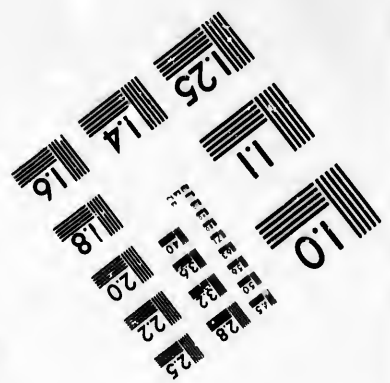
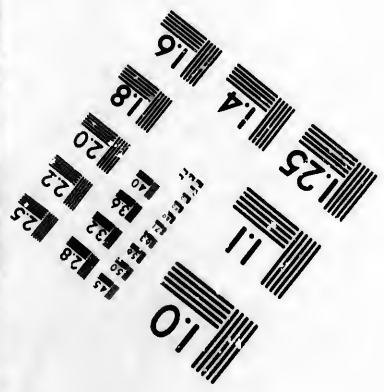
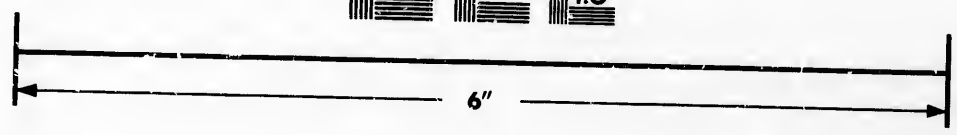
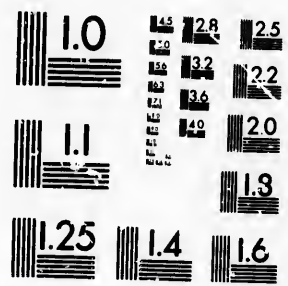


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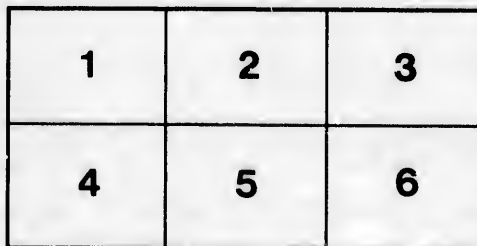
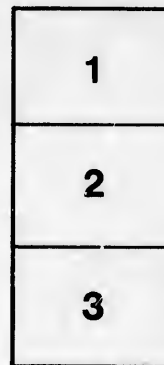
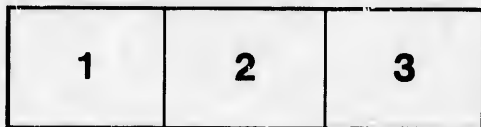
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CHURCH MUSIC.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL,
MONTREAL,

On Sunday Evening, Jan. 27th, 1867,

BY THE

REV. PHILIP WOOD LOOSEMORE, M.A.,

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL.

