

slaughter of Goliath, "the women came out of all cities of Israel singing and dancing to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy and with instruments of music."

Modern travellers represent the same as common still. "According to the modern customs of the East, the dance, which is generally accompanied with singing is still led by the principal lady of the company, the rest imitating her movements and repeating the words of the song as they drop from her lips. She moves according to no regular measure, and chants often the extemporaneous effusions of the moment; but let her vary her steps and cadences as much as she pleases, her group of gay and lively followers imitate with wonderful address, every variation of either her feet or tones. Nor is this the custom only on occasions of festivity, for in many parts of the East, dancing as well as singing forms still a part of their sacred observances, and there is always one principal person who takes the lead in both. The missionary Wolff mentions a congregation of Jews in Palestine, who responded in this manner to an interesting hymn, which was sung by their priest. And another traveller describes a festival of some Eastern christians, where one eminent individual who was the leading singer, as well as the leading dancer, conducted through the streets of the city a large band of people, who sang and leaped in imitation of the tones and gesticulations used by him." [*Jamieson's Eastern Manners.*]

This mode of celebrating joyous events, by songs and dance was not always and perhaps was not originally a religious rite. It was according to the custom of those portions of the world, just a portion of their festal rejoicings. But it was very early, both among the Jews and other nations, connected with their religious services, which were of a joyful character. This was the case among the Egyptians, and we find it among the Jews before the Mosaic ritual was appointed. Thus when they made a golden calf at Horeb, the occasion was celebrated with a feast, observed with loud shouting song and dancing. Exodus xxxii. 6, xviii. 19—"The people sat down

to eat and to drink and rose up to play." "And he said, it is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome, but the noise of them that sing I hear.— And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing." This shows that the Israelites had been already accustomed to singing and dancing in connection with religious festivals, nor is it to be inferred, that the acts were wrong because here they were directed to a wrong object. The service was intended as a service to God.— Aaron built an altar and made proclamation "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord." The error was in setting up any visible image to represent the invisible God, and thus "turning his glory into the likeness of one that eateth grass." That the acts were not forbidden in themselves, is evident from the fact that the same services were afterwards common among the Jews on occasion of religious rejoicing, as in the case of David's bringing up the ark to Jerusalem, (2 Sam. vi. 14; Chron. xiii. 8, xiv. 27, 28;) and also from the fact that they were at least permitted in connexion with their sacrificial meals on the occasion of their great festivals, as we shall presently note more particularly. (See Ps. lxxviii. 26, Jude xxi. 21.)

Before leaving this part of the subject we may notice that in the singing of the song of Moses at the Red Sea we have an example of that responsive or antiphonal singing which we find common afterwards. (1 Sam. xviii. 7, and xxi. 11.) In the hymn itself we find that peculiar arrangement of Hebrew poetry, commonly called Parallelism, by which two or more parallel stanzas sometimes expressing an opposition of meaning and sometimes expressing a progress in the idea. This style of composition is particularly adapted for responsive singing, and undoubtedly some of the Psalms, particularly the 136th, were composed to be sung in that manner.

The instances to which we have thus referred were all occasions of public or national rejoicing. But in Israel these were all of a sacred character. They might not however be considered as worship in the