their ritual, and hence a great deal of that lording over God's heritage, prelatie pretence, and pompous ceremonial, existing and increasing even in Protestant Churches at the present day, and famishing rather than fostering spiritual life.

Professedly building, then, on his textual foundation, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto Thy name, O, Most High. To show forth Thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. Upon an instrument of ten strings and upon the psaltery, upon the harp with a solemn sound," the Doctor proceeds to give an array of Old Testament quotations in which allusion is made to the service of praise in the Jewish economy; then passing on through the New Testament, where he must leave all his instruments behind him, he points to heaven and to its praises, where "Worthy is the Lamb" is sung, and where the redeemed ones, whose united voices are "as the voice of many waters," sing a new song before the throne, and where he points to the glorified ones "harping on their harps" as an evidence of instrumental music in heaven. But if he is to be so very literal in regard to harpers with harps in heaven, he must admit that there were there too, horses and horsemen and horned cattle, a drunken woman riding on a beast, a great dragon, locusts in abundance, etc. Among the many quotations from the Old Testament there is this one "musical instruments of God" (1 Chron. xvi. 42) which seemed to have so specially struck and arrested him as to lead him to pause and emphatically, in proof of his position, remark, "What a striking expression is this last!" Had he, however, looked for a moment at the Revised Version, which is wisely his wont, he would have simply seen instead, "instruments for the songs of God," and the "striking expression" would have struck him comparatively lightly.

Now, as we belong not to the past economy, we are not under its ritual, and seeing that, as professedly held by the Doctor, heaven is not to be the hereafter home of the Christian, its ordeal is not the appointed ordeal of earth, but we live in the present apostolic originated economy, and its service was surely not less in accordance with the Divine will than now, and while there is so exceedingly little either said or shown there in regard to the service of song, and not the slightest allusion to instrumental music, yet the

Doctor, with a sympathizing charity, says, "I believe that many have no adequate impression of the very prominent and important place which, under divine appointment, music has in the public worship of God." And then he adds, "I fully agree with those excellent brethren who are opposed to the use of instrumental music in public worship when they insist that we are to confine ourselves in worship to such things as have the warrant of the Word, but adds that it is his "clear conviction that the use of instrumental music is no less sanctioned by the word of God than that of vocal music." It does not follow, however, that his "clear conviction" and "the warrant of the Word" necessarily, nor always, mean the same thing, or are of like authority, for they may essentially differ. Yet he adds that "no one will deny that in the Psalms we are repeatedly exhorted to use all kinds of instruments in the praise of God." On the contrary, every one will deny that "all kinds" of instruments are to be used, for they are specified, and who will affirm that any one of the "all kinds" is required in the Christian sanctuary? But the further contention of the Doctor is this, "that the use of instruments in public worship, so solemnly sanctioned by God in the Old Testament, was not prohibited in the New." This is surely a very different thing from their being enjoined in the New. Can the Doctor really believe that what was once sanctioned in the Old Economy and not prohibited in the New is thereby required in the New? The apostles held no such dogma, nor should we.

Such is in all accord with his former self when not very long ago during a somewhat lengthy discussion on the Temperance question in the Toronto Presbytery in which the Doctor became markedly noticeable by his frequent and emphatic utterance that "Thus saith the Lord," was the only authoritative origin and extent of duty, and therefrom he argued that wherever the King and Head of the Church had not decided for her in His word she must be content to be silent, no matter what popular clamour may demand, and she is warned to add nothing of her own opinions or speculations even though these should happen to be correct, her orders being to bear His message and that only. In view of such, then, let the Doctor show that he or anyone else has ever found in the whole New Testament record of the Christian Church a single "Thus saith the Lord" for the use of instrumental music in her service, or even the shadow of a regret that it did not exist.

In connection with the text of his first sermon, the Doctor says, "It is not merely the writer of the Psalm, but God the Holy Spirit who instructs that it is a good thing to praise God with instruments of music, but to praise Him upon an instrument of ten strings, upon the psaltery and the harp." If, then, this is obligatory in Christian worship, it cannot be denied that it is optional with no one but obligatory on all, for the same divine authority that enjoins the offering of praise, enjoins the use of instruments, so that every congregation that has not instrumental music in its service is persistently violating a divine obligation, and not only so, but the same authority enjoins the instruments to be employed, and where such are not used there is a wilful setting aside of that same divine authority. Neither is the kind or quality of the music to be overlooked, for the Doctor says, "There is no religion in poor music or in singing or playing good music badly." But what is the standard of what is called poor music or its opposite? Is it the ear of man or the inspiration of God? Few, if any, will deny that in ordinary acceptance it is the former, hence the great desire in some Churches to secure specialties of pronounced professionals, and the great rush to hear them, yet the inspired standard is simply "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord," not with an instrument, but with the heart, the instrument which God Himself hath made and not man. There is nothing that has tended more to divert the mind and heart from the divine standard in the sanctuary service of song than the use of instruments, thereby assuming that instead of what God requires, that which most gratifies the ear of man must be most glorifying to God the Lord while forgetting the inquiry of the Almighty: "When ye come to appear before Me who hath required this at your hands?"

Despite all this, however, and the added fact that in the text the Doctor tells us it is "God the Holy Spirit that instructs us," yet he himself so supplements that instruction as to say that those instru-