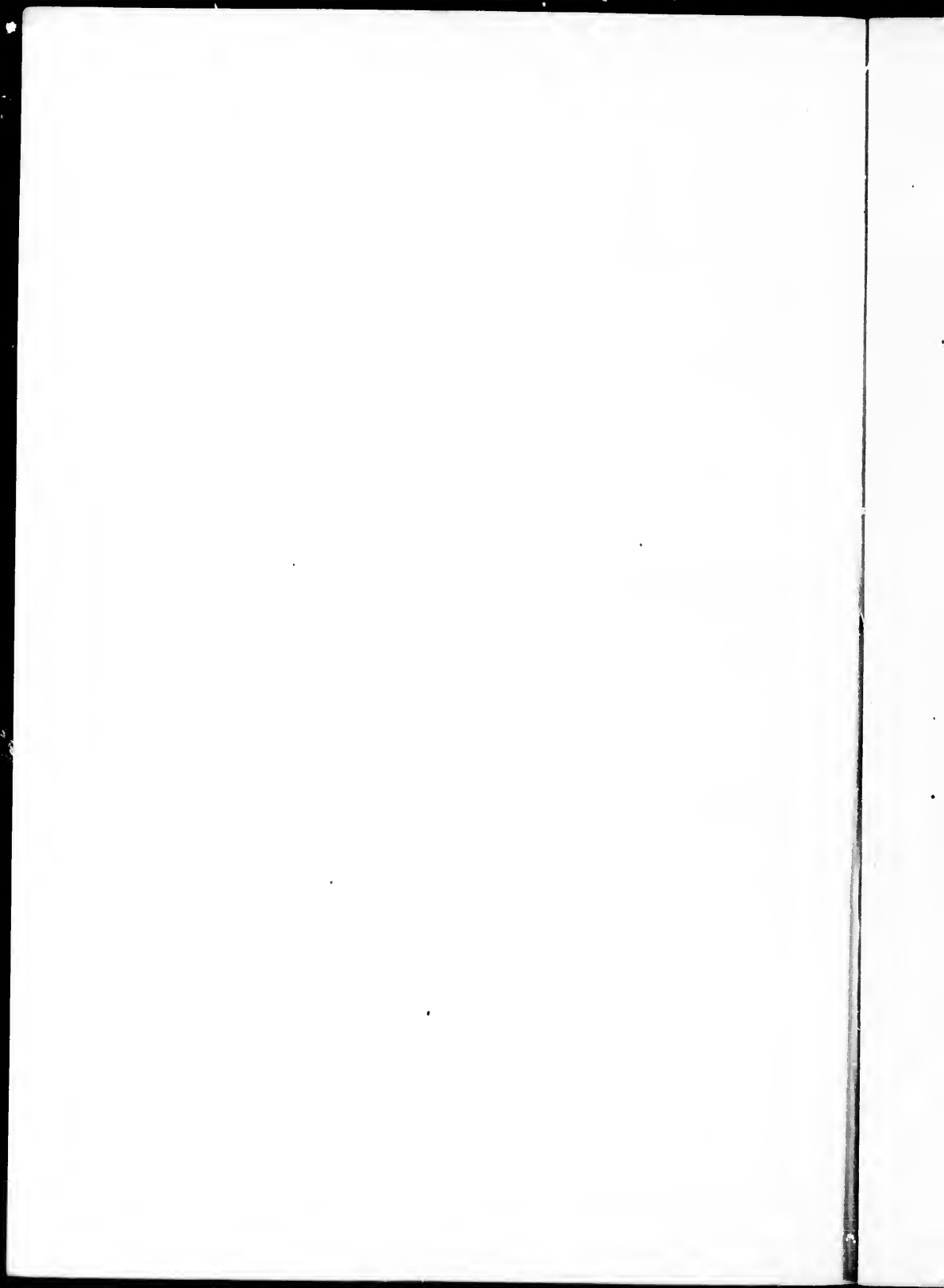
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of the Congregation.

