

trumpet must ring out clearly the war-call. When melody and harmony are not the end, but simply the means by which the worshipper is to be led reverently and penitently to worship God, they must be modified to suit this end.

The introduction into the house of God of highly artistic singing has often been advocated as a means of attracting the careless, and creating in them a relish for religious things. But it must be borne in mind that the emotional nature may be deeply moved without the accompaniment of true religious feeling. Dr. Chalmers, in one of his *Astronomical Discourses*, remarks, "I will make bold to say, that as much delight may emanate from the pulpit upon an arrested audience beneath it, as ever emanated from the boards of a theatre, and with as total a disjunction in mind, in the one case as in the other, from the essence or habit of religion." Substitute in this quotation "the choir" for "the pulpit," and though the application is changed the truth remains the same.

Once only do the Gospels tell us of this exercise, as forming part of the religious services of Jesus and the twelve, though the manner in which this reference is made may lead us to infer that singing was not unusual with them. The occasion was the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the sacred song was, no doubt, the Hallel (Psalms 113 to 118), usually sung in connection with the Passover. Let us imagine ourselves in that little company. A voice, perhaps the Saviour's, commences "Praise ye the Lord; praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised," etc. What are the others doing meanwhile? Are they indifferent or critical observers of the tune or of each other's musical skill? Rather, the tune is the simple instrument by which they are enabled, in unison, to lift their voices and hearts to God. Their understanding is employed in attentive consideration of the sentiments they utter, and as they audibly and distinctly enunciate them, they prayerfully endeavour to make them their own, and become indifferent to any presence save that of Him who can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth.