

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

United Presbyterian Church of North America

CONVENTION

OF

UNITED PRESBYTERIANS

"

OPPOSED TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD,

HELD IN THE

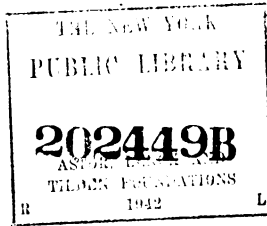
FOURTH U. P. CHURCH, ALLEGHENY, PA.

AUGUST 14th & 15th, 1883.

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1883.



OFFICERS.



Gen. JAS. A. EKIN, - - President.
LOUISVILLE, KY.

Rev. D. W. CARSON, D. D., - Vice President.
BURGETTSTOWN, PA.

Prof. ED. F. REID, - - Secretary.
MONMOUTH, ILLS.

WM. FLOYD, Esq., - - Treasurer.
PITTSBURGH, PA.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CONVENTION.

The Convention provided for by resolutions of a meeting of those opposed to the action of the late General Assembly, held in May last, assembled in the Fourth U. P. Church, Allegheny, Pa., August 14th, 1883, at 10 o'clock, A. M. According to previous arrangement, Gen. James A. Ekin called the Convention to order and presided, leading in the devotional exercises, which continued during the forenoon session. The following were appointed a Business Committee of the Convention, and instructed to report at the opening of the next session at 1:30 P. M., viz.: Rev. E. N. McElree, Rev. W. A. Robb, Rev. Dr. James Brown, Hon. James Dawson and Hugh Nash, Esq.

THE ORGANIZATION.

The Convention reassembled at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, General James A. Ekin, U. S. A., of Jeffersonville, Ind., presiding. The 100th Psalm was sung. The 119th Psalm was read by the Chairman, and Rev. D. H. Pollock, of Elizabeth, Pa., offered prayer. Rev. E. N. McElree, of New Castle, Pa., presented the report of the Business Committee, which proposed General Ekin as President of the permanent organization; Dr. D. W. Carson, of Burgettstown, Vice President; Prof. Ed. F. Reid, of Monmouth, Ill., Secretary, and Wm. Floyd, of Pittsburgh, Treasurer. It recommended that the programme prepared by the Committee should be adopted; that the reading of the papers should not take more than thirty minutes for each, and that the central idea of each should be presented to the Convention in conference in the form of a resolution in discussing which the speakers should be limited to five minutes. The report was adopted. Upon assuming the permanent chairmanship, General Ekin delivered the following

ADDRESS.

“Brethren of the convention, ladies and gentlemen: For the partiality of the convention in selecting me to preside over the deliberations of this great meeting of ministers and elders, members of the

United Presbyterian Church, I beg to tender my thanks and acknowledgments. A very distinguished honor has been conferred on me, it is gratefully appreciated and will be cherished as a precious memory as long as life lasts. In the language of our good old familiar psalms,

"The inheritance that I have got
In beauty doth excel."

When informed of the important position that had been assigned me by the committee, (I refer to the central committee,) I hesitated as to its acceptance, feeling inadequate to meet its demands, its responsibilities and its requirements, but the affectionate earnestness with which it was presented for my consideration, the loving-kindness with which it was pressed upon my attention, impelled me to waive all personal considerations and to respond with a willing heart to the call made upon me. A good soldier will always be present at the call of the roll. And in coming to this great meeting of the people I was convinced that I would be surrounded with kind friends, by Christian brethren and by beloved companions from whom I would receive every encouragement and support. And in this expectation I have not been disappointed. All over this vast audience, in the sea of upturned anxious faces, I see before me those with whom I have associated in former years, some of them from Bethesda away up among the hills of the Yough; beautiful Bethesda, beautiful for situation, the joy of all that surrounding country, it has been the fountain of influence, the home and the field of Henderson, of Dick, of M'Kinstry, of Jamison, and now of Pollock, whence streams of influence have run out, and will continue to run, so long as time will endure. Some of them I have met on the field and around the camp fire, and some on the field where we have sung the beautiful songs of Zion together; these all I see before me to-day, and I feel that I am at home, that I am in my own household, and among my own beloved brethren. You are of the same household, and we belong to the same house; I extend to you a brother's heart, and believe that you will extend to me the same; I feel confident to-day will redound to the glory of God; I thank God for the privilege of meeting with you to-day, for we may never have an opportunity to meet again in this world.

Sympathizing to the fullest extent with the object of this convention, ready to co-operate in proper and legitimate ways in resisting the flood of encroachments and innovations so destructive to the purity, simplicity and spirituality of religious worship which are pouring in like a mighty torrent upon us, in complete harmony with the view of the minority of the committee on bills and overtures, in

the late General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, endorsing and approving the strong and convincing protest of these valiant defenders of the truth, to whom the entire church owes a debt of gratitude, anxious to the extent of my ability to strengthen their hands and encourage their hearts, I am here to show my faith by my works, having travelled at a season crowded with official work, and on the eve of my retirement from the active list of the army, traveling upwards of four hundred miles for the purpose of participating in the proceedings of this grand conference. In the light of covenant engagements I am here, in the light of Christian obligations I am here; I am here to pay my vows taken at Bethesda years and years ago, to pay them in the presence of this great conference; I am here for the purpose of vindicating my Christian consistency.

“And shall that theme so long divine,
Degenerate in hands like mine?”

Times change and men change with them, but the truth of God is unchangeable.

“It doth through ages all remain.”

It is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; why that is one of the most beautiful, one of the sweetest, and one of the most precious passages in all God's word; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; it was taught me at my mother's knee, and then I can imagine this beautiful afternoon it comes down to me like music from the skies. How sweet unto me O Lord, are all Thy words of truth, yea I have found them sweeter, yea far sweeter than honey to my mouth; firm as a rock is truth, she stands the same yesterday, to-day, and forever! Thank God for these precious words.

This conference or convention, originated with a little band of ministers, elders and members of the United Presbyterian Church, after full deliberation and consideration at a meeting held in the basement of the Third United Presbyterian Church, in Pittsburgh, the building in which the General Assembly of 1883, held its sessions and near its close. Pained and humiliated at the extraordinary proceedings of the Assembly they met to confer and consult together relative to the interest of the church and the gravity of the situation, and adopt such measures as its circumstances and the emergency demanded.

Their course was eminently wise and judicious. After a free, full and exhaustless consideration of the whole subject, deeply impressed with the responsibilities and solemnities of the occasion, they adopted without a dissenting voice, a series of admirable resolutions, and presented them through available channels, for the information and

consideration of the whole church, in language clear, strong, terse, compact,—even a little child can read them, and a little child can understand them. This action we regarded as imperative, not only as a right, but as a bounden duty—a duty to withstand what they conceived to be a terrible mistake. And these brethren were right. As has been well said: “There is more force in one Paul, than in the whole Jewish Sanhedrim.” There is more force in one John Knox, than in all the papal power in Scotland. There is more force in one Luther, than in all the Roman Hierarchy. True, every word of it.

The resolutions are as follows :

Resolved, 1st, That the action of the General Assembly on the subject of instrumental music is contrary to historic United Presbyterianism, and we believe in opposition to the teaching of God's word.

2nd, That the re-affirming of the action of 1882, in answer to the memorialist against said action, and the manner in which it was done, was an utter disregard of the rights of the brotherhood.

3rd, That we now pledge ourselves to use every legitimate means to cause the use of instruments of music in the worship of God in any of our congregations to cease until these instruments are admitted in a constitutional way.

4th, We do not feel under obligations to make, or cause to be made, any contributions to any department of church work where said contributions are directly or indirectly used in supporting congregations where instruments of music have been introduced into the worship of God.

5th, That we call upon all pastors to read the pastoral letter to be sent out by the action of the Assembly, to the people, and then present the true Bible position which we now hold and will continue to hold.

6th, That a convention representing all parts of the church, be held the 14th day of August, 1883, in the Fourth United Presbyterian Church, Allegheny, at 10 o'clock, A. M. The programme for said convention to be arranged and published by a committee appointed for that purpose.

7th, That we call upon the *Christian Instructor*, this year as last, to continue its able discussion of this question, and we pledge our hearty support to this able periodical.

It is under this call we have assembled to-day, hence this meeting and outpouring of the people ; this is a wonderful and providential demonstration. In all the conventions with which I have had experience, and I have had considerable, never have I witnessed such a convention as was held at our morning session. Brethren, it is only the drops before the shower ; the battalions are yet to come. This is a representative Assembly, which speaks in tones of thunder. Much might be said on this subject, but the limit of my time is such that

it would not be proper to take it up at this time ; perhaps reference may be made to it during the future sessions of the convention. The origin of this convention has been stated, and the object of it will be fully understood and appreciated as the interesting programme prepared by the committee is unfolded. The meeting promises to be of great interest, both in the topics chosen for discussion, and because of the men who have been selected to treat the various subjects. The convention will be of incalculable value and profit, not only to those present, but to the church generally, and to the Christian community at large. We approach the questions with which we have to do with the earnestness and the seriousness demanded by their importance, and we appeal "to the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

The acts of the convention will be far-reaching. If the meeting results in an awakening to the perils of the situation, the people here assembled will return to their homes, carrying with them a deeper sense of the obligation resting upon them as witnesses for the truth. The good accomplished, eternity alone will unfold.

Again, we are not here to treat with disrespect, and discourtesy, and unconcern, the declarations of the supreme judicatory of the church. Honorable, and distinguished, and beloved, as the Assembly is, infallibility cannot be claimed for it. On this point the Westminster Confession of Faith is clear. Hear it: "All Synods and Councils, since the apostles' time, may err, and many have erred"—words easily understood. The evidence, my brethren, is overwhelming, that we are not living in an age of infallibility. The declarations of the church courts should be confronted with the divine word and only received as authority when they harmonize with the one supreme standard.

The law of God is paramount to all other laws. Nothing unscriptural should be enforced by the church ; in vain do you teach for doctrine the dogmas of men. These should be rejected.

And now let us enter with spirit and with enthusiasm, and with determination upon the duties that are immediately before us. This is an occasion of extraordinary interest. Let us go forward with zeal and fidelity, performing fearlessly and conscientiously every part of duty which belongs to us. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses ; representatives are here from various parts of the church ; the angels of God are encamped around about this sanctuary, and the angel of the covenant is in our midst. Quit ye like men ! Ex-

traordinary issues are now before the United Presbyterian Church, and we are now in the thickest of the conflict, flushed with the anticipation of a glorious triumph. I hear the shouts of victory all along the line. The result is by no means doubtful. "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, the eternal years of God are hers." I tell you lift up the hands that hang down; lift up your heads in joyful hope. Questions of peculiar gravity involving important interests, will come before the convention for consideration; they will receive intelligent and determined action. Let us meet them like men, bold, courageous, determined men, who, knowing their privileges, dare maintain them, and our deliberations will be read with acceptance, and an influence will go out from this place which will gladden the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands of our beloved people. Streams of blessings will pour out on this convention which will cause many hearts to rejoice with exceeding great joy, and there will be praise and thanksgiving on the streets of the city, and throughout the various churches of our New Testament Jerusalem as the good news is received, as congregations and families and individuals gather around the mercy seat, the shout will go up: "Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." May God's richest blessings be poured down on this convention, and may his presence and glory fill the house.

"May the beauty of the Lord
Our God be us upon
Our handy-work, establish thou,
Establish them each one."

Amen and Amen.

The Chairman then appointed the following Committees:

Committee on Resolutions.

REV. D. W. CARSON, D. D.,	JOHN ALEXANDER,
REV. THOMAS BALPH, D. D.,	JOSEPH MCNAUGHER,
REV. ROBERT A. BROWNE, D. D.	W. D. BEGGS.
HON. JAMES DAWSON,	

Committee on Finance.

WILLIAM FLOYD,	JOSEPH MCKELVEY,
THOMAS FÉRGUS,	WM. REED.

Committee on Publication.

J. W. ARROTT,	GEORGE M. REED,
ALEXANDER BARR,	H. BOVARD.
JOHN HOPKINS,	

Committee on Correspondence.

REV. J. M. FULTON,	REV. D. H. POLLOCK.
REV. E. N. McELREE,	

HISTORY

OF THE

Doctrine and Service of Praise

AS IT RELATES TO THE

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY REV. G. C. VINCENT, D. D.

In Church History the matter of doctrine, order and worship occupy each an important place. We institute no comparison between them in point of importance. All hold that the Scriptures, properly understood and applied, do establish and regulate everything pertaining alike to principle and practice.

History too confirms the fact that where there is error in doctrine there is usually a corresponding departure from the proper standard in order and worship.

In times of reformation too, when the church attempts to regain ground that has been lost in respect to doctrine, there is a corresponding zeal in attempting to bring her back to the scriptural standard of worship. Errors have an affinity for each other. Truth and right stand related also in attempts to rectify wrongs calling for reformation.

It is universally conceded, that the Christian church under the direction of inspired men, was rightly constituted; also, that the doctrines taught, and the worship established, were designed to be of standard authority to the end of the world.

We all agree further, that in process of time, corruptions crept into the church, affecting alike doctrine, discipline and worship.

This corruption so generally pervaded the whole church, that she lost her distinctive character, so as to merit and receive the name of anti-Christ. We all believe this, nor do we disagree about the manner in which it was effected. It came stealthily. It came not all at once.

The true theory of Christian worship is plainly set forth.—*John* 4: 23, 24. “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.” Then further he says, with emphasis, “God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth.”

A system of carnal ordinances had been imposed on the Jewish church, “until the time of the reformation.” That period had now arrived. A new order of things is introduced.