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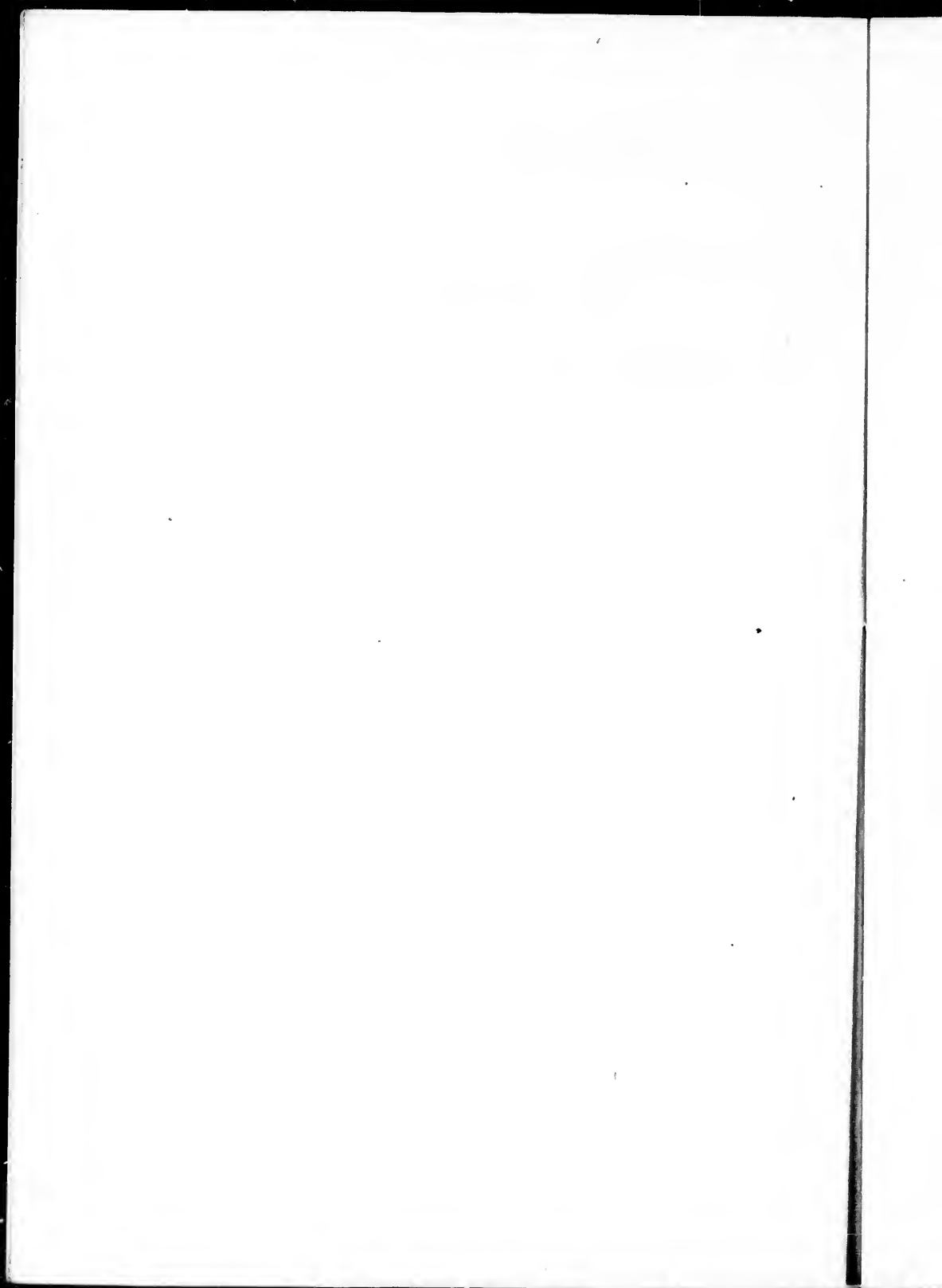
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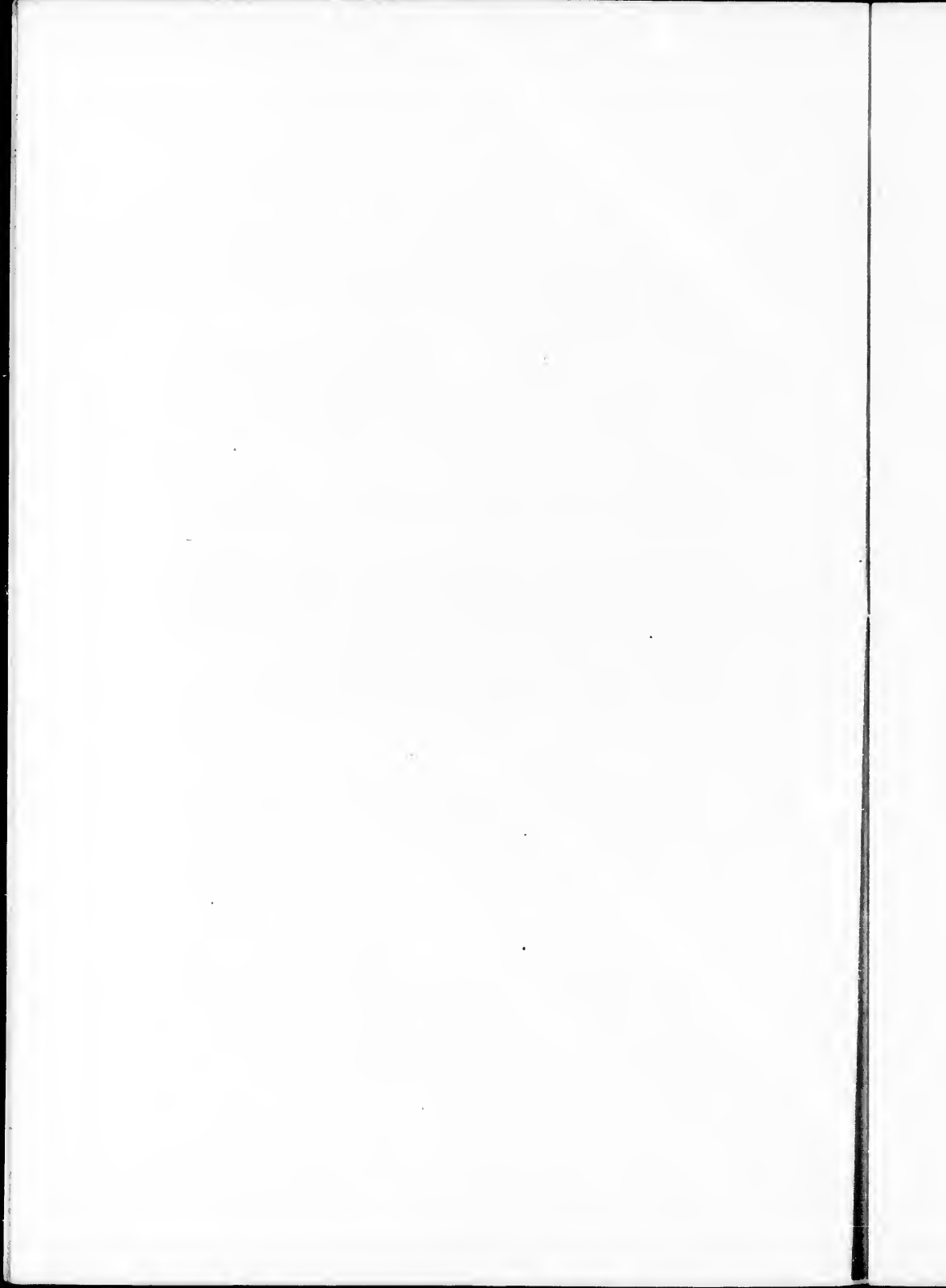
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The following Sermon was prepared with a view to support an endeavour, on the part of the Cathedral Authorities, to render the Singing more Congregational in its character than has hitherto been the case. It has been suggested that this most desirable object would be forwarded by the distribution of the Sermon. It is therefore now circulated in print.

P. W. L.



A SERMON.

EPHESIANS V. 19.—“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

THE Apostle is exhorting the Ephesians to wait on God in every appointed means of grace, for larger communications of the Holy Spirit, Whose sacred influences would fill their souls with satisfying consolation under every present circumstance, and tend to the happiest consequences in future. Of such joyous influences they might seek a full supply without any danger of excess.

In order to this, he exhorts them to substitute, in place of the loose songs of the Gentiles, or other frivolous melodies, the “psalms and hymns” of the Sacred Scriptures, and such “spiritual songs” as godly men had composed, embodying the subjects of the Gospel, and teaching according to the doctrine of truth. In these they were to speak to one another, paying at the same time particular regard to the affections of their hearts, that the *inward* melody and gratitude of the heart unto the Lord might accompany the *outward* melody of poetry and singing, when they used their psalms and spiritual songs either in private, social, or public worship.

We seem to have here a picture of the psalmody of the Early Christians. The moral harmony and spiritual music of the Apostle's own Christian life and conversation found their exposition to the Church and to the world in the utterance of sweet sounds of praise and thankfulness to God, by example as well as by precept. For when bound in an inner prison at Philippi with their feet fast in the "stocks, at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God : and the prisoners heard them."

The same strain of praise he enjoins on the Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Bingham, in his "Antiquities of the Christian Church," shows us, in an interesting manner, how the Early Church continued to act upon the Scriptural and Apostolic practice here laid down. The Service usually began with reading or singing Psalms. Quoting Jerome, he says, "They meet at nine o'clock, and then the psalms are sung, and the Scriptures are read, and after prayers they all sit down, and the father preaches a sermon to them." He tells us, "they sometimes spent whole days and nights almost in psalmody ; as when St. Ambrose's Church was beset with the Arian soldiers, the people within continued the whole night and day in singing of psalms." Alluding to the different ways in which the psalms were sung,

sometimes by one person alone, sometimes by the whole assembly, joining all together, sometimes alternately by the congregation divided into distinct choirs, the one part repeating one verse, and the other another, sometimes one person repeating the first part of the verse, and the rest joining all together at the close of it, he says, "Sometimes the whole assembly joined together, men, women, and children, united with one mouth and one mind in singing psalms and praises to God. This was the most ancient and general practice, till the way of alternate psalmody was brought into the Church. Quoting from St. Chrysostom, he says, "Women and men, old men and children, differ in sex and age, but they differ not in the harmony of singing hymns: for the Spirit tempers all their voices together, making one melody of them all. After the same manner, St. Augustine sometimes speaks of singing the psalms between the lessons with united voices, though before his time the way of alternate psalmody was become very common in all parts of the Church."

Comparing the Church to the sea, St. Ambrose says, "From the responsories of the psalms, and singing of men, women and children, there results an harmonious noise like the waves of the sea." "The way of singing the psalms alternately was when the congregation, dividing themselves into two parts, repeated the psalms by courses, verse for verse, one after another, and not, as formerly, all together. From all this it is as clear as the sun

at noon day that the people generally had a share in the psalmody of the ancient Church : and that this was not an exercise strictly confined to the canonical singers, or any particular order in the Church ; but that men, women, and children were all allowed to bear a part in it, under the direction and conduct of precentors, or those who presided in this and all other offices of the Church."

I shall conclude my quotations from Bingham, with his remark that " from what has been said, it is evident, beyond all contradiction, that the people always enjoyed their ancient privilege of joining in this divine harmony, and were encouraged in it by the greatest luminaries of the Church."

In the letter of Pliny the Younger, a distinguished advocate at Rome in the beginning of the Second Century, to Trajan the Emperor, expressing his difficulty and doubt as to how to act when the adversaries of the Christians brought before him certain charges against them, and asking the Emperor for special instructions, we find no wickedness preferred but the charge that " they were wont to rise up a great while before day to meet together, to sing a hymn to Christ as God : (*secum invicem,*) *one to another amongst themselves :*" which exactly expresses St. Paul's meaning in the words translated " *speaking to yourselves,*" or " *to one another.*"

Now the *responsive* system of music, to which allusion is here made both in the text and in the citations from early Christian writers, which is in

use in the Cathedrals of England, and, indeed, generally throughout Christendom, has been supposed to come down to us from the time of St. Ignatius, who is said first to have taught the Christian Church at Antioch to sing alternate verses of Psalms in responsive strains. But even if this tradition be considered by some unworthy of confidence, we may say with the great and judicious Hooker, "Whether Ignatius did at any time hear the angels praising God after that sort or no, what matter is it? If Ignatius did not, yet one which must be with us of greater authority did." The custom is traced by the prophet Isaiah to the blessed angels themselves, who are described as singing the praises of Jehovah in alternate choirs: "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; above it stood the seraphims; and one cried to another," or as the margin more literally and more forcibly expresses it, "this angel cried to this."* From this example of the highest authority, then, we may say that *responsive* singing fulfils the apparent intention of the heavenly mind, agrees also with the practice of the Jewish and the Primitive Church, and certainly brings out more satisfactorily than any other method the sense of Holy Scripture itself.

In addressing you on this subject in this place I do not forget, and would have you also remember, that the more *scientific* and *professional* part belongs to others, the *practical* it is my special

* Isaiah vi. 1-3.

prerogative to guard and exemplify. This embraces that *Sacred Music* which is used in the service of Almighty God : for the science of music is infinite in its range, divine in its origin, a special gift of God to man. "Music," says Luther, "is a fair gift of God, and near allied to divinity. Next unto theology I give the place and highest honour unto music." Paley, in his well known work on Natural Theology, enumerates music among the evidences of the love with which all creation abounds; that whereas the Creator might, had He so willed it in His anger, have made every sound a discord, He has peopled the very air which encompasses us with the ministrations of harmony, and has caused that the *sweet* sounds of nature shall indefinitely preponderate over such as are discordant and grating to the ear.

God gave the human voice, and endowed it with the gift of exerting a powerful influence over the mind and heart. It can stir in a moment all the passions and affections of man's rough nature. Joy, grief, loyalty, patriotism will spring into being and active exercise at its bidding. But in this place we have only to do with its power of creating and stimulating religious devotion.

All persons are not equally musical. All have not an equal power of sounding in song and by the voice, guided by the musical ear, the praises of God. The Giver of all good gifts has distributed with no little inequality the power of the human voice to produce vocal musical sounds.

But, whatever the inequality, whatever the degree in which the faculty is possessed, much, doubtless, depends on early culture and constant painstaking as time rolls on.

It is not my province to speak of music and singing in any other respect than as an element of public worship, and amid the comprehensiveness and expansiveness of the subject, I confine myself to this.

As a rule no one should be silent in the service of the sanctuary. Some perhaps cannot sing. But how many *could* who *do not*? And this is enough to warrant all our exhortation, and the appeal which is made.

