

your hearts to the Lord." Still we do not think the Old Testament Psalms enough for purposes of social and congregational worship. They were specially adapted to the circumstances of the church in an incipient and expectant state; and consequently, are not sufficiently expressive of the feelings of the church in her present more enlarged and perfect condition, when so many of the promises to which the ancients looked forward, have been already fulfilled.

No doubt Christ is often presented to the believer in the psalms; but he is there seen through a veil, and now that the veil has been removed by the events of his life, we think the psalmody of the church should be enlarged, so as to present Christ to the people *directly*, that the devotional feelings of the least intelligent may be excited and called forth.

The principle of all this is conceded in our church by the authorized use of the Paraphrases; but yet there is in some places, and among people of undoubted piety, a strong aversion to anything but the Old Testament Psalms in public worship. We consider this aversion to be not only without authority in scripture, but in direct opposition to plain scriptural precept; and we have the conviction that it has been very injurious to the spirituality of the Scottish people. We feel satisfied that a large number of the psalms are not understood by the people when they are sung; and the consequence is, that an exercise which is calculated to be not only delightful, but most edifying to the people, is to multitudes altogether unprofitable. When the glorious truths of Christianity are directly embodied in simple and appropriate language, the singing of them is calculated most deeply to impress the heart. Conversions indeed have been known to take place through the instrumentality of the singing of appropriate hymns in the church; and if we saw times of great revival, hymns suited to the circumstances of the church would probably be both required and furnished, for new mercies require new songs of praise. In this way, we believe, many of the hymns in use in the non-conformist churches in England were called forth, and we have often thought that no small portion of the success of the Methodists is owing to their hymns.

The collection of Paraphrases and Hymns in use in our church is both defective and objectionable. It was prepared during the worst days of moderatism, when a strong prejudice was entertained by the leading men in the church against the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and when evangelical religion was at the lowest ebb: hence the want of hymns bearing upon many of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel. There is nothing in these Paraphrases regarding the work of the Spirit, or the conviction, or conversion of the sinner; and as to Christian experience, they are almost totally devoid of it.

Not only is the doctrine of some of them objectionable, but many of them are constructed on a false principle, and are unfitted for public worship. We hold that it is simply absurd to convert into verse plain historical statements, which were not intended by the Spirit of God to be sung in the public worship of the sanctuary. Of this nature is the first paraphrase, beginning

Let heaven arise, let earth appear, &c.

The same thing may be said of the 38th, beginning

Just and devout old Simeon lived,

and several others. It must be admitted that these are elegant metrical versions of passages of Scripture, but they are totally unfitted for public worship.

Many of them, again, are too long, and would have been better fitted for the purpose of public worship, had they presented the grand idea contained in the passage which they paraphrase, with an appeal to the feelings, or an expression of the gratitude and admiration called forth by it. Hymns for public worship should be chiefly devotional, and a large proportion of them direct