The Christian dispensation is called “the dispensation of the spirit,” “a royal priesthood;” we are “to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” This is the key-note of Christian worship. To this no exception is taken by our brethren who contend for the use of musical instruments in God’s worship. But we charge that the use of instruments is at the expense of the spirituality of the worship tendered. In this we are confirmed by what is written, *I. Cor.* 14: 15. “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.” “Things without life giving sound,” are incapable alike of understanding and of spirituality. To us, these scriptures seem to close up the controversy. What the Saviour uttered to the woman of Samaria were not random words. Some may think the whole interview was merely “incidental.” Perhaps it was so; but whether by design or by accident, the Lord did then and there set forth the great regulating principle of acceptable worship.

It is a rule of Biblical interpretation, that what is approved in acts performed, is equivalent to a command enjoining such acts. This rule is applicable both to the subject matter, and the manner of its performance.

In conducting praise service, we have the example of the Saviour himself; an example we presume, intended to supersede the necessity of positive law. It was on the eve of the crucifixion. He and his disciples had partaken of the solemn feast of the

Passover ; the Lord's Supper, the connecting link between the two dispensations was celebrated, and the solemn occasion was concluded with song. "When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." We believe they sang what was usual on such occasions, "The Hallal," or of the Psalms of David ; some part from the 113th to the 118th. We believe too, that they sang with the voice simply, without instrumental accompaniments. This single example of praise service should settle for all time, both matter and manner of song in the Christian church. The Lord gave law by his example.

This is no forced interpretation of ours, gotten up for the purpose. History sustains us in saying, that it was so understood by the apostles, by converts to the Christian faith, and by common consent of the whole Christian church, as far as the seventh century. This is amply confirmed by heathen as well as by Christian writers. By all these, the practice of singing, simply with the voice, is confirmed as a fact. As a fact it must be universally accepted.

For good reasons, the usages of the primitive church are carefully sought after. No change in doctrinal truth taught in the Bible is admissible. No changes in ordinances, nor in the worship established. The words of inspiration constitute a perfect rule, both of faith and duty. Of all this it may be said, as of the altar ordered to be built, "If thou lift up a tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."

The impulse given to this pure, spiritual worship, carried the apostolic usage down the centuries as we have said, and it is not complimentary to those now contending for a change in the service of song to state that instruments of music, images, incense, and many other innovations were introduced by the Romish church about the same time. In this, we must admit, a logical consistency. The worship was designed to be sensuous ; hence all the senses were sought as far as possible to be gratified, the eye and the nose, as well as the ear. The whole science of æsthetics was laid under tribute to render the worship more acceptable ; not to God, but to man.

As far back as the year 1566, the Puritans in England condemned this very thing, for which our United Presbyterian brethren

ren are contending, as they never have contended for any principle of truth. These Puritans condemned the use of musical instruments in the church a "tending to amuse rather than edify."

All we wish to say here is, that history sets forth the use of instruments in the worship of God, as one of the plain marks of anti-Christian apostasy; and that the pure, simple, spiritual worship of the apostolic times, did then give place to the meretricious ornaments of Rome.

THE REFORMATION.

From the 7th to the 16th century, Popery continued on its even way of moral degeneracy. The various steps of descent we will not stop to trace. Suffice it to say, that the Papal power became dominant over all Europe, "the kings of the earth gave their power to the beast." In opposition to this entire system of error and sin, the Lord raised up witnesses at different times and in diverse places, who exposed these departures from first principles. Niclof, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Melville, with hosts of others, confessors and martyrs, "who lived not their lives to the death." These all opposed the usurpations and corruptions of this mother of harlots with wonderful success.

All these departures from truth and duty had come in through considerations of expediency, and by authority mostly human. The Reformation was effected by the application of the principle of exclusiveness. For all that pertains to God's worship, there must be a Divine appointment. The worshiper must be ever ready to give an answer to the question, "Who hath required this at your hand?"

By the application of this plain scriptural principle, was swept away the rubbish of ages—the mass, the seven sacraments, supremacy of the Pope, Musical Instruments, Monastic vows, altars, etc.

All this and much more gave way before the application of the principle, not of permissive appointment. Such nonsense was not thought of, but of exclusive appointment. This was that "trenchant blade of trustiest metal," that cut Rohal and wounded the Dragon—the battle-axe of Protestant warfare, that inflicted on the man of sin "his deadly wound." We can not but speak earnestly on this subject. Without the belief in the exclusiveness

of Divine appointment, the reformation from Popery could not have been effected. More than this, without this principle and its equally persistent application, the reformation can not be perpetuated.

The Protestant church must gradually relapse into the ritual of Rome.

In Scotland the Reformation attained its highest degree of perfection. It secured the Presbyterian form of church government. Scotland seems still to be the natural home of Presbyterianism. Her reformers clung with heroic tenacity to the cardinal principle adverted to above. One anecdote in the history of Knox, mentioned by Dr. McCair, illustrates his life-purpose and work. When spending some time in England at a certain period of his life, an attempt was made by wily politicians to capture him by offering him a benefice. This he declined and was called before a privy council to give his reasons.

In the course of this investigation he was asked if he did not consider kneeling at the eucharist a matter of indifference? To this he replied, "Christ's action at that communion was most perfect, and in it no such posture was used. It is most safe to follow his example, and kneeling was an addition and an invention of man."

It was doubtless the conviction of all Protestants that in these days of darkness and conflict, when truth and error confronted each other in deadly strife, that our reformers enjoyed the presence and power of the Divine Spirit in a very high degree. "There were giants in the earth in those days, mighty men—men of renown." These all, with one consent, fixed their seal of disapprobation to these very same innovations which we are called to resist.

THE COMPILATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS.

The next important juncture in history which bears on the subject in hand is the compilation of our confession and catechisms. This work began in 1643. The assembly was called by the reforming Parliament. The same that called Cromwell to the front. It was composed partly of lay and partly of ministerial delegates, representing the three kingdoms.

The misrule of the British king was the occasion of calling them together. These sovereigns of the House of Stuart had sworn to the solemn league and covenant, binding themselves to resist Popery and prelacy and all the infringements of civil and religious liberty which these systems imply. In face of all this, turned and used all their power to re-establish them. Then there was war in the gates. "Michael and his angels fought, and the Dragon fought and his angels." A tempest of civil war was sweeping over the land and round the capitol where this assembly was convened.

They spent five-and-a-half years in this business, and the work was well done. It covered the whole ground of doctrine, order and worship. After the lapse of two hundred and fifty years we are prepared to say that no work ever executed by worldly human hands commands such general confidence. The whole civilized world has been influenced by it, and the end is not yet.

How stands, in the judgment of this Assembly, the matter in controversy among us to now? "The singing of Psalms with grace in the heart."

They meant what they said, "singing." No room here to play on the disputed word "Psallo." No room for the "plectron and the string." But simply *singing*. Here as to the subject matter they are equally decided. Psalms, just Psalms, and nothing more. The sentiment of this Assembly was so decided and so strong that the organ gave place to it spontaneously. The great organs of St. Paul's and St. Peter's church were peaceably taken down and removed. In the duties required in the second commandment we have their meaning clearly expressed—this commandment requires "the removal of monuments of idolatry."

Monuments of idolatry this Assembly judge these organs to be with which some of our brethren are so infatuated. *Jer.* 50 : 38.

The practical judgment of the Westminster Assembly is this: Instruments of music in the church, is a part of the idolatrous worship of Rome.

THE SECESSION.

It is remarkable that revolutions in church relations have returned in cycles of about one hundred years. The celebrated

reformation from Popery occurred in the sixteenth century. The Westminster Standards were called forth in the seventeenth century. The secession from the church of Scotland in the eighteenth century and in 1843 occurred the exode of the Free Church from the same old established church of 1688.

The secession of 1733, or perhaps, more properly speaking, the ejectionists, for it is a historical fact that our fathers were cast out, not for their *faults* but for their *fidelity* in testifying against sin in the church.

In this secession as in popular language, it is generally known, we stand most intimately related, as an organic body, and stand similarly related to the larger body of Presbyterians.

The Scotch covenanters of whom such frequent and honorable mention is made in history, were the Presbyterians who withstood through privation, persecution and death, all the encroachments of the House of Stuart, up to the Revolution settlement of 1688. History nowhere records a succession of more worthy men. The Wisharts, the Hamiltons, the Camerons and the Renwicks.

These men stood in defense of the covenants, the great constitutional principles of civil liberty, and the still more sacred rights of conscience, the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, was the battle-cry, and "they lived not their lives to the death."

We claim to stand thus honorably related. No line of kings can boast such an ancestry. God often sets up over the nations politically the basest of men. But those who love the truth so as to hazard and sacrifice their lives, in order to maintain and transmit principles by the belief of which the world is saved, are justly entitled to a pre-eminence.

It is not our purpose to trace the various steps by which the Associate Presbyterian Church became separated from the established Church of Scotland.

Suffice it to say,—

1. Secession means separation. Such entire separation as breaks all connection with the church from which they were separated. It means also taking with them all the rights, privileges

and immunities enjoyed in their previous connection. They organize for themselves as completely and independently, as though there were no other church organization in existence.

2. This separation must be for good and sufficient reasons. Separation among the various sects is so common that the evil, and the magnitude of the evil, or the sins of Jereboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, is not appreciated, indeed, seldom thought of, without enumerating the causes of just separation at large. We may safely say, that when anything plainly unjust or unscriptural is bound upon us, which our conscience repels, we are at liberty always to obey God rather than man. Still there is left room to return, if the cause of offense may at any time be removed. Our fathers of the Secession did so. They appealed to the first free, faithful Reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that should meet. In keeping with this, many of our brethren took up their Protest, when the Free Church took their separate position, as being the state of things contemplated in the appeal of their fathers.

3. A decent respect for the sentiments and feelings of mankind, require that we should give our reasons for the departure made. This document our fathers called their Testimony, a scriptural name for such statement, and quite intelligible.

The elementary idea of this position and practice is stated by our Saviour, *John 7 : 7* : "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

The Lord in his day and in his place was a reformer. To what he found that was evil, he called attention, and expressed his disapprobation. This reproof called forth opposition—provoked hatred. Some of our brethren would be kind enough to say, "he bristled all round with opposition."

This idea is inseparable from a Christian church, and also from a private Christian, wherever we find him. Between the church and the world there is, as between Hannibal and Rome, "eternal enmity." Attempts to remove this enmity, and conciliate the opposition of the world, has, in all ages, been the besetting sin of the church.

In the period to which we refer, faithful reformers in the persons of the Erskines, the Wilsons, Moncriefs and Bastans were

proceeded against as evil-doers, and ejected from their livings, their churches, and as far as possible from their office as ministers of the word. But God who causes the wrath of man to praise him, turned the curse into a blessing. Archimedes said "if he could only get a position *outside*, he could move the world." The outside position into which these men were forced, was made a blessed means of saving Scotland.

They organized in this outside position, whence they could most effectively bring their artillery to bear on that backsliding, worldly confirmed organization, the Established Church.

Doctor Chalmers, a leader of the Free Church, one hundred years later, blessed God for the secession. Its influence was so salutary and so effective on the Establishment, against whose defection they so faithfully testified, as to make the separation of the Free Church possible.

This secession was followed by a most remarkable revival in pulpit oratory and power, also in piety in private life. For the dead formality of mercenary incumbents of the Established Church, the people had no relish. The people—the masses of the people flocked by thousands to the ministry of live men, who had been censured for their fidelity, moved it may be by sympathy in some measure, but principally by sound doctrine, by plain scriptural proof, presented in the most earnest and impressive manner.

A great revival of the truth and power of religion followed. the results of which extended across the Atlantic. The names of Clarkson, and Marshall, of Anderson, of Henderson, of Mason, of Beveridge and Bullion, with many others, testify to future generations this same earnest fidelity in the exposition and application of evangelical truth. This city, not to make invidious distinctions among brethren, has had its share of this blessed work. The names of James Rodgers and John T. Pressley will not soon be forgotten here. By their efficiency the 1st and 2d congregations of this city were established and built up. Not by monuments of idolatry, detested by all Psalm-singing churches, but by plain, powerful, expository preaching, and "*singing Psalms* with grace in the heart." I can in imagination, to-day, see those worshipping assemblies; in solemn style the pre-

centor took his position in front of the pulpit; with his lead in familiar strains, the service of song began. The congregation sang. They all sang. Melody in the voice begotten of melody in the heart, gave relish and zest to the whole performance.

This service of praise was well performed, we allege both in the sight of God and man.

Those were the palmy days of prosperity in the churches in these cities. The same thing is true over western Pennsylvania, and Eastern Ohio, and generally wherever these churches have a place.

Gavazzi, the Italian, who traveled all over Europe and America, and noticed what he saw, says: "Respecting church music, the best in the world is in Scotland. The people all sing. They sing with the voice simply, without instrumental embarrassments. They sing Psalms with animation and with relish," precisely the same song and the same manner of singing that was practised in the churches of Drs. Pressley and Rodgers, and everywhere generally where worship is conducted according to the order of the United Presbyterian Church.

My subject is history, and what I have presented I believe to be strictly historical. I have yet a very brief chapter.

The United Presbyterian Church was organized on the conceded principle, that instruments of music should never be introduced there. This was the common faith and the common practice of the parties forming this union, and no intimation was given that any change was desired or by any means desirable.

When an advocate of this innovation, prefaces his speech by saying that Christ and his apostles worshiped with instrumental accompaniments, and further that our Confession of Faith has no disapproval, and the Associated Presbyterian Church was indifferent to such matters of praise service, I know he is attempting to mislead his audience, and further, that the cause of truth never stood in need of such advocacy.