I have alluded briefly to the music which abounds in nature, to the link which is thus established between mankind and the God of nature. But see what a position it holds in Scripture! The inventor of musical instruments has received a commemoration among the very earliest records of inspired history. And the author of the "Paradise Lost" suggests that the melody of the human voice was one of the gifts consecrated to the service of the Creator in the time of man's innocency. It is evident to an ordinary reader of the Bible that music and singing are interwoven with the very texture of Holy Writ from beginning to end of the Inspired Volume. God has expressly sanctioned the element of music in His public worship. He has enjoined its use both vocal and instrumental. Knowing what was in man, know-

ing that the mind and heart and soul are affected deeply and truly and devotionally by musical sensations, He has been pleased to declare His acceptance of an attractive service which, whilst it does the Creator homage, raises the soul of the creature into an atmosphere of reverence and devotion. So that the instinct is from above, not from below; it is of heavenly not of earthly origin.

Without entering at length into the many passages which any one may find for himself, I will refer you to the important place assigned to music and singing in the regulations of the Jewish Church. And in so doing I am referring to the *principle* which runs through the whole of the Old Testament dispensation showing what the will of God was in such matters for His chosen people. There are many things which were peculiarly intended for the chosen nation alone, which pointed to some striking event in their past history or to some hidden mystery of the future; but some things there are which remain as the outline of a service applicable to the Church in all ages, furnishing criteria by which to try principles, and examples by which the practice of the Christian Church may be guided.

Now whatever difference of opinion there may be as to other matters of ceremonial in the Jewish Church being a ground for imitation now, there will, I think, be none concerning that musical element of public worship comprising singing hymns and chanting psalms which David the organizer of

the Temple service adopted, Asaph chief of the singers prescribed, and Jeremiah prophet and priest sanctioned; and which the Apostles and their Jewish converts did not abandon even in the Temple in which they worshipped until the overthrow of Jerusalem, as recorded in Scripture and Ecclesiastical History.

The writer of the Second Book of Chronicles, then, thus describes the Dedication of Solomon's Temple,—II Chronicles v. 11-14.

“And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place,” where they deposited the dedicated treasures and made the solemn induction of the ark into the oracle: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course :) for so great was the multitude of sacrifices to be offered on this occasion, that the whole body of the priests, who were capable of service, were employed at once: “also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun,” who were evidently the leaders of the choir, for we read that “David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun,” who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals, with their sons and their brethren, instructed in the songs of the Lord, “being arrayed in white linen,” a custom perpetuated in all the Cathedrals of the old country, “stood at the east end of the altar,” in the choir I suppose, “and with them an hundred and twenty

priests sounding with trumpets : it came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one," all joining evidently in full chorus, " to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord ; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good : for His mercy endureth for ever : that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord." Thus the Lord took possession of His Temple by the cloud, when, with one consent, the Levites were singing the praises of His everlasting goodness and mercy.

Now it seems to me that, with the difference of the use of the Organ, which with all the modern improvements and the state of perfection to which that instrument is brought, may well be considered to comprehend all the variety of the combined instruments in use in the Jewish Church, we have here what may be called a complete Cathedral choir, and indeed a perfect Christian anthem sung in the middle of the Temple service, before the King addressed the whole assembled congregation.

But the music of the Christian Church is founded on a Divine Original, on the practice of our Blessed Lord Himself who joined in the Eucharistic Hymn with His disciples : for " when they had sung an Hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." Whatever hymn it was, certain it is that the Incarnate God sang, and fulfilled the Psalmist's prophecy, " In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

We are to remember, too, that the Services of the Church on earth are but the type and shadow of the service and worship of Heaven. St. John's Revelation tells us something of heavenly worship. When an express revelation was made to the beloved disciple of mysteries too great to be at once divulged, the glimpse of the heavenly glory contains a similar picture and similar expressions. There we find perpetual music and singing. "I heard a voice as the voice of many waters." It was the voice of a multitude, blended, swelling into louder chorus, profound, solemn, sublime: the mysterious voice of harpers harping with their harps, and the unceasing Angelic song. It matters not whether you regard the words of St. John as descriptive of the present, or prophetic of the future, or as only an accommodation to human ideas, the great principle remains the same, and the words of a great poet of the present day are strictly true that "Music is an echo from heaven." It may be as ancient as the creation of angels, the morning stars who shouted for joy.

