

standing all that has been said *pro* and *con* on the subject, it appears that the question is just as far from being settled as ever. Good men have differed, and good men will differ; and there is no department in which good men have differed more widely than in their interpretation of some passages of Scripture; and we cannot help thinking but that, if the arguments for and against the use of instrumental music had been taken up, not upon scripture grounds, but on the ground of *expediency*, a more satisfactory solution might have been arrived at. The difficulty in dealing with the scriptural argument arises from the fact that the Apostolic Church was a persecuted and an unsettled one. Nowhere was the Church consolidated into what we understand by "fixed congregations,"—a few here, and a few there, worshipping, sometimes in the Jews' synagogue, and at other times in private houses. There is neither precept nor example left us on record by which to determine the mode in which public worship has been conducted; and we are therefore left in total ignorance of how much of the ancient ritual was incorporated with the new. We know the Psalms of David were put to music, and sang with the voice accompanied by instruments in the temple worship; and we know, also, that Paul enjoins the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," as a christian duty, at all events in their *private* devotions; but there is nothing distinctly said, in the New Testament, of the manner of conducting praises in public worship. It is only by *inference*, and from the nature of things, that our authority is derived for the use of any sort of music in public worship—and let it be remembered that this *inference* is mainly drawn from the ancient Jewish worship—and as the New Testament is silent on the mode in which public praises were conducted in the early Christian Church, we need not be surprised to find many of the Evangelical Churches copying much after the pattern of the Temple worship. Not only the Episcopal Churches, but also the plain and modest Methodists and Baptists, and many Presbyterians, have introduced instrumental music into the services of the sanctuary; and those who contend for the symbolical nature of the temple worship, are certainly bound, we think, to show, what it was that the temple praises *did* symbolize. Prayer and praise are the natural breathings of the redeemed soul, as well under the old as under the new dispensation, and it ever will be so until the redeemed on earth shall join the holy company of the redeemed in heaven, whose occupation, as it is represented to us, is to be "singing the praises of the Lamb upon golden harps." Surely it can be no great departure from strict orthodoxy to use an instrument in the temple on earth, which the Holy Spirit represents as being employed in the Heavenly Temple! It will be said that the representa-

tion in the Apocalypse is to be understood *figuratively*—and so we do understand it. But suppose we take it *literally*: what then? We do not know. Neither do you! The accompaniment of instruments with the human voice adds not to the *spirituality* of the praise. No one contends that it does. Neither does the accompaniment of bass or tenor. The *spirituality* of the praises depends upon a power altogether extraneous to and beyond human effort; nevertheless, who will deny the power of sweet and solemn melody in soothing down the rough asperities of the human spirit? Yet, to say that the use of instrumental music in the praises of the sanctuary is founded on equal authority with the institution of the Sabbath, were surely a great error. The institution of the Sabbath is embodied in the moral law—has all the sanction of the ancient ritual, and pervades the whole spirit of the new dispensation. Nor do we think it less erroneous to assert that polygamy has equal sanction from scripture that instrumental music has. Those who say this must first prove that the Psalms of David are entitled to no authority in such matters. Polygamy was only a *tolerated evil* under the old dispensation; it has not the sanction of a single precept in the Old Testament, and it is utterly repudiated in the New; while the use of instrumental music, on the other hand (unless we ignore the Book of Psalms as an inspired book), in public worship, is *commanded* over and over; and we have a right to assume, until the contrary be made to appear, that it was also used in the early Christian Church. Those who say otherwise are bound to shew the *prohibitory statute*.

The cry raised about "*innovations*," although a very formidable and portentous word, is, nevertheless, to our mind, a very senseless cry. Changes have been insensibly creeping into our mode of public worship. Choir singing, in the sense in which the word is being now applied, is an *innovation* on the old-fashioned *precentor* and the single *air*. To many Gaelic congregations, some time ago, choir singing would be an intolerable abomination; and then, there is the *innovation* on the ancient and solemn manner of administering the ordinance of the "Lord's Supper." The decently covered table, with its decorous furnishings, has disappeared from many of our congregations, and now the sacred elements are served much in the same way that coffee or tea is served at our fashionable *soirees*. In some other congregations, the people attend church in the forenoon of the communion Sabbath, go home for their dinners or for anything else they see fit, and come out in the afternoon to partake of the consecrated elements. And what do you say of the disuse of the grand old Scottish version of the Psalms of David in our public worship, and substituting the light and superficial songs of *Watts* in their place?