No mention was made of this change in worship in our articles of union. Had an open door been left for this innovation, not one Presbytery, not one congregation in the Associate Church

would have joined in such union. The same thing I believe is true of the Associate Reformed Church.

The agitation of this subject is, to say the least of it, a violation of good faith, a breach of covenant among ourselves.

We have found from history,

1. That the Lord and Lawgiver of the church has established an order of worship in his church which is spiritual. This is based on his own spiritual nature, and hence unchangeable.

2. The Saviour and his apostles have left us an example of praise service, in plain simplicity. This example is law both with respect to matter and manner of song, "They sang a hymn."

3. The form of apostolic institution and practice brought the pure form of Christian worship down to the time when the Romish Church became idolatrous.

Musical instruments in worship have the same origin and were introduced nearly at the same time with image worship, the supremacy of the Pope, &c. Our Protestant fathers so understood and discarded them together.

4. An Assembly of the most learned and pious men in all Europe, discarded this mode of worship as foreign to the Christian dispensation, by divine constitution. Our Westminster standards lay the organ under ban of reprobation.

5. The United Presbyterian Church stands committed before all the world by her historical tradition and by her uniform practice to "the singing of Psalms with grace in the heart." That is, we sing, we sing Psalms, and so let it be.

History further assures us that a majority of the last General Assembly are not averse as we all were twenty-five years ago to the instrument in worship. While this is the vote of the General Assembly, we do most confidently affirm our belief that the masses of our people have not changed their mind, and it is our bounden duty, for their sakes, as well as our own, to insist and afford what relief we can to those who cannot and will not worship where the instrument is introduced.

Resolved, "That the introduction of musical instruments in the United Presbyterian Church is not a reform."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

THE HISTORY
OF THE
INTRODUCTION OF INSTRUMENTS
IN THE
Reformed Churches.

BY REV. W. W. BARR, D. D.

INTRODUCTORY.

By the Reformed Churches in this connection we are to understand the churches of the Reformation of the 16th century, and more especially those that adopted the Calvinist doctrine and the Presbyterian form of government. The introduction of instrumental music by these churches implies their prior exclusion by them. A discussion of their introduction, therefore, to be thoroughly intelligent, requires a somewhat extended view of the field of history—a consideration, indeed, of the history of instruments from the beginning.

INSTRUMENTS AUTHORIZED.

That history, it must be confessed, has been a checkered one. In the Old Testament dispensation instruments of music were used in the worship of God, as "David the man of God commanded."—*II. Chron.* 8 : 14. They were approved of God, for they were called the "instruments of music of the Lord."—*II. Chron.* 7 : 6. They were used with the trumpets, the Psalms and the singing with the voice ; and they were not an incident or circumstance of worship but were as really and truly a part of it as were the trumpets, the Psalms and the singing. Those appointed

for the service were commanded to use instruments of music as definitely as the trumpeters were commanded to blow the trumpets or the priests to offer sacrifice.

INSTRUMENTS EXCLUDED.

We advance to the days of Jesus on earth. We follow him through his life and we do not find a shadow of evidence that he or his apostles ever used an instrument of music in worship, or joined in worship where an instrument was employed, except in connection with the temple service. He instituted and observed the Lord's Supper, the crown of the New Testament ordinances, sang praise in connection therewith, and did so, it is morally certain, without any instrumental accompaniment.

In due time he ascended into heaven, leaving his apostles, by their teachings, writings and example to complete the revelation of his will to his church. This revelation is completed in the scriptures of the New Testament. In these the apostles tell us that the shadowy and the typical of the old dispensation have been done away. They tell us with fullness and clearness the things that remain. They command us to sing praise, and they indicate the psalms and hymns and spiritual songs which we are to sing. But nowhere do they enjoin the use of instruments, and nowhere do they refer to them, unless it be in figurative language. This has been doubted by some, but no one, at least, who adopts the theory that instrumental music is a "circumstance" of worship to be determined, not by written revelation, but by the light of nature, can fairly doubt on this point any longer. The apostles give us instances and examples of worship, instances and examples of singing praise, but there is not a shadow of evidence that an instrument of music was used by any individuals, families or congregations in the worship of God.

As corroborative and, indeed, conclusive proof that instruments of music were not used in the apostles' times, is the historical fact that instruments of music were not used in the worship of the Post-Apostolic church for at least several centuries. To suppose that instruments were sanctioned and used in the apostles' days, and that immediately after their death they were excluded by the church and were kept out for centuries, is an absurdity of which no one could be guilty except when swayed by prejudice. Taking

human nature as it is, and, in connection with this, the fact that the tendency of the church from the very days of the apostles was toward the sensuous, and toward corruption in worship, the supposition that she excluded instruments which were sanctioned and used by the apostles, and the Apostolic church, is one which no person can fairly make. Such a thing would be an anomaly in history and a moral impossibility.

Corroborative again of the position here taken is the historical fact that the Greek church, which we may believe understood the meaning of New Testament Greek, excluded instruments, and does to this day exclude instruments from worship. This was done because it was in accordance with the teachings and the example of the apostles, and the Apostolic church. It is a singular fact, also, as Stanley in one of his essays clearly shows, that the Pope, in the worship in the Vatican, excludes instruments, while at the same time he continues to use a table at the Lord's Supper. Both of these things are done because of the claim of infallibility, or the claim that the Pope adheres to the very forms of worship established by Christ and followed by his apostles. I do not undertake to justify the inconsistency of the Pope in excluding instruments from the Vatican while he allows them throughout his church, but I mention the fact as singular and suggestive. If the Pope retains a table in the Lord's Supper because Christ and his apostles used and sanctioned one, and if he excludes instruments of music from worship because Christ and his apostles did not use or sanction them, the fact is worthy of consideration.

By means of all this testimony we think it is proven beyond a reasonable doubt that while instrumental music was commanded in the Old Testament worship, it was excluded in the New. As a matter of fact it was excluded from the worship of the church after the days of the apostles, and remained excluded for hundreds of years. The only fair and rational way of accounting for this is that it was excluded by apostolic teaching and example—that it was left where it always properly belonged, that is with the shadows, types and ceremonies of the sensuous Old Testament dispensation. It was the will of the Head of the Church that it should have no place in the simple, spiritual worship of the New Testament dispensation.

INSTRUMENTS AGAIN INTRODUCED.

But instrumental music thus once excluded did not remain out. It was not likely, when we know the condition of the church, that it would. The church now united with the State, rapidly became corrupt. This corruption manifested itself quite as much in worship as in doctrine. The worship, which was at first as Christ enjoined, simple and spiritual, now became showy, pompous and attractive to the world. The enchantments of art were summoned and made subservient. Naturally, we might almost say necessarily, instruments came in. Exactly when the organ was first introduced is not material to determine. Dr. Hase, (*History of the Christian Church*, p. 153,) speaking of public worship in the 7th century, says, "The outward forms of religion became more and more imposing." He says that in the 7th century *bells* were used to call the people together, and adds, "Soon after, in the face of continual opposition to all instrumental music, the organ (*organon*), worthy of being the invention of a saint who had listened to the ministralsy of angels, was brought to Italy from Greece." Neander (*History*, Vol. III. p. 128, note 4), writing the history of the period a little later says, "From the French church proceeded the use of the organ, the first musical instrument employed in the church." He says, however, that the authority quoted to sustain this statement "seems to presuppose that the art of playing upon the organ and using it in divine service was first brought to perfection in the Church of Rome." That is, of course, in the local church at Rome. What is material to know and remember here is that organs were introduced when the church had become thoroughly papal, when the pure and spiritual worship instituted by Christ had given place to the corrupt and sensuous. There was opposition to instruments in many quarters, and protests were made, but the use was at first tolerated and afterwards sanctioned. Even as late as the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas said that musical instruments "were connected with the carnal and figurative state of the Jewish church, and that they were more calculated to afford pleasure than to form good dispositions." And again, "our church does not use musical instruments as harps, and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to judaize." From this it may possibly be inferred that in Aquinas' day the use of instruments was not general. Be

this as it may, it is certain that they had been introduced and that they were tolerated by those who did not approve of their use. *Forbearance* is the modern term which; as we are now repeating history, is becoming familiar, and which we are affectionately exhorted now to exercise. Thomas Aquinas and others of kindred spirit did forbear, but they did not *keep quiet*. Their protest, however was not vigorously made and continued. Unfortunately they appeared to be in the minority. They were overwhelmed and instrumental music, along with other corruptions of worship, assumed its place and accomplished its share in bringing the church into that pit of corruption which made the Reformation and the rending of the church a necessity. Is history again to repeat itself? Have we in all this a sad prophecy of what is before us as a Church?

INSTRUMENTS AGAIN EXCLUDED.

Thus instruments of music were in the church and came to be generally used in the worship of God. The Reformation of the 16th century came. It was not a reformation of the church of Rome. At first that was the aim of the reformers, but it soon became evident that it could not be accomplished. To save the truth and the church separation was an absolute necessity. The reformers consequently came out from the church of Rome. Unfortunately two opposite tendencies were early developed among the reformers themselves. These tendencies manifested themselves especially in relation to worship. On the one side, which we may call the Lutheran, was the desire and purpose to retain as far as possible, the practices of the Church of Rome. This was done on the principle—which is Romish and Episcopal—*of permitting what is not expressly forbidden in the word of God*. On the other side—the Calvinistic—was the determination to thoroughly purge the church from all innovations made by Rome, and to bring her back to the simple model of the New Testament. "Lutheranism," D'Aubigne says, "took the church, such as it was, contenting itself with effacing its stains. The Reform (Calvinism) took the church at its origin and erected its edifices on the living rock of the apostles." The appeal of Calvinism in relation to what it retained and what it rejected, whether in doctrine or worship, was to the only absolute rule of faith and practice—the holy

Scriptures. In reconstructing the church these two parties proceeded according to their opposite views. Again we quote from D'Aubigne, "The principle of Lutheranism was to preserve in the church all that was not condemned by the word of God, while that of the Reformed was to abolish in the church all that is not prescribed in the word of God." The Lutherans accordingly retained many practices which the churches of Calvin and Zwingli swept away. Among these was the use of instrumental music in worship. The Lutherans may have done this partly on the principle which Fuller says governed the English Reformers at a later time. They "permitted ignorant people to retain some fond customs that they might remove the most dangerous and destructive superstitions, as mothers to get children to part with *knives*, are content to let them play with *rattles*." If this be so it turned out as Dr. McCrie, who quotes this, has remarked, "Very good; but if children are suffered to play too long with rattles, they are in great danger of not parting with them all their days." Unquestionably, however, the great reason why the Lutherans retained some of the corrupt practices of Rome, was owing to their erroneous principle relating to the absolute authority of the word of God in all matters of doctrine and worship. The Calvinists, having adopted the principle that nothing is to be admitted to the worship of God but what is commanded in his word, made their reformation searching and thorough. They most carefully examined the teachings of the Bible. What it commanded they retained. What it did not enjoin they rejected. Thus divinely guided, as they believed, *they cast out instrumental music from their worship, together with other Popish corruptions, and they reconstructed the doctrines and worship of the church on the basis of the teachings of the New Testament, and brought it, as they believed, into harmony with the church in the days of the apostles, and before she was corrupted by Popery.* What the Calvinistic church did on the continent, the Church of Scotland, the mother of us all in this land, led by John Knox, did in that one of the British Isles. Knox did not simply follow or slavishly imitate Calvin. He studied the Bible for himself and established the Church of Scotland on the firm basis of the word of God. What God commanded was accepted as her doctrine and worship. What he did not command was excluded. *Acting on this principle,*

instrumental music was excluded from the worship of the Church of Scotland as unauthorized by the word of God, and because it was regarded as a corruption of worship that was Popish in its origin. There is no possibility of fairly mistaking the teaching of history here. There is no possibility of denying the facts. Instruments of music were in the church. The Reformed Churches excluded them, and they did this because they were not authorized by the word of God, and because they were therefore a corruption of worship. Calvin voiced the Reformed Churches when he said, "Justly does the Lord, in order to assert his full right of dominion, strictly enjoin what he wishes us to do—at once to reject all human devices which are at variance with his commands * * * Musical instruments were among the legal ceremonies which Christ annulled at his coming, and therefore we, under the gospel, must maintain a greater simplicity. * * * When they (believers) frequent their sacred assemblies, musical instruments, in celebrating the praises of God, would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews."

Thus instruments of music were excluded from worship in the Reformed Churches, and they were excluded in accordance with the principle dear to all the true Calvinistic Reformers, and dear to all their true followers, namely: that nothing but what is prescribed in the Holy Scriptures is to be used in the worship of God. To assert in the face of this that any branch of the church descending from the Reformed Churches had no law prohibiting instrumental music, is to falsify the plainest teachings of history, to disregard the most manifest facts. It might, with just as much truthfulness be affirmed that the church had no law against the use of incense, the cross, or the introduction and use of images. More especially would we say that this would be the case with any church that has adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, since that document most clearly asserts the very principle upon which instruments were excluded by the Reformed Churches, namely: "The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his revealed will that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices

of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture."

INSTRUMENTS RE-INTRODUCED.

Notwithstanding the fact that instruments were excluded at the Reformation along with other Popish innovations, it is true that they have now been re-introduced to some—indeed to a majority of the Reformed Churches. How has this change been effected? So far as the churches on the continent are concerned, but little can be said, because but little is known. It may be stated that the warmth of their early zeal for the truth and for the purity of worship soon abated. Religion declined, coldness and deadness supervened, and as a natural consequence those churches generally permitted the instruments to come in, and in other respects departed from the principles of their founders. But passing by these, we are more directly concerned with the Church of Scotland and the branches which have descended from her. We have seen that under the leadership of John Knox instrumental music was excluded from that church, along with other corruptions and additions, with which the pure and simple worship of God was overlaid during the preceding centuries of Popish rule. For centuries that church continued to exclude instruments, and every branch of the church descending from her accepted her law and followed her example in this respect. It is only in quite recent years that she, or any of her daughters, swerved from what was her primitive faith and practice, and theirs as well. How has the change been brought about?