But whatever part music and the melody of the human voice may have played in time past, whatever part in the world of spirits in the disembodied state in Paradise where they are enjoying the deep quiet of a heavenly home the saints departed may hold in the praises of Christ's Church, or saints below may catch of heavenly melodies, we know, upon the testimony of the Scriptures themselves, that the Song of Praise is to reach on, and on, un-

dying and undiminished into the boundless future of Eternity, the type of the worship of angels. So that it has been well said, "Other arts—painting, sculpture, or architecture—have their own special charms, and their own characteristic properties towards the representation of the sublime and the beautiful, but their relations are with the material, and their place is on the earth. When the truths which they may serve to impress on the eye of faith shall become visible realities, their occupation or mission will be over, and they will resign their office into the hands of that queen of all the arts who is alone endowed with the capacities for discharging it when time shall be no more."

I may now say a few words as to the *kind* of Music which should be heard in the House of God.

We shall all feel that this is best decided by the character of the words which are to be sung. Surely no light and operatic music can be consistent with the solemn words of men "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The subjects of the Psalms, the Attributes of the All Holy Almighty God; the mystery of the Ever-blessed Trinity: the fall of man and his corruption: the misery and defilement wrought in him by sin; the eternal counsels of the Father's love in the Gospel scheme of salvation, the Incarnation of the ever-blessed Son our Lord, His birth, His sufferings, His victories, His all-sufficient Atonement, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the conflicts of the Church,

judgment and salvation, the glories of heaven and the terrors of hell, are not subjects for strains such as the world is accustomed and delighted to hear. Devotional music, whether jubilant or plaintive, should have a character of its own. It should be sober, dignified, chaste, severe. The strains which may lawfully delight the ear in places not specially hallowed by the promised presence of God are alien to the church, and should be banished from its sacred walls. The Bible and its simple severe grandeur are different from any other book and its colloquial phraseology. *Church Music*, the music specially chosen and adapted for the *Lord's House*, should be similarly distinct in its style and character. And I suppose all will agree that the abundant works of the old Masters are not obsolete but still singularly adapted to our ideas and perhaps eminently superior to any other. And as our Blessed Lord Himself, to show that He is the author of whatever is good and true in every age and in every country, quoted old parables, proverbs, and maxims current among the people, so we may here adopt the language of one which He used for another purpose, and say, with reference to the style and genius of the Church Music which has so long reverberated throughout the time-honoured Cathedrals of the old country and been more or less adopted in our own, "No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."

Now we meet so frequently and statedly here, that it is useful occasionally to throw into promi-

nence some special part of the services in which we engage, that reflection and suggestion may bring us all to a clearer knowledge of what is required of us by Him, who watches the movings of the heart.

I speak now with special reference to our Evening Service, when the whole Church is free and all are welcome in every part of the spacious building ; a musical service rendered in unison : tunes chosen which may produce congregational psalmody, that none need be mere listeners, but all may join heartily, that one grand swelling sound of praise to God may resound throughout the capacious building, the choir doing its specific work of *leading* all others, and not monopolizing all the words and music. In the *chanting*, too, the whole congregation are invited to join, for with psalters pointed for the purpose, it is easy and soon acquired. The tones or melodies we use are very few and simple, and must already have become familiar to your ears, several words being put to the first or principal note of each half verse called the *reciting* note, the last four or five syllables having each a separate note, to form a cadence.

There may be parts of the service in the morning and afternoon, which the choir sing by themselves, according to the arrangement of a Cathedral service, in which the congregation are invited to join "in spirit and understanding" if not in voice, as the service for the "Te Deum" in the morning and the Anthem in the afternoon. But in addi-

tion to these two services, we have the third in the evening, a service more simple as to its music, in which the congregation are earnestly invited to take an *active responsive* part, and yet a service diversified in its very simplicity.

I feel strongly that if we here, and our brethren in all the Churches of our Communion in the city can only bring the attendants on the public worship of the Church, to feel a personal interest in, and take an individual part in the service, which is intended for *all*, there would be little fear of that most reprehensible practice of our young people and others, from whom we might expect better things, violating the principles of consistency before God and the Church, and wandering off to strange pastures, or gratifying the lust of the ear for melodious strains or alien pulpit oratory in forbidden places, where a more showy and gorgeous ceremonial may ravish and entrance the sense and charm the ear, whilst leaving barren and untouched the deep feelings of the soul.

