

instrumental music in the ritualistic symbolistic system of which it formed a part.

It is in fact needless to enumerate more passages in the Word of God, confirmatory of the use of instruments in that system, or further to shew, that they peculiarly belonged to, and were in perfect keeping with it. The heathens made the same use of instruments in the worship of their idols (see Dan. 3rd chap.) at the erection of Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold on the plain of Dura, which the three Hebrew children refused to worship. Instruments of music could not fail to be in perfect harmony with a system symbolical and objective, in which sacrifices, incense, etc., were offered, and in which altars, holy garments, candlesticks, tongs, and snuff dishes, formed important parts. As that system has been swept away, and a simpler one of a purely spiritual character substituted in its place,—and this none will dare to deny—it follows that musical instruments, like the candlesticks and other things peculiar to the ritualistic system, should pass away with it.\* The dispensation, under which we now live, is that referred to so impressively by our Lord in His words to the woman of Samaria—John iv; 23: “The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.”

In the service of the synagogue which was the prototype of the Christian Church, and in the service of the New Testament Church itself in apostolic days and long after—as we shall shew under the subsequent head IV.—instrumental music had no place, and was never used; and this is just what we might expect. That its disuse had divine authority we cannot well question. If we grant, and grant we must, that the details of divine worship were divinely regulated under the first dispensation, we cannot deny that it must have been so in the second. God will be worshipped in His own way, and not by the inventions of men. Everything in the Mosaic ritual, by the authority of God, was minutely assigned its time and place, and the Second Commandment expressly forbids all human tampering with the divine method.

Everything then that entered into the usage of a truly pious people, though not expressly enjoined, we think, may be generally regarded as having the divine sanction, though particularly as to the details of divine worship might become more express as the light of revelation and the knowledge of the divine character increased.

If there was reason, under the old dispensation to be exact in regard to all the outward ritualistic observances, which formed its distinguishing characteristic surely, amid growing light, there is greater reason to be particular in the maintenance of that sole spirituality of worship which is the chief trait of the dispensation under which we live.

IV. Instrumental music being, as heretofore shewn, symbolic and out of keeping with a simple spiritual method of worship, we find that it was never used either in the synagogue or in the New Testament Christian Church, and is wholly without divine sanction in the worship of the second dispensation, whether looked at in the light of direct precept or in the usage of the pious.

As we have elsewhere already shewn, the synagogue was the true prototype or pattern on which the Christian Church was formed. The people, male and female, met in their synagogues on the Sabbath day, had the Word of God read and expounded to them, praised with their lips and prayed to God, just as was done afterwards in the Christian Church. The synagogue had its elders

\* The argument, sometimes presented in the present day, “that as there is nothing said in the New Testament against the use of instruments in worship, therefore they may now be properly used,” is an exceedingly silly one. We may just as well say, that as nothing is said in the New Testament against the dishes, tongs, priestly garments or altars of the temple, these ought to be used now in our regular services. We have not enough of popery in us to admit this.