It has been intimated, if not plainly asserted, that the Westminster Assembly indirectly encouraged the re-introduction of instruments by not inserting a prohibitory law in the Directory for Worship, framed and adopted by that body. A more inaccurate and unhistorical view of a matter could hardly be entertained. The Westminster Assembly was called through the influence of the Puritans. These, it is well known, were bitter opponents of instrumental music in worship. As indicative of the power which they had in the half Reformed Church of England, it may be mentioned that as early as the year 1562 certain reforms, such as the abolition of all holy days except the Sabbath, the use of the cross in baptism, and the laying aside of organs, were moved in

the lower House of Convocation. The motion was carried by a vote of forty-three to thirty-five—a clear constitutional majority. Proxies, however, who were not present, were allowed to vote, and by this means the motion was defeated by a majority of *one*. This fact indicates the influence of Puritanism, and the opposition to the organ. This Puritan influence increased and was more and more determined up to the time of the meeting of the Westminster Assembly. It was under this influence that the assembly was called. A large majority of its members were Puritans. The influence of the organ-using Church of England, after the assembly had gotten fairly under way, was scarcely perceptible. The prelatic form of government had been abolished, and the way was clearly opened to do what the assembly was called together to do, namely, “to reform farther than had yet been attained, many things in the liturgy, discipline and government of the church, and to bring her into nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad.” Many of the members of the assembly were also members of Parliament. By act of Parliament organs were excluded from the churches. In obedience to this they were taken down in St. Paul’s and St. Peter’s churches in London, the news of which was sent to the church in Scotland, upon the reception of which, the General Assembly of that church expressed its great gratification. In accordance with the principles of the Reformers and the spirit and demand of the times, the Westminster Assembly adopted as a fundamental principle that nothing was to be allowed in the worship of God except what is prescribed in the Scriptures. It gave up the task of revising the liturgy of the Church of England, cast it aside altogether, and framed a Directory for Worship, suited to the views and convictions of the great majority of the assembly, and meeting the object for which the assembly was called. In the preface to that Directory the assembly said: “In the beginning of the blessed Reformation, our wise and pious ancestors took care to set forth in order for redress of many things, which they then by the word, discovered to be vain, erroneous, superstitious and idolatrous in the public worship of God.” If the assembly did not include in these “vain, erroneous, superstitious and idolatrous things,” instrumental music, then it must be said that history is useless, and nothing can be proved by it. To say that they did not disapprove of, and

means to exclude instruments from worship, because they did not put an express law in the Directory to that effect, is as unwarrantable and illogical as it would be to say that they did not disapprove of and exclude the cross in baptism, absolution, confirmation, bowing at the name of Jesus, and a hundred other things of Popish trumpery, because they made no express statute prohibiting them in worship. These things were all in use in the Church of England, as well as instrumental music. To say that the assembly was lenient towards instrumental music, while utterly intolerant of the other things, is, in the light of the whole history and all the circumstances, absurd. The truth is the assembly made and intended to make, a clean sweep of everything that was regarded by the Puritans and Presbyterians as "vain, erroneous and superstitious"—instrumental music among the rest. Thus only could it have been true to the convictions of the great majority of its members, and thus only could it have brought the church, which it designed to do, into conformity with the Church of Scotland.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ratified the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and Directory for Worship, which were prepared and adopted by the Westminster Assembly. Can it be supposed that the Scotch Assembly would have done this if these standards had been regarded as leaving the way open for instrumental music in worship? The supposition would be preposterous. It might as readily be supposed that the assembly would have ratified these standards had they left the way open for the burning of incense or the use of the cross.

The Westminster standards took their place in the Church of Scotland. Under these, instruments were excluded, and they were excluded by law—the same law precisely that excluded incense, altars, images, bowing at the name of Jesus, the cross in baptism, &c., &c. Every church that descended from, or branched from the old mother church, at first excluded instruments in the same way and under the same law. It is now affirmed that the Associate Church in America had no law excluding instruments. This declaration is modified somewhat by saying that she had no statute law. But she had law. *In her mother in Scotland she put out instruments, and she did it expressly by the law of the Holy Scriptures.* She excluded them by law as she did other Popish innovations and

unwarranted additions. No law on the subject! I have examined with some care her history as written in the *Religious Monitor* and the *Evangelical Repository* up till the union in 1858, and on no page have I found a word to indicate that she had no law against instrumental music. No law on the subject! Had any one of her ministers at any period in all her honorable history attempted to introduce an instrument of music to her worship, he would have had a worse thing than a Jennie Geddes' stool hurled at his head. He would have been arraigned on the instant by his Presbytery, and he would have been tried and condemned by the law of God and by the Confession of Faith, by which instruments of music were excluded in his mother church and in his own.

Yet instruments have come in, and they are to-day in the mother church in Scotland, and in most of her daughters there and in other lands. How has this come to pass? The history is meagre for somehow this subject does not appear much on the page of history. The record is not an honorable one, and historians, sparing the church, say little on the subject. It has not anywhere so far as is known been authorized by statute, or even by resolution of a church court. In all its history only one Presbytery is known to have even recommended its introduction—that of Geneva, in the Presbyterian Church, in the United States, in 1836. That church, it is believed, was the first of all the descendants of the Church of Scotland to permit the use of the organ. Individual congregations, without law or authority, began the innovation. It is noteworthy that hymns of human composition had been introduced in the same way. The General Assembly afterwards authorized these, but never authorized the use of instruments. Amid strife and heart-burnings almost everywhere, the history of which will never be written, the organ came in. There were earnest and decided protests against it, but once in, it could not be put out. Only twice, we believe, did the matter reach the General Assembly. In 1843, the "burning question" came before the Synod of Cincinnati. A paper of grievances, relating to instrumental music, was laid before the Committee of Bills and Ordinances. The committee refused to report the paper to the Synod. Complaint was entered against this action, and the complaint was sustained. A special committee was then appointed to report upon the subject at the next meeting of Synod. This committee

reported in 1844, by a majority and minority. The majority report was discussed at great length, and was laid on the table, when the whole matter was referred to the General Assembly for its action. The General Assembly, in 1845, declared that by the constitution of the church its whole internal arrangement as to worship and order is committed to the minister and session, and that the Assembly did not "feel themselves called upon and obliged to take any further order on this subject, but leave to each session the delicate and important matter of arranging and conducting the music as to them shall seem most for edification, recommending great caution, prudence, and forbearance in regard to it." In 1858, an elder from the Presbytery of Iowa, asked the assembly to define the rights of the session of a church in regard to the singing in the house of God. He was "referred, for a sufficient answer, to the action of the assembly in 1845." Thus without authorizing the use of instruments, permission was given to introduce them. Amid heart-burnings and strife, which have not ended even at this day, instruments have come in and are now in general use in the Presbyterian congregations of this country.

The history of the introduction of instruments by one branch of the Presbyterian family, is substantially the history in every other branch in which they are employed. Among those which have introduced organs within quite recent years, the Canada Presbyterians, it is stated, led the way. Instruments were introduced in a few places, when twelve years ago leave was given to use an instrument in all cases where there is reasonable unanimity on the question. In the year 1807, an organ was introduced in Glasgow, in one of the congregations of the Established Church of Scotland. The Presbytery at once interposed and adopted the following resolution: "That the Presbytery are of opinion that the use of organs in the public worship of God is contrary to the law of the land, and to the law and constitution of our Established Church; and therefore prohibit it in all the churches and chapels within our bounds; and with respect to the conduct of the clergyman in this matter, we are satisfied with his judicial declaration that he will not again use the organ in the public worship of God, without the authority of the church." This shows that the Presbytery then believed that the use of the organ was contrary to the law of the land and of the church, and that it required

authorization of the church before it could be legitimately introduced.

About the year 1865, another innovation was made. This was done by the congregation in the Established Church, then under the pastoral care of Dr. Robert Lee. It is noteworthy that "independently of other vagaries" he signalized the occasion by declaring that Calvin and other Presbyterian forefathers had "over-reformed things," and by making "a fierce onslaught upon the Shorter Catechism, and especially upon effectual calling, which he said was not to be found in the Bible." The subsequent history is soon told. The organ came in against law, was permitted by the assembly, is now used by a large number of congregations, has vexed and continues to vex many of the godly throughout the church. Three thousand of these petitioned the late Assembly to withdraw its sanction of instrumental music. This history has been repeated substantially in the Presbyterian Church of England. Organs were introduced without authority and tolerated. Only a few years ago permission was given to use them. Now it is stated that out of about three hundred congregations, less than sixty are without an instrument.

In the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, some twenty years ago, a congregation desired to introduce an organ, and petitioned the Synod for liberty to do so. The liberty was not granted at the time. We have not the exact data here, but our impression is that as in other instances, organs were introduced without authority. The question was agitated until, in 1872, when the Synod declared that it declined to pronounce a judgment upon the use of instrumental music in public worship, yet did not longer make uniformity of practice in this matter a rule of the church. The Synod at the same time urged the guarding of the simplicity of worship, and watchfulness over the unity of congregations.

In the Free Church of Scotland the question of the use of instrumental music has been earnestly contested for a number of years. The matter was brought definitely before the General Assembly, in 1882, by two congregations petitioning for liberty to introduce instrumental music as an aid to praise. A committee was appointed to report upon the subject in 1883. The result was that the assembly, this year, resolved that they "find that

there is nothing in the word of God, or in the constitution and laws of the church, to preclude the use of instrumental music in public worship as an aid to vocal praise." The usual resolution with respect to the convictions and feelings of ministers and members opposed to the use of instruments, and in relation to the peace of congregations was also adopted. A strong dissent was entered against the action of the assembly, but liberty is given to introduce the organ, and now the "burning question" becomes a practical one in the congregations. It may continue through a period of fifty or a hundred years, but who shall write its history! It is to be noted that in giving liberty to use instruments the Assembly did not say that it was on the ground that instrumental music is a "circumstance" in worship. The Scotch were too "canny" to do that. They styled it "an aid to praise." Those who regard that as meaning a "circumstance" can do so. Those who regard it as meaning something authorized by the word of God can also do so. An "aid to praise" may be prescribed by the Holy Scriptures, but a mere "circumstance" cannot be. Our late General Assembly was not quite so skillful in the use of phraseology.

Fifteen years ago, the congregation of Enniskillen, in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, against the law of the Reformed Churches, which excluded instruments from worship, as well as that of the Confession of Faith, introduced a harmonium. All are familiar with the conflict that has progressed during these intervening years as the result of this innovation. The General Assembly has advised, and coaxed, and directed, and enjoined, but all to no effect. A few others followed the rebellious example of the congregation of Enniskillen. The assembly has failed to secure obedience to its authority, and now at length in this year of grace, has by resolution refused to exercise discipline upon ministers or congregations that employ the aid of instruments in worship. The Assembly did not declare upon what ground this refusal was made, or the liberty to continue to use or to introduce instruments was given. It simply refused to discipline congregations that are using the organ, with the implication that those who may see fit to introduce it will not be dealt with. Here, as in the case of the Free Church of Scotland, the Assembly has been more

consistent and more fortunate than our own. Every one who introduces an instrument may have his own theory as to it. He may regard it as a "circumstance" or as prescribed in the Scriptures according to the light in which he may view it.

The sad history of the introduction of instruments to our own church is familiar to all. It has been written substantially in what we have said in relation to its introduction to other churches. In two particulars only is it distinguished from them. In the first place, in addition to the law common to all the Reformed Churches, by which instruments were excluded, and the general law in the Confession of Faith covering all similar matters, our church had solemnly enacted a specific statute prohibiting the use of instrumental music in worship. In the face of all this and in direct violation of law, instruments were introduced. The General Assembly refused to exercise its authority to secure obedience, and ultimately it "put the law itself on trial," and in violation of its own law on overture declared the prohibitory law repealed. In the second place the permission to use instruments in our church has been finally justified on the ground that instrumental music is an "incident" or "circumstance" of worship. This ground has not been specifically taken by any other church. The farthest that others have gone has been to regard it as a "help," or "aid to praise."

We have thus sketched briefly the history of the introduction of musical instruments into the Reformed Churches. In most of these the innovation has been recent. The troubles in these now go largely to the congregations. Who can foretell what these troubles will be, say, in the next fifty years? In our church the result is by many regarded with satisfaction, as a triumph of liberal over conservative ideas. Viewing the history and effect of musical instruments in worship, to say nothing of their unauthorized use by Scripture, we cannot but regard the triumph as bringing evil, and foreboding greater evil to our church. In the late Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, when the vote was taken and it was announced that the pro-instrumentalists had the victory, a scene of joyful acclamation ensued such as the Assembly had, perhaps, never before witnessed. Will there be such joy over the result when fifty years, with the use of instruments, have run their course?

CONCLUSION.