I read in invisible yet distinct characters, over the threshold of the doorway of any sanctuary which is not our own, and would venture to bid any one to whom such caution may apply to read the same as a scroll of warning : " As a bird that wandereth from his nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place : " whether temporarily or permanently. Such an one is in peril all the time, " as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare. "

I may be allowed here to remark the *frame* of *mind* in which those should be found, who engage in the service of God. They should be imbued with reverence, faith, and love, as they utter God's own words in the presence of God Himself. Uttering words with the voice without any mental effort to grasp the meaning as they fly past the lips, carelessness of manner, indevotion, irreverence, are habits of rapid growth, and if no caution be sounded, and *received*, degenerate into solemn mockery. Look at our services throughout. Of course, I refer to the Singing. Prayer, Preaching, and Reading, are separate topics. Some of the words of the Anthems are words which will be used hereafter coming from the lips of the Lord Himself as the authoritative invitation of admission to the joys of Heaven, and as the judicial sentence of banishment to the woes of hell!

We deprecate the mere luxury of hearing. We would desire to do away with the mere lust of the ear. We would that the concord of sweet sounds, in whatever degree produced and developed, should serve the purposes of devotion, of drawing out the highest efforts of the really spiritual mind. Only reflect how much is annually spent on the development of this art for secular purposes? Of time, of industry, of talent, of money?

And this City, happily, is not backward in the culture and practice of the musical art, but has many friends who (in the most laudable and per-

severing manner) cultivate the taste, develop the capabilities, and raise the tone of all who have any ear and any heart for music. For let it not be for a moment thought that any disparagement of such efforts is intended. But should not so holy a gift be religiously exercised in rendering praise to the Creator, as well as pleasure to the creature, in speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs? In this point of view, I put in the claim of music on the community, and especially on the worshippers at the Cathedral, and exhort them to sustain the effort which is now being made for the mutual benefit of all, and for the glory and praise of God. Because in proportion as the chanting, the singing, the melody of Service and of Anthem, fail in elevating the soul, they fail in their high object, and degenerate into empty performance which would be better carried out elsewhere than in God's House and Presence.

So that we must aim, brethren, at bringing you to this House of God, for better reasons than because others come, at inviting your voices to swell the strain of praise in public worship for other reasons than because it affords a sense of gratification or relief. We invite you to offer a worthy sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God, "the fruit of your lips giving thanks to His name."

And, lastly, study to "give none offence:" to be no stumblingblock in a weaker brother's way. I should like to exhort the youths who sit in the Chancel, and lead our voices in praise, to hear me, to listen, and to obey.

Let no hurried conduct in Church disqualify you, my young brethren, as acceptable worshippers before God. Let no unbecoming manner and demeanour cause offence to the devout and the reverential, and so bring dislike and disrepute on the very service we are seeking to improve. Do not despise your own youth, and think irreverence no crime, because you are young.

Samuel was younger than any boy in the choir when he lay down in his place in the Temple of the Lord, heard God calling unto him, "Samuel, Samuel," and answered, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Your services in the Temple, I maintain, are not less honoured, nor less honourable, nor less responsible, than were Samuel's of old: nor were Samuel's privileges and opportunities of growth in grace superior to yours. So that I preach "Samuel" to you as a pattern and a guide, an example and a copy, attainable by you all. Remember, too, that you are each and all responsible to God for what has now been said to you in the name of the Lord. May you all, as Choristers, unite with us, in heart and voice, in our services here! May you, as Choristers, grow in grace, in meekness, and in godliness! and may the prayer which we have so often used together before entering the House of God be verified! May you "finally be found worthy to sing the praises of God in the choirs of heaven!"

And as for us, brethren, while the happy sys-

tem of chanting and singing one to another, of "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs," should make us beware of offering the unacceptable service of the lips only, it should also make us "joyful in the house of prayer."

What solemn associations are here, though our Cathedral is not yet eight years old! what inspiring thoughts may surround us as we worship! The songs we are invited to sing, the hymns we use, are the songs of angels, the songs of just spirits before the throne of God. Our services, however imperfect, are intended to render us meet for the perfect services of the Church Triumphant, to join the chorus of the sky with those whose record is on high, whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, whose spirits in the blessed peace of the intermediate state in Paradise, are looking out with joy for the dawn of the morning of the resurrection day.

Here indeed, alas, the finest voices may conceal the coldest and most unloving hearts, and the best and holiest may be the least melodious. But there, blessed be God, all shall be gifted with song, all voices shall swell the melody of heaven, all hearts and all voices shall be in tune, uttering a perfect language, breathing a worship spiritual, pure, and true.

And this shall be the Song, accompanied with the sweepings of the harps of the angels of heaven, the Worthiness of the Redeemer! "worthy

is the Lamb that was slain." And "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands" shall prolong the notes of the lofty anthem, "as the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

