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ORIGINAL DEPARTMENT.

ON INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN SACRED WORSHIP.

[To the Editor of the INSTRUCTOR.]

DEAR Sir,

I believe it is acknowledged that in all matters there is some standard by which to try the correctness of any proposition; and in religion the Almighty Creator of the universe has provided, as a guide for us, the bible, which we are told is for a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path—to direct us in all things pertaining to his government and will concerning us; but if we are permitted to set aside, or alter, every or any portion that does not accord with our private opinions, we might as well close it altogether, and take the infidel's boasted light, reason—unassisted mere human reason—for our guide.

The remarks of 'a Vocal Musician' on the 150th Psalm amounts to a quibble unworthy of the subject about which he writes, had he possessed all the candour for which he gives himself credit in his second communication, he would not have written thus; he could hardly be ignorant of the comments of Dr. A. Clarke, whose opinions he has used so freely, on the very word he cavils at. I here subjoin it: 'AND DANCE—Machol, the pipe, the croude, Old Psalter; a species of violin—it never means dance.'

But to enter into a detailed consideration of the several arguments, assertions and opinions produced and reproduced by your correspondent V. M., would occupy more space than you have to spare; and, moreover, it is less necessary, as I have before answered the majority of them in a manner he has not found it convenient to refute.

I shall, therefore, consider the question 'is the use of instrumental music in divine service compatible with Christian worship?' and in doing this I shall take for

— "My rule the word,
My end the glory of the Lord."

The first mention, as far as I can learn, in the sacred writings of instruments being publicly used in divine worship is in 2 Sam. 6, 5, and 1 Chron., 15, 8, where the same ceremony is related, viz. the restoration of the ark of the covenant, when those who used them were not reproved but blessed; while Uzzah, because he, contrary to the law, laid his hand on the ark to prevent it from falling, was smote, that he died, and in the 15th chap. of the same book, 13th verse, David said to the priests and Levites, whom he had convened and told to 'sanctify themselves,' 'the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order;' yet he tells the chief of the Levites, 'to appoint their brethren to be the singers, with the instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding by lifting up the voice with joy.' We afterward read, that at the dedication of the temple by Solomon, it came to pass as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lift up their voices with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God; and again, when King Hezekiah was restored from sickness, in the gratitude of his heart he exclaimed, 'therefore will I sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord,' for which he is not reproved by Isaiah the prophet, who was specially sent to him. With all these facts before us, it cannot be considered irrational to conclude that—as stated in 2d Chron., 24, 25—their appointment was 'by the commandment of the Lord.'