In concluding this review, two remarks may specially be made :

1. Instrumental music has been introduced to the Reformed Churches in every instance in disregard of law, and in almost if not in every instance in disregard of the authority of the church. Congregations have assumed the responsibility of bringing in the instrument, and have defied the power of the church to exclude it. Instrumental music has uniformly declined to come in by the door. It has climbed up some other way. This fact defines its character and at the same time predicts the result of its entrance. It would be instructive and admonitory in this connection, did time permit, to direct attention to the parallel between the introduction of instruments and of images to the worship of the church. A few pages in Section 3d, Vol. I, of Neander's Church History, and Chap. LXIX. of Gibbon's Rome, might be read with great profit here. The parallel is well-nigh perfect. Images were at first excluded. They appeared and were familiarized in the family—not worshipped, but introduced in the progress of art and cultivated taste. Then they were used as helps in devotion. Soon they found their way into the churches, not by authority, but by individual assumption, and in defiance of universal though unwritten law which excluded them. They were tolerated, used as aids to worship, or justified as mere incidents or circumstances. They soon became a part of worship and ultimately a very large part of worship in the Roman Church. With this parallel before us the introduction of instruments to the worship of God among us assumes much larger proportions, and reaches much farther in its results than is apprehended by many. Can the friends of truth and of the pure worship of God be faithful to him and their covenant vows and not oppose its introduction in our beloved United Presbyterian Church?

2. The introduction of instrumental music in the Reformed Churches has been uniformly preceded, or accompanied by a decline from former attainments in other matters—notably in respect to the matter of God's praise. Hymns of human composition and paraphrases have been tolerated or authorized, and the instruments have followed. *There has been no exception to this, unless*

it be that of our own church. Is it *really* an exception with us? If so, how long will it remain an exception?

Resolved, "That instrumental music, excluded by Christ and his apostles from the New Testament worship, introduced by Popery, excluded by the Reformation has, in these modern times, been re-introduced by most of the Reformed Churches contrary to the mind of Christ and the fundamental principle relative to worship adopted by the Calvinistic Churches of the Reformation."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.



THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF DIVINE AUTHORITY.

BY J. G. CARSON, D. D.

“God alone is Lord of the conscience and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men” is a fundamental maxim of religion—whether natural or supernatural. Its recognition is the protection and preservative equally of good government and true liberty. On the one side it guards the authority of rightful government from the assaults of unbridled liberty or licentiousness and on the other it protects the just liberty of the individual from the encroachments of arbitrary despotism either in church or state.

It is in the domain of conscience that all questions of right and wrong, of truth and duty are to be settled—and here the authority of God is not only supreme, but exclusive. This principle is embodied in the chapter and section of the Confession of Faith, which reads thus—see Chap. 1st, Sec. 6th:

“The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture—unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men. Nevertheless we acknowledge that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed.”

It is here asserted:

First. That the will or authority of God is expressed in the Scripture or inspired word of God, either in the form of plain,

direct statement or by good and necessary consequence, and that the latter is just as authoritative or obligatory as the former.

Second. That this counsel or will of God as thus set forth is the infallible and all sufficient rule and reason of faith and life in reference to all things which concern God's glory and man's salvation.

Third. That being thus at once perfect and supreme, it is exclusive of all other authority whatsoever, whether by pretended new revelations of the Spirit or the traditions of men.

Fourth. That while "there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and the government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence," that is, by human wisdom and authority—yet these constitute no real, but only an apparent exception to the principle above stated—because being necessary to the execution of the Divine will they are impliedly included in the authority of that Divine appointment or prescription, to the carrying out of which they are necessary.

Fifth. The principle announced in Chap. 21st, Sec. 1st, of the Confession is but the corollary of that contained in these propositions, viz: "The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or any other way not prescribed in the Scripture." Of like import is the language of the great Dr. Owen, in his commentary on Hebrews, 3: 7.

"God is to be regarded as our Sovereign Lord and only Law-giver in all that we have to do with him. Hereby are our souls to be influenced unto duty in general, and unto every special duty in particular. This reason are we to render to ourselves and others of all the acts of our obedience. If it be asked why we do such and such a thing? we answer, because we must obey the voice of God. And many advantages we have by a constant attendance unto the authority of God in all that we do in his worship and service. For—

1. This will keep us unto the due rule and compass of duty, whilst we are steered in all that we do hereby. We cannot under-

take or perform anything as a duty towards God which is not so, and which therefore is rejected by him when he saith, "Who hath required these things at your hand?" This is no small advantage in the course of our obedience. We see many taking a great deal of pains in the performance of such duties as being not appointed of God are neither accepted with him nor will turn to any good account unto their own souls. Had they kept upon their consciences a due sense of the authority of God, so as to do nothing but with respect thereunto, they might have been freed from their laboring in the fire where all must perish.—*Mich. 6: 7-9.* Such are most of the works wherein the Papists boast.

2. This also will not suffer us to omit anything that God requires of us. Men are apt to divide and choose in the commands of God—to take and leave, as it seems good to them, or as serves their present occasion and condition. But this also is inconsistent with the nature of obedience, allowing the formal reason of it to consist in a due respect to the voice of God. For this extends to all that is so and only to what is so. So James informs us that all our obedience respects the authority of the Lawgiver whence a universality of obedience to all his commands doth necessarily follow. Nor doth the nature of any particular sin consist so much in respect to this or that particular precept of the law which is transgressed and violated by it—as in a contempt of the Lawgiver himself—whence every sin becomes a transgression of the whole law.—*James 2: 9-11.*

3. This will strengthen and fortify the soul against all dangers, difficulties and temptations that oppose it in the way of obedience. The mind that is duly affected with the authority of God, in what it has to do, will not be frightened or deterred by anything that lies in its way. It will have a readiness wherewith to answer all objection and oppose all contradictions. And this sense of the authority of God, *requiring* our obedience, is no less a gracious effect of the Spirit than is that freedom and cheerfulness and alacrity of mind, which in these things we receive from him."

To the principles set forth in the above propositions and extract, particularly in their application to the worship of God, there will be no dissent among Protestant Presbyterians, and especially United Presbyterians. The declaration of the testimony on the

subject of Psalmody is but the application of these principles to the ordinance of praise. "We declare that it is the will of God that the songs contained in the Book of Psalms be sung in his worship both public and private to the end of the world."

The key-words of this declaration are these: "It is the will of God." This is the application of the principle of the Confession regarding the exclusiveness of Divine authority or prescription in the worship of God to the ordinance of praise.

According to this declaration this authority has reference to two things, 1st, the matter, and 2d, the manner of praise.

In reference to the matter, we declare that God has authorized or appointed the "songs contained in the Book of Psalms," to be used in his praise to the end of the world; and this prescription operates to the exclusion of all other songs, even though they be inspired, which he has not so authorized. The "devotional compositions of inspired men" are particularly mentioned as excluded, but practically, because logically, all others, such as "imitations of the Psalms," "paraphrases or versifications of other parts of the Scripture," &c., though not mentioned, are excluded until the same authority is found for their use. Our position therefore, is not as it has often been erroneously stated an "inspired Psalmody," as distinguished from an uninspired Psalmody, nor even a "scripture," as distinguished from a "scriptural" psalmody, but a "divinely authorized psalmody," as distinguished from that which is "not divinely authorized." So it has always been understood and declared in the practice of the church, and the decisions of its highest courts,—See action of Assembly of 1872, in the matter of paraphrases—Digest, page 162, Minutes of the Assembly, Vol. III, page 419.

Resolution 1. "That the use of paraphrases as songs of praise in the worship of God, is not consistent with the principles and usages of the U. P. Church."

Even though therefore the whole of Article 2d, chapter III, of the Directory of Worship were stricken out, as long as this declaration stands in the testimony, no other songs but those contained in the Book of Psalms could be lawfully used in the U. P. Church, because these only are declared to have Divine authority for their use.

2. In reference to the manner of praise, this declaration affirms that "these songs contained in the Book of Psalms should be *sung* in God's worship." The "will" of God prescribes the manner in which they are to be used, as well as the matter; whatever therefore is not "either expressly or by good and necessary consequence included in this term "sing" or "singing," is thereby excluded from the manner of praise. Unless the use of instrumental music, even as "an accompaniment to vocal praise," can be shown to be necessarily implied or included in the Divine injunction, to "sing praises," it is excluded not by the rule of Directory, but by the principle or law contained in the Declaration of the Testimony. "The statutory application of the principle of the Confession," is not contained in the rule of the Directory, as declared by the action of the last Assembly, but in the Declaration of the Testimony. It existed and was operative as the law of the church, when no such rule was found in the Associate Church, and before it was inserted in the Directory of the U. P. Church. Even though that rule had been constitutionally repealed, the principle or law of the church as contained in the Testimony, and as understood and acted upon by the church in all its past history, remains unchanged, "that in the praise of God these songs should be *sung* in his worship to the end of the world."

This principle of the "exclusiveness of Divine authority," stands as a guard at the door of his house to challenge the right of any and everything that claims admission, either into the matter or substance, or the manner and mode of rendering worship to him, and whatever does not show the authority of his appointment or prescription, either expressed or implied, is excluded, prohibited, not by a rule of direction enacted by human authority; but by the unchangeable law of God, as declared in her Confession and Testimony, viz: the second commandment, "which forbids or prohibits the worshiping of God by images, or any other way *not appointed* in his word."

If instrumental accompaniment has been appointed of God to be used in singing his praise, then it not only *may* but it *must* be admitted; to exclude it, is contempt of his authority. If it has not been so appointed, then it is an intruder, and must be excluded and is prohibited by Divine authority as corruption of his

worship, even though the church rule did not exist, or has been repealed. It is the law of God and of his house, which is prohibitory, even though the church his servants prove unfaithful. To say that "there is nothing in the law of God or the constitution of the church to prohibit the use of instrumental accompaniment in the worship of God," is a pure assumption, and begging of the question, which is, "whether there is anything in the law of God or the constitution of the church, which authorizes and so requires its use" either in connection with vocal praise or in any other form in the worship of God? An affirmative answer must be given to this question, either "from express scripture, or by good and necessary consequence," or else it is and remains "prohibited by the law of God and the constitution of the church," all human declarations to the contrary notwithstanding.

But in order to evade the force of this conclusion, (for it is nothing but an evasion,) it is objected that by the statement of the Confession, to which we all subscribe, "there are circumstances concerning the worship of God common to human actions and societies which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence," and that instrumental music at least as an accompaniment of vocal praise belongs to these circumstances, and therefore needs no Divine appointment. This also is assuming what we deny, and which requires to be proved. For while all admit that "the use of particular tunes, some method of finding the key-note, &c., do belong to such circumstances common to the human action of congregational singing; yet we by no means admit, nor was it ever admitted by the reformers or the Reformed Churches from which we have descended, that instrumental music was a necessary accompaniment of vocal praise, or "common to the human action" of congregational singing. That where it has been allowed it has almost invariably usurped the chief place in the praise of God, and reduced it to the performance of artistic music by a company of trained singers, is obviously the truth. But passing this, and its obvious inference that the only effectual means of protecting and preserving the purity and simplicity of congregational singing, is the absolute prohibition of instruments in any form, as our fathers did. We remark,

First. The command of God includes in it authority for whatever is necessary to do the thing commanded. Thus the com-

mand to search the Scriptures carries with it authority to translate them into the vulgar tongue so that all may comply with this injunction—A translation and the printing and circulation of the Scriptures is not only the right but is the duty of the church. In like manner the command to sing Psalms contains in it both the warrant and obligation to translate them into a form in which they can be sung. If they cannot be sung in the form of prose then it is not only the right but the duty of the church to put them into metrical verse—for they were “given to be sung not read.”—So that in everything pertaining to the service of God in answer to the question “Why do ye such and such things which are not expressed in the command?” We can say, “We must obey the voice of God, these things are necessary in order to comply with his will.” Thus the exclusiveness of the Divine authority is absolute and universal, extending even to the circumstances concerning his worship and service which are necessary to the carrying out of the Divine prescription or appointment. It follows therefore that one of two things is and must be true in reference to every thing pertaining even to the circumstances of His worship—either that it is expressly mentioned and appointed of God, or that it is absolutely needful to the execution of His command, and so implied in that command, and in both cases it is equally authorized. In the latter case, according to the doctrine of the Confession, the “consequence” must be “good and necessary.” That is, it might be evidently implied. If this be so then we remark,

Second. That the use of instrumental accompaniment to vocal praise is either Divinely authorized or it is excluded. If it belong to those circumstances which being common to human actions are needful to the due and decent performance of vocal praise, then it is included in the Divine command to sing praise and is not only right and warrantable but obligatory just as much as singing with the voice. It is not only helpful in certain circumstances but it is always and everywhere necessary to congregational singing. This is involved in the claim that such accompaniment is a circumstance common to the human action of social singing.

The only liberty allowed to human authority is to decide what kind of instruments and how many may be used at any particular

time or place, just as the particular tune to be used and the method of finding the key-note are decided by the same authority. Some kind of instrumental accompaniment is necessary in the case supposed, just as some kind of tune is necessary—always and everywhere necessary—and therefore such instrumental accompaniment is Divinely authorized and prescribed, not in this or that congregation, but always and everywhere in singing the praise of God. The decision of the question whether an instrument shall be used at all or not is not left to human wisdom and authority, much less to the will and pleasure of a majority in any particular congregation, any more than whether they shall sing a tune at all or not. This question is decided by the authority implied in the Divine command to sing praise which is always and everywhere obligatory. The Divine authority extends to and includes all the circumstances of his worship and not only authorizes and warrants these, but excludes all others, no matter how helpful and expedient they may appear to human wisdom under particular or special circumstances. “Whatsoever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto or diminish therefrom.” If instrumental accompaniment is necessary to the performance of the Divine command to sing praise and is therefore included in it, then it is wrong to omit it, because this would be diminishing from that command. If it is not so necessary and therefore is not implied in the Divine command, then it is wrong to use it anywhere, because this would be adding to it. The principle of the exclusiveness of Divine authority is without exception or limitation. Whatsoever is not authorized by Divine prescription either expressed or implied, is thereby forbidden or prohibited, even in reference to the circumstances of his worship. All that is left to human wisdom and church authority is to judge and determine what is included in the Divine command and adopt measures best adapted for carrying it into effect subject to the general rule “Let all things be done decently and in order.” Room for liberty in matters of God’s worship and service there is none except freedom from the observance of that which is imposed by human authority. Much less is there liberty to divide among the commands or parts of the commands of God, to observe only that which is essential and omit or decline at our pleasure that which is merely circumstantial or incidental.

