

to utter and declare his mind and knowledge to the comfort and consolation of the Kirk." Thus were the first Scottish Churches regarded—not simply as a place of meeting on Sundays, but as "a sanctuary and asylum always open to the solitary worshipper, who sought opportunity of quiet devotion." It is a positive delight to look back upon these early days of open Churches and frequent services of praise and prayer: would that the practice were still common in all the Churches!

As regards the other usages sanctioned, or rather implied, in the *Book of Common Order*, we can mention only those referring to postures at prayer and in singing. The posture of the people during prayer seems in the early days of all the Reformed Churches to have been that of kneeling. That it was so in the Scottish Churches cannot be said with absolute certainty, though the *Book of Common Order* apparently bears out the supposition. The congregation engaged in prayer are described as "We thy children and people *here prostrate* before Thee;" and as a preparation for kneeling, the people are called upon "not to stand up;" but "inasmuch as before our Lord Jesus Christ all knees are compelled to bow, let us humbly fall down before Him, and in this manner pray." The Rev. Neil Livingston, in his dissertation prefixed to the reprint of the Scottish Psalter, argues that standing at prayer must have been the usual posture, otherwise, of course, a change from sitting to standing must have taken place at some period, and, says Mr. Livingston, "it is scarcely credible that this could have happened without previous discussion and appointment by the General Assembly, or at least some historical notice of it." On the same grounds he concludes, contrary to the usually accepted belief, that sitting must have been the ordinary posture in praise. Great deference is due to these opinions; but we think Mr. Livingston reckons too much on the part which the General Assembly was likely to take in the matter under consideration. The Church of Scotland (leaving aside the implied usages of the *Book of Common Order*) has always treated the question of postures in public worship with indifference: so far as we are aware, such matters