

al. and never accompanied by the voice. 2. Sacred music ; such as the compositions of Handel, and Mozart ; anthems, hymn-tunes, and the pieces adapted to sacred poetry. 3. Songs which, although not strictly sacred, are not inconsistent with Christian morality, and with the most refined affections of the human heart ; such as, "The evening bells," "The Canadian boat-song," and most national airs. 4. Such compositions as are attached to romantic, sentimental, or licentious poetry.

Now with regard to the first of these, mere instrumental music, the imagination is affected without the aid of language—by sound alone ; indeed the imagination is left to elicit its own deep spiritual language ; and this will be pure or impure, sinful or sinless, according to the spiritual state of the individual, and the degree in which the conscience is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Abstract music being one of the media in which the external world, by our adorable Creator, is made to commune with the spirit within us—may, in proper subordination to the duties of life and religion, be cultivated to his glory, and will in that case be not only a pleasing recreation, but a rich intellectual enjoyment.

Sacred song may undoubtedly glorify God ; for it is spoken of with approbation in his word, and has been used in all ages as the medium of glorifying him. But here again, as in the last case, every thing will depend upon the motives and feelings of those engaged : a Christian party in a room is different from a mingled and worldly multitude at an oratorio ; and amongst the former it generally ministers to that kindly influence which distils its balm upon sanctified society.

"The former and the latter rain,
The love of God, and love of man."

Songs of the third class mentioned, partake of the neutral character ; but if the sentiments be morally pure, the imagery chaste, the spirit of the song elevating and ennobling, they may be occasionally introduced without prejudice to personal religion, or the cause of piety in general : a pure and tender conscience will, however, select the most unexceptionable subjects, and will err rather on the side of rigid scruple than of laxity. Where there is such caution, neither the word of God, nor Mr. Wesley's rule, is violated ; and peace of mind receives no wound. Great attention, however, here must be paid to times and circumstances ; for recreations, which at one time are useful and innocent, at others are positively sinful. And here the Christian youth of either sex must take a firm stand. Let the accomplishments or voice be what they may, it is hard to withstand the solicitation of company ; but the Gospel of our Redeemer must be honoured by a dignified decision. The good Mr. Wilberforce was attractive in this line on his first introduction to society ; but those attractions, being a source of temptation, were afterwards a subject of sorrow.

With music of the fourth class we have named, no members of