Now, as there is no one who claims that the use of instrumental accompaniment is necessary to the acceptable rendering of God's praise in singing Psalms, and is therefore Divinely authorized and appointed by good and necessary consequence from the command to sing praise, it follows by an irresistible inference from the principle above stated that it is and remains excluded and prohibited by the authority of that same command. Thus we have shown that the principle of the exclusiveness of Divine authority as enunciated in the Confession of Faith and Testimony in its application to the worship of God, is absolutely universal and without exception. And that even those circumstances concerning his worship which are common to human actions and societies, being necessary to the execution of the Divine command are by that fact brought within the scope of its authority so that instead of forming an exception to the rule that what is not appointed or commanded is thereby forbidden and prohibited they are themselves included in the Divine prescription.

And finally that instruments of music even as an accompaniment to vocal praise not being necessary to the execution of the command to sing praise as is acknowledged and admitted by both sides of this controversy are excluded, not by this or that rule of the church, but by the will and law of God, and cannot lawfully be admitted into any congregation of the United Presbyterian Church until such Divine authority for their use either expressed or implied has been shown from the word of God and constitutionally declared by the church. This conclusion may be summed up in the following resolution :

Resolved, "That the principle of our exclusiveness of Divine authority in its application to the worship of God as set forth in the Confession and Testimony, extends to the circumstances concerning that worship as well as to its substance or essence, and therefore the use of instruments of music in any form not being necessary to the performance of the divine command to 'sing praise,' is therefore excluded by authority of that command."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

WHAT THE GROUNDS OF CONVICTIONS ? CAN WE YIELD THEM ?

BY REV. D. S. LITTELL.

There is a strange obtuseness in the minds of nominal Christians in their efforts to define the function of conscience in determining religious duty. Extreme liberalists make the individual conscience the supreme rule. Congregationalists make the aggregate conscience of a single church the supreme rule, and Presbyterians make the aggregate conscience of the denomination the supreme rule, with a tendency, when this last supreme rule cannot be conveniently enforced, to fall back to the Congregationalist or the Liberalist theory.

This, of course, is neither the philosophical nor the religious theory of the function of conscience, but it is a theory so easily accepted in an age that idolizes liberty and deifies independence and exalts man above all authority outside of himself, that it comes to have a place in religious literature and ecclesiastical enactment. "The liberty of conscience," and "the right of private judgment,"—very good names for civil rights,—are utterly false and delusive if used to designate moral rights. Conscience has no liberty to recognize, feel or enforce an obligation that God has not imposed. Private judgment has no moral right to exist if it differs from the judgment of God. Conscience is no rule at all. It is merely the power of the mind which recognizes, feels the obligation of, and and through the strength of that feeling enforces the rule; which to all Christians is the revealed will of God. Conscience as a high moral faculty, distinguishing man as moral agent, from the lower irresponsible forms of animal life is entitled to respect. As an authority in morals, assuming to make that right which it approves, it is simply a rebel and usurper, to be opposed and deposed, and either brought into subjection to its lawful Master

and Lord or to be condemned. For the convictions of our consciences then, as convictions, we claim nothing but the charitable consideration which the law of Christ requires, and that candid investigation of their grounds which is enjoined in the command of the Spirit, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." For the ground of our convictions, the revealed will of God, we are not permitted to demand less than absolute submission and acceptance from every human will on earth. Failing in that demand we are still required to exact such submission and acceptance, of ourselves and of all Christ's sheep over whom the Holy Ghost may make us overseers. The conscience that does not "tell me what to think and to make others think as I do" is either not sure of its grounds in the Word of God, or not faithful to its trust. The Lord give us all consciences void of offense toward God and toward men, with clear, strong convictions, grounded on the simple, true meaning of his word, and faith and fortitude to adhere to those convictions, "faithful unto death," or to any other issue of faithfulness.

These questions require an answer in the theme assigned to me.

I. What are our convictions on the subject of instrumental music in the worship of God in the New Testament times, and what is the ground of those convictions? And

II. Having such convictions so grounded, can we yield them?

1. I know of no better statement of them than that contained in our excellent Directory for Worship: "As the use of musical instruments in the worship of the New Testament church, has no sanction in the Bible, they shall not be introduced in any form in any of our congregations." That is the expression of it in ecclesiastical law. Change it to read "ought not to be introduced," and we have the same conviction expressed as a moral law.

Our first conviction about this is that it has not been lawfully repealed. This conviction is, primarily, on an arithmetical question, but also on a moral question. The arithmetical question has these data: When the approval by the church of the repeal of the law was asked, the church was represented in the presbyteries (as per record furnished to the Assembly,) by 1,242 members. At least sixteen more members were present in the presbyteries whose

action on the overture was not reported to the Assembly. Thus 1,258 representatives of the whole church were asked to give judgment on the repeal; 620½ are reported as giving their assent. When the Assembly declared that a clear majority, it made a mistake in arithmetic. It was eight-and-a-half less than half the representatives of the church. Then the Assembly fell into a mistake in morals, by enacting the repeal of the law. The effort to deprive the people of God of a pure worship was "without due process of law." Our conviction is that the action of the Assembly in enacting repeal is null and void, and the ground of this conviction is moral law, church law, and the multiplication table. But those in favor of the overture and perhaps a few who opposed it, ask us, what is the use of this fact, if fact it be, and why persist in asserting it? You can never obtain the recognition of it by a majority. We cannot be sure of that. There were, we believe, a great number of honest men who voted for the overture, men who will be willing to correct a mistake when they have discovered it, men who will not be willing to introduce anything in the worship of God with the taint of legal and moral wrong in its introduction. We ought not to interpret God's providence arbitrarily, but it is competent for us to inquire if the Head of the Church may not have allowed the deeper wrong of corrupting the worship of the church, to be marked by the more visible wrong of violating the law of the church—if he may not have permitted the enactment which was not right to be at the same time not lawful. It is of some advantage to our moral standing in the United Presbyterian Church, that in opposing instrumental music in its worship, we are not breaking, but according to our ordination vows, maintaining and defending her laws.

Our second conviction is that if this rule in the Directory had been constitutionally repealed, there is still law remaining in our subordinate standards forbidding the use of instrumental music in worship, unless such mode of worship is prescribed in the Scriptures. Every one is familiar, or should be, with the teachings of the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, on the rule of worship. It will do no harm to repeat them. Confession of Faith, chapter 21, section 1: "But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and is so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the

imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures." In the Larger Catechism, the answer to Question 109, contains these doctrines: "The sins forbidden in the second commandment are all devising, counselling, commanding, using and in any wise approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself. . . . All superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever." (The phrase "any other pretence whatsoever" would probably include incident, circumstance, and æsthetics.) This is more briefly stated in the Shorter Catechism, in answer to Question 51: "The second commandment forbiddeth the worshiping of God by images or any other way not appointed in his word." Evidently the authors of these declarations and those who accept them, know of a "sufficient Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule" against everything in worship not "prescribed in the Holy Scripture," "not appointed in the word." But these are the subordinate, not the supreme rule, one will say. True, but all United Presbyterians have professed their adherence to these as agreeable to and founded on the word of God, and all ordained persons—ministers, elders, and deacons—declare, in receiving ordination, that they believe and acknowledge these authorities as agreeable to and founded on the word of God, and that they are resolved through grace to maintain and adhere to the same against all opposing errors. Without any assumption that we have specially good consciences, we yet feel the obligation of those vows. When we find them not binding, we hope to be led by grace, to seek relief from them through atoning blood, sincere repentance, and changed ecclesiastical relations. But what saith the Scripture? This at least is bed-rock, a good foundation for conviction. Deuteronomy is still recognized as good authority in the United Presbyterian Church, though Prof. Robertson Smith impugns it, and though the same church authority in Scotland permits him to teach and the organist to play, unrebuked. In the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy, Jehovah warned his people against idolatry, showing them in verses 29–31 how it had grown among the nations, to the abomination and horror of

Molech worship, guards them against its beginnings by the absolutely prohibitory rule of the 32d verse: "Whatsoever thing I command you, observe to do it. Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." It is true God does not repeat that very often in his word. He does not need to repeat it very often. It is explicit. To the intelligent, conscientious and obedient, once is enough. But it is expressed in other forms very often. Isaiah complains (29: 13,) "their fear toward toward me is taught by the precept of men." Jesus teaches the same truth, giving a his interpretation of the prophet's language, (Matt. 15: 9,) "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Plainly our consciences are on good ground in their conviction that instrumental music can have no place in worship unless prescribed and appointed in the word of God. Before the gate of that fleshly Eden, where musical entertainment is worship, flames the sword of a divine prohibition. Conscience may seek other entrances. One may be through the conviction that it was prescribed in the word. On this let these remarks suffice. It was prescribed, but with these conditions: 1. The service was rendered exclusively by priests and Levites. The single exception to this is, that David and all the people used instruments of music in the first attempt to bring up the ark, (*I. Chron.* 13: 8.) Of this he himself confesses: "Ye sought him not after the due order," (15: 13.) 2. It was rendered exclusively at the place of sacrifice. 3. It is not mentioned in the New Testament at all, except in the Revelation, and there in connection with other symbols taken from the Levitical service, such as the temple, incense and the altar. 4. This claim for divine appointment, after being worked for all it was worth, in securing repeal, has been abandoned. The last General Assembly renounced it. The Bible and common sense were too strong for it.

But, again, musical instruments may be used, not as part of the worship, but as an incident. Playing the organ is not worship. And yet they would have it played on the Sabbath. They would arrest the organ-grinder or Italian harper on the pavement, and pay a salary to the organist in the gallery, though neither is worshipping. On what plea? It is not worship. Is it necessity as the lighting and warming of the church may be? Let a thousand years of blessed Christian worship, between the last apostle and

the first organ answer. Let three hundred years of edifying Christian worship after the Reformation answer. Let Spurgeon's tabernacle answer. Let the opponents and the advocates of the organ in the United Presbyterian Church answer.

Is it a work of mercy, then, as the tuning-fork, preventing throat-ache, or the note-book—preserving us from the torture of incorrect time and discord and breaking down in the singing,—may be. We would be glad to find the element of mercy in the advocacy of instrumental music in worship. We have not found much of it yet. But no; it is not worship. It is not a work of necessity. It is not a work of mercy. At a time when God's holy Sabbath is sadly desecrated, we need to beware that our practice sanction not the sacred concert in the opera house, the musical entertainment in the home, and the melodious conviviality of the beer garden. At this gate too there flashes across our path the flaming sword of another divine precept, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him; not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Sweeter music than ever harp or psaltery or instrument of ten strings, made in the ear of God, is his people's humble, sincere prayer, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams."

Let us briefly recapitulate the ground of our convictions:

1. The law in the Directory for Worship, arraigned by the Assembly of 1881; tried before the Presbyteries; condemned by the Assembly of 1882, on a miscount of the vote; killed and buried; secured additionally by the Assembly of 1883, rolling a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, sealing it and setting a guard; mourned for by many a sad, disappointed heart as its friends went away, saying, "We had hoped that this would have helped to keep back the flood of corruption in God's worship." But, do you say this rule in the Directory is not Christ? No;

but our conviction is that it is part of Christ's truth, and that there is that of the Divine in it that will bring it up again from the dead, and that it shall live and reign in some pure, spiritual, obedient organization of Christ's people till he come again.

2. The declaration of the Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms, that God's revealed will forbids in worship what is not prescribed and appointed by God himself.

3. The Bible declaration of the same truth, under which we show: (1.) That instrumental music is not appointed as part of New Testament worship, and (2.) That not being prescribed worship, nor a work of necessity or mercy, it is unlawful on the Sabbath.

We come now to our second question.

II. CAN WE YIELD THESE CONVICTIONS?

1. We can yield them, and ought to, and, by the grace of God, will, if they are shown to be not in accord with God's word, or the subordinate standards. To the former we are under unrepeatable obligations; to the latter, we are under the continued obligation of our profession as United Presbyterians, and vows of ordination.

