

CHRISTIAN BANNER.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

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LETTERS ON SACRED MUSIC.

No. I.

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I feel prompted to write a few letters on Sacred Music. A recent tour of more than a thousand miles, in which I had many opportunities of observation on the subject, brings the unwelcome impression that it is very generally and strangely neglected in the Churches of Christ. The power of music to enliven and cheer the heart is felt and acknowledged by all men. Its gentle cadence wins its way to the heart that is closed to every other influence. The man of mighty logic stands before us. He lays down propositions; arrays facts; builds up arguments and demonstrations; talks of premises and conclusions, and storms the heart with a regiment of syllogisms. We listen, we are instructed, we admire the breadth and firmness of the intellectual structure. The accomplished orator may open the treasures of the richest rhetoric, and display masterly skill in metaphors and tropes that almost *live and move and have a being*. And from both and all how many go away untouched, unmoved, unsubdued? The strongest argument sometimes sets the soul on defiance, and it may be parried by evasion. But the sweet, attractive charms of music calm the turbulence of the human soul, soothe to rest the passions that revel in the halls of our spiritual nature, divest us of our hostility, and cause all the kindlier sensibilities to pervade the breast. It allays, it softens, it persuades. It touches with tenderness, it teaches with gentleness, it smiles with benignity. It comforts, it wins, it exhorts. It inspires hope, and courage, and zeal. It breathes contentment, peace and love. It awakens, it enkindles, it arouses. It bathes us in tears, and it wipes them away. It takes away our breath and inspires us with life.