

the voice. It is true we may, like Hannah of old, pray with the heart while no sound goeth forth from our lips. But we cannot pray publicly, and mark you, it is not to offer up our private devotions that we assemble here. It is rather that we may all, both high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, join in one common act of worship, in the name of one common mediator and in the presence of one God. Nor do we come to listen to singing. We go to the concert room for that; but when we come to church it is to sing. Oh let both choir and people think of this. Let the members of the choir remember that they sing not merely for men but to God, and let the people remember that the choir is here to lead and assist them in the service of praise, not to take that service away from them. Let us all remember that our service is for minister and people, not for minister and clerks, or for minister and choir, and therefore anything which keeps the people from joining in it, whether it be their own carelessness, or difficult music, or what ever it may be it is contrary to the spirit of the prayer book, and to the design of those who compiled it and called it the "Book of Common Prayer." If all the congregation were to act as many of its members do, keeping silence during the confession, the Lord's Prayer, the apostles' creed, the responses of the Litany, and were never to say "Amen" at the end of the prayers, for all the purposes of public prayer the people might almost as well be sitting by their own firesides and leave all the service in appearance as they do in reality to their minister. So, if none were to join in our beautiful psalms, and chants, and hymns, but the choir the congregation might almost as well be absent so far as praising God is concerned. Brethren this may seem strong language, but it is truth. I do not say that we cannot sing in church unless we pray aloud, or that we cannot make the prayer ours which has been offered up by our minister without saying "Amen," so that others may hear, but I do say that audible prayers and audible amens are necessary to public prayer. So I do not say that no man can praise God in the "Venite" the "Te Deum," the "Jubilate Deo," and in the various psalms and hymns, without singing audibly but I do say that such worship however acceptable to God is not public worship.

But besides this which is bound up in the very nature of public worship, there are other good and weighty reasons why we should all endeavour to carry out the suggestions of the cards as to joining in the service with our lips as well as with our hearts. Feeling as I do the vast importance of this subject, and knowing as I do how very short we come in this respect, I shall endeavor to bring those reasons before you as plainly as I can. In the first place, loyalty to our church demands it of us. The church puts the prayer book in the hands of her children to be used, and has incorporated with it many wise and very plain rules to guide us in using it aright. As soon as the services have been begun by the minister reading one or more of the appointed sentences from God's word, the people are invited "to ac-