2. We can yield them, even knowing them to be right, if we are willing to. David yielded both moral and civil right, because "These men, the sons of Zeraiah, be too hard for me." But it did not bring peace. In this very matter of acquiescing in an unappointed circumstance of worship, the burning incense in the high places, Solomon yielded.—*I. Kings*, 3: 2, 3. Jehoash, under the tuition of Jehoiada, yielded.—*II. Kings*, 12: 3. Amaziah, —14: 4. Azariah yielded,—15: 4. Jotham yielded,—15: 35. Even Jehosaphat yielded for a time,—*I. Kings*, 22: 43; though "when his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah." Simon Peter, "the man of rock," yielded to the power of a clear majority when "they all condemned him to be guilty of death," and Simon said and swore that he did not know the man. He yielded again, after bearing years of faithful testimony to the freedom of the gospel, and the right of the Gentiles to an equal place in the church, when certain having come down from James, he "withdrew and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision;" and Barnabas, the "good man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," yielded, and was carried away with their dissimulation.—*Gal.* 2: 12, 13. Alas for human weakness. The

example of men whose peers we dare not claim to be, shows us that we can yield, and that very easily; and that unless cleaving to the truth of God, and sustained by the power of God, we will yield. But that was not the meaning of the question the Committee wished an answer to. It means: Can we yield with good conscience? Is it right to yield? In answer,

1. Our vows to God will not allow us. We may well recall the day of our ordination. It was, or should have been a solemn day to us. It had solemn work in it. We professed our belief and acknowledgment of the subordinate standards of the United Presbyterian Church, as agreeable to and founded on the word of God; and to the question, "Are you resolved, through grace, to maintain and adhere to the same against all opposing errors?" we answered, tremblingly and prayerfully, "I am." We promised in the same spirit that we would not "follow devisive courses, either by complying with the defections of the times, or by giving ourselves up to a detestable neutrality in the cause of God;" and to the question, "Do you make these promises as in the presence of God, in reliance on his grace, and as you would desire to give in your account with joy at the great day of the Redeemer's appearance, when he shall come, and all his saints with him, to judge the quick and the dead?" we said, "I do." The soldier's oath is not so explicit in statement, nor so solemn in appeal as that. When we have concluded to yield and give up the principles to which we are thus sworn, let us wend our way down through the pine woods of Georgia to Andersonville. Let us stand and meditate among the clustered graves of the honored dead; let us remember how they, with the constant opportunity of breaking their oath and gaining their liberty endured hunger and sickness, and insanity, and starvation, and death, and were faithful still. And while we water the green sward over their graves with tears of pity for their sufferings, of admiration for their steadfastness, and of love for their manhood, let us not forget to mingle with them some of shame for our own inferiority. Let us say in a humble confession, that their dead ears will not hear, "you kept your oath and we had thought of yielding ours. The children of this world are not only wiser, but braver in their generation than the children of light. You endured all this to give to our country, union and liberty. Being dead, you yet speak; your dead lips

teach us the lesson of courage, constancy, fidelity. We hear and heed you. We go back home resolved to endure whatever it costs to give to the same country a better boon—an uncorrupted Christianity."

2. A proper care for the purity of Christian doctrine and worship, will not permit us to yield. In our various stations we are "set for the defense of the Gospel," Christ's royal right, as King, to prescribe the acts of worship in which we shall draw near to the Father, in his name, is a precious gospel truth. Let nothing enter the pure worship of God without the signature of the King, without the image and superscription of Christ's example or precept. A dozen specious pleas will be offered for the admission of other things in worship; but let us remember, Christ has entrusted us with the defense of the gospel. We must be faithful. It will help us to this to remember the logical sequences of the admission of one addition. The very same plea will obtain admission for a legion of additions. Was it Martin Luther or Sir Isaac Newton who made a hole in the door of his room for his cat to enter, and subsequently a smaller hole for the kittens? Probably neither. In carpenter work men know more than that. It is only in matters of religion that the children of light betray such lack of wisdom. They forget that the hole that will admit one cat will admit any cat—all cats—"an irresistible torrent" of cats. We must keep the logical line of defense solid, for if we weaken it at any one point, the enemy will come in like a flood. It will help us too, to be faithful, if we consider what is safe for God's people. What is admitted by some hair-splitting distinction, as incident or circumstance—a distinction it takes learned Doctors two years to elaborate—goes to the people, and with them becomes worship, takes the place of simple and spiritual worship. Misled by their spiritual guides, they practise or enjoy music, and think that worship. Have you not heard of Christians, not very ignorant, who were "carried to the very gates of heaven" by an instrumental voluntary? When you have given that delicate infant, spiritual worship, a Corliss engine to cut its teeth on, the probable, nay, certain result is, that the infant will have the breath knocked out of it, and the engine will go on. Paul, who admits doctrinally, that circumcision has no spiritual effect, who for social reasons, "because of the Jews which were in those quarters" circumcised Timothy,

yet utterly refused to do the same in the case of Titus. The doctrinal results are too dangerous. "To whom we gave place by subjugation, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

3. Love for Christ's church forbids us to yield. All Christ's truth belongs to all of Christ's people; maintaining and defending it, we are guarding the treasure of all. If we are on the advanced line, if we are holding an out-post, still that must be held to make the defense good. An eminent minister of the Presbyterian Church is quoted as saying, "I hope you United Presbyterians will keep steadfast; you are a bulwark of orthodoxy." The preacher of that grand sermon with which the Presbyterian General Assembly was opened this year, is quoted as saying to one of our own ministers, "I wish you United Presbyterians would come into the Presbyterian Church and help us fight the battle of inspiration." But have they a better position than we on that question? Would it not be better for the Presbyterian Church to advance to our position, and fight the battle of inspiration over the Book of Psalms? Then Deuteronomy would take care of itself.

Does the call to fall back come from the Captain of our salvation?—If it does not, would our falling back on the main body strengthen or weaken it? Would we could contribute courage or panic. The Presbyterian Church has enough timid men in it now. The cry "Call in the out-posts! Fall back to the citadel!" is the precursor of the other cry, "Retreat! Surrender!" No; it is for Christ's crown and covenant. Love to him and to his body, the church calls on us to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." We must maintain this truth. Our brethren have made a mistake; we must tell them so. We must speak the truth in love; always the truth, the whole of it; always in love, "the greatest of these." Let us pray and testify, because we love. "The bravest are the tenderest,
The loving are the daring."

Resolved, "That a proper regard for Christ's authority as King and Head of Church, for the authority of the constitutional law of the church, for the purity of worship, for the edification of God's people and for the account we must render to Christ when he comes to judge the quick and the dead, absolutely forbids us to yield our convictions; and no consideration of consequences will justify us in doing so. We are responsible for obedience, not for results."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

POWERS AND DUTIES

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

What she did that she ought not to have done, and what she ought to have done that she did not do.

BY REV. D. S. KENNEDY.

The United Presbyterian Church is a body of believers organized under Presbyterian Church government. She receives the Word of God, the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, Declarations of the Testimony, a Form of Government, and a Directory for Worship, as the symbols of her faith. The United Presbyterian Church claims no power to make laws, to regulate the moral conduct, or religious life of her members. Her office consists solely in publishing and administering the laws which Christ, the Head of the Church, has already enacted in his word. She acknowledges "*God as her only law-giver,*" and the "*Word of God as the infallible and only rule of faith and practice.*" She believes that God has invested the *Presbyters*, the Teaching and Ruling Elders, with ministerial authority to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience, and to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and the government of the church. The Presbytery is the "*essential court,*" the court of invested powers and original jurisdiction, and is composed of Elders who have been invested by Christ with the official functions of his militant church. These Presbyters are all equal in power, and when united in judgment, exhibit the *highest authority* lodged in the church by its Divine head. In the Constitution, the exclusive right to define the faith, regulate the worship, and order the government

of the church according to the revealed will of God, is vested in the *whole number* of Presbyters, and explicit provision is made for the submission of all such questions directly to the Presbyters by overture. The supervision of the current work of the church is committed to subordinate courts, whose powers and duties are also explicitly defined in the Constitution under which they are organized. The work of these courts is altogether *ministerial*, and to be carried on in harmony with, and in subordination to the rules of faith and practice adopted by the *whole number of Presbyters*, as indicated by the Constitution. The General Assembly, the highest of these courts, is a delegated body, and made up of commissioners who represent Presbyters from all parts of the church, and who are entitled to hold a seat, and exercise a franchise in all the business committed to the care of the Assembly. This court, although a court of last resort in questions of discipline and the application of law, is nevertheless limited to this particular work and sphere of action. It is not the "supreme authority of the church," as affirmed by the majority in the Assembly of 1882, in answer to protest of Dr. Jas. Harper and others, and since by those who should know better. *God is the supreme authority, the only law-giver*, and the whole number of Presbyters is the only constitutional authority having the right to determine what is the *doctrine*, form of worship, and government of the *church* as revealed in the law of God. The Assembly is the *servant* of the *church*, the whole number of Presbyters creating it, and has only that authority which has been delegated to it. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" The whole vested power is in the *whole number* of Presbyters; and a delegation of power to a less number is *conventional*, and limited by the terms of the enabling act. The constitution which confers this authority says, Chapter 5, Vol. 4, Sec. 3, "The General Assembly shall have power to receive and decide all appeals, references and complaints regularly brought before it; to review, and approve or censure the records of Synods; to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline reasonably and seriously proposed; to warn and testify against any error in doctrine or immorality in practice; to organize, unite or divide Synods; to establish and regulate Theological *Seminaries*, so as to secure uniformity in the course and term of study; to conduct the missionary operations of the

church ; to correspond with other branches of the church ; and in general to adopt measures to promote truth and holiness throughout its bounds, and be a bond of *union, peace, concord,* and mutual confidence." Quite an extended and responsible sphere of work ; and yet not *all* the work in the church. There is an important work below it, as there is also *above* it, with which it is not to interfere. The Constitution expressly forbids the Assembly to interfere with the reserved rights of the Presbyters, Section 5. "Before any regulation affecting the doctrine, worship, or government of the church shall be adopted or made binding on the church, it shall be transmitted in overture to all the Presbyteries, and be approved by at least a majority of the votes of the *whole church.*" The work of formulating the declarations of faith, and "keeping pure and entire such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in his word," is deemed too *important,* too intimately associated with the very life of the church to be committed to any part of it. The *church* claims for herself no original legislative power or authority ; but she *does* claim and *hold* above and over her Assembly, the right to determine by her Presbyters, conjointly, as office bearers in the church, *what* under the teaching of God's word shall be the external symbols of the faith and worship, and government of the whole body of believers, joined in the covenant bonds of the United Presbyterian Church. She does not claim to be infallible, in formulating the faith and practice of the church, hence she has made provision in her constitution for any change, which in the judgment of the *whole church* will conform her standards more perfectly to the requirements of the Divine Law. She has wisely provided, however, that these regulations shall not be changed by a *small minority,* or by a large *minority* of the Presbyters ; this would be as dangerous as leaving it to an Assembly or a Presbytery ; but the change must be *approved* by a *majority* of the votes of the *whole church,* "each minister and ruling elder in the Presbytery being entitled to vote."

In the Directory for Worship, Chapter 5, Vol. 2, Sec. 5, the *whole church* constitutionally declared "as the use of musical instruments in the worship of the New Testament Church has no sanction in the Bible, they shall not be introduced in any form in any of our congregations." Was not that declaration true ? I heard the *learned Dr.* say that they were neither commanded nor forbid-

den ; surely then they had no sanction. Was this not then a good and safe law ? And yet there were many who were dissatisfied with it, as they were perhaps with all the sections in this article of the Directory, as they are all very similar. They wanted instruments in the church, they wanted the doctrines and practice changed, and they had a right to seek change in a constitutional way. But until this change was constitutionally effected, it was a direct violation of the established order of the church to use instruments in the worship of God. Yet some of them did it. It was a willful violation of a covenant obligation taken in the pledge "to be subject to the order and discipline of God's house, as set forth in the Directory for worship, adopted by the church." And yet that covenant was violated.

This gross and aggravated *duplicity* was reported regularly by complaint or memorial, by Drs. James Harper and James G. Carson, describing the crime and naming the Presbyteries, where the offense was being committed, to the Assembly of 1881. Did the Assembly of 1881 investigate these causes of complaint, these instances of unfaithfulness, thus regularly reported by responsible parties ? These crimes which by common fame had become an offense against law and order throughout the whole church. On the contrary. She dismissed the complaint by saying that the *Presbyteries* and *Synods* were expected to apply the law. (*See Minutes, page 356.*) Thus she allowed "these questions of doctrine and discipline, reasonably and seriously proposed, to go unresolved," and these violators of order to go unrebuked. These crimes were not committed in a corner. These charges were openly admitted as true ; and yet the Assembly of 1881 knowingly retained in *unquestioned standing* in her communion these elements of rebellion, and discord, and disunion, to subvert rather "*than preserve the bonds of peace, concord and mutual confidence.*" And thus she became guilty of violating constitutional law, "*particeps in criminis,*" in extending the privileges of the church "*to those who refuse adherence to her profession, and subjection to her government and discipline,*" a violation of our Art. on Communion. The retention of these parties in the church without question, was a practical suspension or repeal of the law against instruments before its *overture*. It was the business of that Assembly to institute such judicial proceedings as would have compelled submission to the

constitutional order of the church, or separation from its privileges. In neglecting or refusing to do this, she failed to protect and preserve the ordinances and faith committed to her care. But this was not all: she retained those who stood in open defiance of the law, and instead of putting them *under trial* by the law, she put the law on trial by these men. This Assembly reversed the constitutional order and made the Assembly the judge, and the *law the prisoner at the bar*. Thus she betrayed her trust, and joined hands with the violators of law. Against this action we protest, as being disorderly, unconstitutional, and subversive of every principle of equity known in the courts; and we aver that the parties charged in the memorial should have been disfranchised in the overture. Again, this same Assembly overstepped its power and violated the constitution, when it attempted to modify a statute, by an authoritative declaration of its meaning; when it attempted to substitute *its definition* of the phrase: "*A clear majority of the votes of the whole church,*" for the phrase itself. This was the very thing she was expressly forbidden to do by the constitution: To frame opinions on abstract points or questions of law, was the very essence of the legislation guarded by the law of overture. If that Assembly or any other has power to substitute its opinion or interpretation, *for the law itself*, and make it binding on succeeding assemblies and the *whole church*, what power has been reserved to the presbyters? This would change the constitution without the consent of the presbyters, which is expressly forbidden, except by overture. It is manifest that the Assembly has no such power of legislation; courts armed with such power would be superior to any laws, and become a law to themselves. The Assembly's power of interpretation lies in the judicial application of law in concrete cases. It has power to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline judicially, in the forms of legal justice, by judgment and penalty, *but in no other way*. One Assembly has no authority to bind its successors or reverse the judicial findings of a former, as all assemblies are co-ordinate, and courts of *last resort*, WITHOUT REPEAL. Each Assembly is *independent*, and subject only to the constitutional statutes of the church; and hence the declaration of the Assembly of 1882, in answer to the protest of Dr. James Harper, that this interpretation of the previous Assembly "*was conclusive and binding until regularly repealed,*" is a fallacy. Whoever before

