

sanctifying power. In this active utilitarian age, especially when our religious life is practical rather than devotional; benevolent towards men rather than emotional towards God, working outwards rather than upwards, it is more than ever necessary that we culture the heart of praise,—the hallowing and elevating influences of worship. We have no sectarian theory to maintain, no clique to vindicate, no school to recommend. We do not presume to say what distinctive mode of worship is ritually right or wrong. We take our stand upon an eclectic and catholic basis, disposed to think that in such matters whatever *does best is best*. With an impartial eye, therefore, and a sympathising heart, we would “prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.” We would not test church song by its mere poetry and music. These may be of the very highest artistic excellence, and yet for all purposes of worship be but “as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal;” they may possess only the intellect and the sensibilities. A man may have the most exquisite enjoyment of both, and his heart of worship remain untouched. Neither would we test church song by mere ecclesiastical usages or traditions, either episcopal or nonconforming, for these are often as unreasoning and injurious as the traditions of the Pharisees; but we would test it by its practical fitness for inciting and expressing true worshipping feeling, by its power experimentally proved of appealing to that which is highest and holiest in our spiritual life, of making us forget self and think about God, of making the love of evil depart out of us, and of producing godliness within us. That may be the best form of worship for one congregation which is not the best for another. Wisely then did the Synod of our Church grant liberty to each congregation to use that form which will be most conducive to its own worshipping joy. The only advice we would give on this point is that whatever the form selected it be the worship of the people, the united vocal praise of the whole congregation, a form of song in which every worshipper can easily and heartily join. We do not sing when we merely listen to a choir, any more than we preach when we merely listen to a sermon; the song or sermon may affect us, but it is the act of another, not our own. God cannot be worshipped vicariously; and few perversions of worship are more incongruous than for a congregation to be listening when a choir is per-

forming, than for a worshipper with his heart full of praise to refrain from giving utterance to it. The people are preached to and prayed for, surely they are not to be sung to as well. Whether, therefore, it be choir or precentor; whether the rustic composites of the village church, or the artistic slovenliness of the town cathedral; whether the barbarous vocalizations of the “Denmarks” or “Polands” of the last generation, or the skilful combinations of Handel or MeJelssohn in this: in these things let every church be persuaded in its own mind. We would “lay upon it no burden further than this necessary thing:” that from a service of worship every form of song be excluded in which every worshipper cannot join. Worship is a sacrifice to God, not to musical art.

---

We have occasion to complain of the tardiness with which contributions are sent in aid of the French Mission Building Fund. The encouragement given by the Synod, in a full house, to this enterprise was, in the estimation of the committee, an important element in the discretion with which they were authorized to proceed. It was expected that when the time for collecting came, the practical result of such encouragement would lighten, to a very considerable extent, the undertaking with which the committee is charged. Is this to be another instance of the say-much and do-little characteristic which so often distinguishes the proceedings of corporate bodies? Is the responsibility of imposing a heavy burden upon a Mission Committee to begin and end with the collective capacity from which it proceeds? Is it right for the Synod, as such, to countenance a work, and, for the members of Synod forthwith to forget all about it? Were the Mission Chapel an enterprise in which Montreal alone is concerned, we have no doubt that Montreal would do all that is required, if the members of the Church there undertook it at all. But we conceive it is only rightly viewed, when it is regarded as an important step for the extension of a *Synodical* scheme. The choice of a base of operations must be regulated by considerations of convenience and advantage; but the choice made is in the interest of the whole Church responsible for the scheme and not a mere section of it. We are of opinion that the future welfare of the general scheme depends very much upon the extent to which this branch of it is sup-