

terred in Bunhill Fields, where so many eminent Non-conformists repose.

In next paper, which will close the series, I shall say something additional of Watts hymns.

"CHRISTIAN HYMNOLOGY."

Or, The Review of Mr. Harvey's Letters Continued.

The asserted absence of the evangelical element in the psalms is a favorite argument with all hymnologists, and a valid reason for the introduction of hymns. The inspired psalms, in their opinion, are deficient in gospel fragrance. Even Mr. Harvey, with all his professed respect for them, thinks that they are defective in not being rendered fragrant by "the name that is ever dear to the christian's heart,—the name of Jesus." This is an argument that appeals more to the sentimental than to the sanctified understanding and reverential assertions. It is more in appearance than in reality. In that "outburst of sacred song" which he tells us marked "the introduction of the christian dispensation," and which he designates "the first christian hymn," (though by the way it belonged to the old dispensation), and was sung by the mother of our Saviour, the name of Jesus does not occur, nor does it occur in the "morning songs" of Zacharias and Simeon. Let any one examine them and he will find that the style is identical with the inspired psalms. All christians admit that Jesus Christ is in the psalms though the name Jesus is not. It will not surely be maintained that it is the name of Jesus appearing to the eye of sense that gives fragrance to the hymn. In the inspired psalms he is really, *in his nature, in his work, in his sufferings, in their renovating power, and in his triumphs*, though not in name, as he can be in the uninspired hymn where the name of Jesus meets the eye of sense, and with this grand distinction: psalms are God's, hymns are men's work. If Christ is to be discerned and enjoyed, it is not by the eye seeing his blessed name, but by the Holy Spirit revealing him in all his fulness to the believing soul. Beyond all question in the using of hymns, there is a great deal of sentimentalism which is often mistaken for religious feeling.

Mr. Harvey seems to think it inconsistent with our religious liberty, under the gospel dispensation, to be restricted to the psalms, and that we have the same freedom in choosing the matter of our praise, that we have in prayer and preaching. Religious liberty, or gospel liberty, is often greatly misunderstood. Gospel liberty surely does not mean that every man is free to worship God in any way that he pleases, and with

any service which he chooses. Gospel liberty frees us from the yoke of ceremonial bondage, but it does not free us from worshipping God in accordance with his revealed will. It delivers us from the law, as the basis of justification, but it does not free us from it as a rule of life. To the law and testimony we must still appeal. God's word is to be a "lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path." It is both our guiding star and our anchor. The moment we abandon the revealed we are liable to wander in the paths of error, and to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine. Human wisdom has always chafed under the dictation of divine wisdom, but to the christian to do the will of God is felt to be the most delightful liberty. God has revealed his will to us in the matter of praise in a way which he has not done in prayer or preaching. He has made a collection of inspired poetry for the service of praise to be used in the church in every age. Has he done this with regard to prayer or preaching? He has given as models and directions for our guidance in these, but he has made no collection for use. Christ says, "after this manner pray ye;" but he does not say after this manner praise ye. Scattered throughout the divine word we find a great variety of models, both of prayer and sermons, but no collection for use. But there, in the sacred volume, stands the collection of inspired poetry for the service of praise, for the use of the church, made under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, acknowledged and used by Christ and his apostles, but to which they made no additions, nor has any addition ever been made by any inspired authority. It is a matter of surprise that this argument should be so often used when it is so directly opposed to facts.

He also further asserts that "there is no evidence that the old testament saints were forbidden to praise God in language other than of the psalms." If he means the service of praise in the house of the Lord, there are the very strongest reasons for believing that they were not allowed to praise God in the sanctuary as they pleased. Every thing connected with the service of the temple was of divine appointment. The service of praise among the rest. Of course, before the temple services were appointed, the old testament saints would be at liberty to praise God according to the light which they then enjoyed, or as the Holy Spirit moved them. It is not for Mr. Harvey to assert that they were not forbidden. He must prove permission.

He asks, "can it be wrong in us to versify and sing some of the sublime poetry of Habakkuk, Isaiah, &c." and then adds, were we to do so, "do we present an unauthorized offering of praise." It will be time enough to answer this enquiry when