

THE INSTRUCTOR.

No. XXXII.]

MONTREAL, DECEMBER 12, 1835.

[PRICE 2d.]

ORIGINAL DEPARTMENT.

ON INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN SACRED WORSHIP.

[To the Editor of the INSTRUCTOR.]

DEAR SIR, — Had the question of “A Vocal Musician” appeared unaccompanied by any remarks, or accompanied by such as would have left the subject equally balanced, I should have proceeded at once to a candid and unprejudiced consideration of it. Clothed, however, as V. M. has thought proper to send forth his proposition, it will be necessary, first, to discuss the various points presented to us; and, to avoid confusion, I shall notice them in the order he himself has placed them.

The want of antiquity in, or heathenish air of the custom of employing instrumental music in the worship of Jehovah, are by no means arguments of any weight against the legality of using them, as will be plainly seen by a consideration of the next paragraph.

A reference to II. Chron. 29, 25, will show that it ‘DOES APPEAR that the Divine Legislator gave a command to the effect’ that instrumental music should be used in his worship, and, therefore, that David, though ‘a man of great musical genius,’ was NOT guilty of ‘making innovations,’ and that the text Amos vi. 5,* was not a censure on him: and also, that instrumental music was not ‘disapproved of by the Lord’—all which things V. M. has asserted.—‘And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king’s seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD by his prophets’—II. Chron. 29, 25.

The passage from Amos v. 23, is also viewed in a false light, ‘Take away from me the

* At a future period I may make the passage the subject of a communication. V. M. is grossly mistaken in it.

noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the sound of thy viols.’

But was it, I would ask V. M., because God was averse to their songs of praise or their music? No, but because they were not accompanied by the homage of the heart; but if V. M. determines to retain his own view of the passage, let him remember that the song is to go with the viol.

We need not trouble V. M. to ‘admit’ as a matter of courtesy that instrumental music was lawful in the Jewish church, having proved it by the unerring standard; and if, as V. M. asserts, the fact does not prove that ‘it ought to be tolerated in Christian worship,’ it certainly does not militate against it—as it is a command emanating from an unchangeable source, from a Being whose foreknowledge was not likely to create a law which at a future day it should be necessary to annul.

‘It is among those ordinances which were suppressed by the Christian economy.’ Will V. M. shew us his authority for this assertion. That part of the Jewish ceremony which is done away is that which was typical of the Messiah; but I really do not recognise any thing of a typical nature in music: and, though the time is come when the ‘true worshippers are to worship the Father in spirit and in truth,’ I hope that V. M. does not suppose that our religion is to be wholly internal. Jesus Christ tells us, ‘when thou prayest enter into thy closet,’ &c, but he does not mean to forbid a more public mode of worship—for the Apostle of the Gentiles, in his epistle to the Hebrews, says, ‘forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.’

The argument drawn from the allusion made to instrumental music by St. John is much more favourable to its use than V. M. seems to think it is. We should remember that its appointment was by God himself; no command requiring its disuse had ever been given—and are we to think that St. John, who had been favoured with such exalted and overpowering views of the Lord of his ascended