heard of the *repeal* of an *interpretation*? *Statute laws are repealed*, but interpretations never; they lose their force and pass into history with the concrete case with which they stand connected. An *interpretation* "*regularly repealed*" is *juridical nonsense*. The Assembly of 1882 was bound only by the *constitutional law*. It had a sovereign right to decide for itself the meaning of the statute. It *could not be bound* by the interpretation of a previous Assembly, interpretations in co-ordinate courts are oftentimes contradictory. The citing of a precedent could have only a *moral force*, leaving the Assembly at liberty to either follow it, or make a better one; and this is the only way to dispose of false interpretations. But this opinion of 1881 was not even a *precedent*, because *extra judicial, outside* of its *purview*, separated from a concrete case, unauthorized and without significance. The Assembly of 1881 was incompetent to make a declaration of law, that could modify, repeal, amend, or in any way substitute the statute law, without first submitting it in overture to the presbyters. And the course of the Assembly of 1882 in following such a declaration, instead of following strictly the constitutional statute, was unauthorized and unconstitutional, since each Assembly is charged with the obligation to execute *the law*, not to imitate either the *follies*, or the *virtues* of preceding assemblies. And hence the canvass of the votes on the overture of 1881 by the Assembly of 1882, according to a *mere* opinion, expressed by a previous Assembly, on an abstract question, in an extra judicial form, and having no legal or binding force as a statute, could in no sense be a constitutional justification of the canvass. The law of overture, Sec. 5, Art. 4, Chap. 5, of the Book of Government, was **THE** law, the *only* law binding on the Assembly, in the canvass of this vote. To enable the Assembly to make this count, this law requires the roll of all the Presbyteries to be called, and each minister and ruling elder in the Presbytery should be entitled to a vote, and the vote *carefully recorded* and *reported* by the clerks to the next General Assembly. In this case the Assembly erred in that she did not insist on this complete record of the vote, *as taken in the Presbyteries*. She erred in making up her judgment on a partial and defective return. According to the Assembly's answer to a protest against her action in the count, she says (*Minutes, page 527*): If the Assembly had been forced to go back of the returns and throw out

all the irregular voting that appears to have been done, the majority for the overture would in all probability have been far in excess of the negative vote and all the silent and challenged votes together." But probably not. So the conclusion was only a probability at best. It also appears that the returns were defective, in that the answer of an important number of voters present was not returned at all. Under these circumstances the Assembly was under no compulsion to count, as she had not the complete record before her on which she was to decide. The only constitutional course left to the Assembly here, was to order the votes to be re-taken and returned according to the law of overture.

The circumstances were such as to make it impossible for the Assembly to declare a *clear* majority according to the law of overture. But "where there is a will there is a way," it is said, and so the vote was counted under an *ex post facto opinion*, rendered by the Assembly of 1881, *rushed through* almost the last thing in the closing session; and if intended to control the action of a succeeding Assembly, was one of the grossest outrages in the history of the church. And it is not strange that such a large number of the clearest-headed men of the Assembly of 1882 protested against such a violent and arbitrary usurpation of their rights, and such an unpardonable offense against the organic law of the church. But the case is complicated still further by the report of the committee counting the returns. That report shows that 1,242 qualified voters were present and answered to their names, only 620½ of which voted for the repeal of the article, leaving 621½ who did not vote for the repeal. The law of overture requires, not an implied consent, not a constructive vote, *but the positive, unequivocal "approval"* by at least a majority of the votes of the *whole church*. "When a clear majority of the votes of the whole church is in the affirmative," the constitution requires a positive, unequivocal affirmation to enact an *overture*. The whole church being (each minister and ruling elder entitled to a vote,) 1,242 *at least, as certified by these defective returns*. Now what would be an affirming majority of votes of 1,242, or the *whole church*? Manifestly nothing less than 622. A majority on *roll call* in a recorded vote always refers to more than half the persons enrolled and entitled to a vote. "A vote is something different from not voting;" so counting all in the *church*, (1,242,)

who approved the overture, the ones who were under accusation by the memorial, the ones gone to other communions, only 620½ out of 1,242 voted for repeal, and according to the plain figures of the count the overture was *lost*. Yet in the midst of these complications, in contradiction to these figures, in the face of a protest of 90 out of 225, and in utter disregard of constitutional law, a *meager* majority decided that the overture had received "a clear constitutional majority." Now, these very men tell us (*Report on Bills and Overtures, 1883*), "that with our differing interpretations of the law of overture, there can be but little expectation of a satisfactory result in an overture." Do our interpretations differ more widely now than they did then? How could the result have been satisfactory *then*, under precisely the same circumstances, "and the constitutional majority *clear*?" Thus you see that the leaders of this little majority of thirty-five in the Assembly of 1882 stand self-condemned *to-day, on their own declaration*. But let us examine another attempt at *off-hand-Assembly-legislation*. The Assembly of 1882, like its predecessor, assumes to declare it as the judgment of the *whole church*, (1,242 presbyters or more,) "that there is no sufficient Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule on the subject" of instrumentation. Another violent assumption of the reserved rights of the presbyters, and with which the Assembly was *forbidden* by the constitution to intermeddle, except by overture. This declaration may have been the judgment of the majority in that Assembly of 107 presbyters; but there were at least one thousand presbyters *not* in the Assembly, that had as much right to vote on that question as those in the Assembly; and who had never been consulted about this declaration; and there were in the Assembly eighty-three presbyters solemnly recording before God their protest against it. Here again we have twenty-four presbyters *formulating the doctrines which are to modify the faith and worship* of the church. What was the design of these men in this declaration? *Manifestly to license the use of instruments*. That this is true is evident from the form of another proposition offered by the same committee in the same connection, viz., Res. 4: "That while there may be a liberty here, it is a liberty which in itself, and especially in the present state of the church, should be stringently regulated and kept from abuse, or any use, that would conflict with the required

simplicity of Christian worship." Notice this language, Res. 4: "That while there may be a liberty here." A liberty where? In this new declaration. A liberty to do what? To introduce instruments into the praise ordinance. Here you see plainly the *wolf*, so poorly concealed in the majority declaration and which was thus, without the consent of the church, to be licensed to commit such terrible havoc in the peaceful folds of our once prosperous church. If that little majority in the Assembly of 1882 had a constitutional right to formulate a section for the Directory of Worship, either in form or effect, why did it not take the affirmative and declare straight out "that instrumental accompaniment was an authorized part of the praise ordinance." Why did they not say just what they meant? They did design to do an unconstitutional act, legislate instruments into the church by the negative declaration that there was "no sufficient Bible authority" to keep them out. There can be no question as to their intention. These very men have put themselves on the record in the Assembly of 1883. Answering the memorialists on this action, they say that the words, "*not as authorized*" were admitted in a spirit of conciliation, but with no such idea as conceding that instruments should not be permitted, the point claimed by the memorialists. In that sense, or anything like it, the resolution was not adopted, and could not have been by the majority. But the majority, Pastoral says, "The Assembly asserts a liberty, a freedom from legal restraint, and yet it has not either by express declaration or by *necessary implication* given its sanction to the use of an instrument in the worship of God." How could it assert a liberty without giving its sanction? This is merest caviling pettifoggery. *Every person knows what they tried to do—legislate* instruments into the praise ordinances of the church. And where did they get the authority to recognize or tolerate instruments in the worship of God? Was it given by the vote of the presbyters on the overture, even if it did pass? It cannot be held in this case or in *any other*, that the simple repeal of a law, enacts any other law in its place. It simply leaves the statute book without the *law*. The question of repeal was directly put and answered, and left no implication whatever. Hence instruments were left unauthorized and the action of this majority cannot be recognized as a consequence of the repeal; such a conclusion would unsettle every system of jurisprudence.

This the majority admit when they say, (*Report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures*.) "The repeal of a law does not authorize anything, except freedom from its restraints. Formally, it neither *commands* nor *forbids* anything. It simply leaves the subject without the law repealed." Why did not they *hold* to this position and not shift it and say: "To repeal that law, *was to declare it a misapplication of the principle, in other words, that there was nothing in the ordinance of praise or any other Bible authority to justify such prohibition.*" When it suits them the *repeal declares nothing*, and again it declares anything they desire. Surely brethren, it cannot declare nothing and something.

It is an admitted principle in all legislative bodies, that a simple repeal leaves the statute book without the law, and this is the only effect; any other construction would work legislative suicide. In this repeal then, the majority can find no authority whatever for *this* declaration, nor any *other* declaration, *except simple repeal*. Where there is no law there can be no interpretation of law. And this declaration is *without* any constitutional authority whatever. But this is not all. This declaration is directly in conflict with other constitutional enactments which *have not been repealed*. We hold by confession, "*That nothing is to be used in the worship of God that is not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.*" Chap. 1st, Sec. 1st, says, "*That the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men.*" Chap. 21st., Sec. 5th., says, that the ordinance of praise consists in "*singing of psalms with grace in the heart.*" So also our directory for worship, forbids the use of instruments without, (Sec. 5th, Art. 2d, Chap. 3d,) which they allege has been repealed.

The remaining sections of Art. 2d., Chap. 3d., still stand to describe and define the ordinance of praise so *explicitly* as to absolutely exclude instruments from the worship of God. Sec. 1st. says: "*It is the will of God that the sacred songs contained in the book of Psalms should be sung in his worship to the end of the world, to the exclusion of the devotional compositions of uninspired men. The poetical version of the Psalms now in use shall be employed until another shall be prepared and authorized by the church.*"

Sec. 2d. says : " In praising God we should *sing* with the Spirit and with the understanding also, making melody in our hearts to the Lord." " But that God may be praised in a becoming manner with our *voices* as well as our hearts, congregations should seek a more thorough knowledge of music."

3. " Some suitable person or persons may be employed to lead in the *singing* ; " " but all the congregation should join in this exercise to the best of their ability."

4. " It belongs to sessions to appoint the leaders in their congregations, to regulate the *singing* of praise, and to see that this important part of public worship is rendered for edification and in the best possible manner." *This still remains the unquestioned law of the praise ordinance.* This law does exclude, *was in its enactment intended to exclude* instruments. The church in undertaking to define this ordinance by explicit legislation, both as to matter and manner, limits the ordinance to the exercises described. Thus the church still retains an absolutely exclusive rule, and applies strictly to the principle of the confession ; " that God may not be worshiped in any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures." *Thus the liberty asserted by the assembly is condemned by statute law.* This negative position of the majority assumes, that we may use instruments, because they are not explicitly forbidden. But brethren, the braying of an ass and the bellying of bulls are not explicitly forbidden ; " there is nothing in the praise ordinance or any other Bible authority to justify an absolutely exclusive rule." Will they introduce these into the praise ordinance?

Did Christ say, " Ye are my *friends* if ye do whatsoever I have not forbidden ? " No. Explicit obedience is the evidence of discipleship. He said, " Ye are my *friends* if you do whatsoever I command you." A statute enforces what it commands, not what it does not forbid. Where does Christ forbid the use of hymns of human composure except in the command to use the Psalms ? In matters of faith the word of God alone must be obeyed. The first as well as the last duty of a soldier of the cross is to obey orders. This excludes from the formal ordinances, our confession says, (Chap. 1st., Sec. 6th.), everything that is not " either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary conse-

quence, deduced from Scripture," thus limiting the worship of God to the things "instituted by himself." *There is something then, in the appointment of the praise ordinance, and in other Bible authority, and in the constitution of the church, to absolutely exclude instruments from the worship of God.* And more, there is not a single appointment in the New Testament Scriptures; neither is there a single *constitutional enactment*, on the records of the United Presbyterian Church anywhere, to justify any of her courts in approving or in any way encouraging, or *apologizing* for, the use of instrumental accompaniment in the ordinance of praise. Does anyone of these brethren of the majority dare *now* to affirm that instrumentation is a Divinely instituted exercise in the New Testament ordinance of praise? Oh, no, no! We don't claim that it is commanded, only that it is not forbidden; that's all! *Is it not laughable, indeed, to see our DD's and LL.D's, long and short, fat and lean, exercising in these illogical theological fantasies?* To see them when called to face squarely a doctrinal proposition, simultaneously mount the fence, and *refuse* to commit themselves, either dogmatically or pastorally? Say, brethren, is it commanded? Is it a duty? Is it a part of the Divine Service? Why this *equivocation* and *evasion* by men commissioned to lead the world to Christ? Why don't they give a categorical answer instead of sitting on the top rail to plead, oh so pathetically, "*Forbear! forbear! It's a little one. 'A non-essential!' 'A circumstance!' Only an 'incident!'*" *Its popular, many of us like it, 'and want it, and will have it,' and you can't enforce that declaration of the confession, 'That the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself.'*" Shall we then set the sails and send the church of Christ to sea, before the pleasant breezes of *culture*, tastes, preferences and *aesthetics*, knowing the terrific gale soon to blow, and before which our ecclesiastical ship is doomed to founder? Shall our confession read: "*The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by the majority in the Assembly or Committee of Bills and Overtures, and limited only by forbearance in love?*" Or shall we claim our constitutional right and Christian obligation as presbyters in the Church of Christ, to testify that the Second Commandment forbids the worshiping of God *in any way not appointed in his word?* As officers we have been charged by

Christ to keep pure and entire such religious worship and ordinances as he has appointed in his word; to limit them to what "is either expressly set down in Scripture or deduced from Scripture." Our responsibilities extend to the *incidents* as well as the *essentials*, and the assembly is forbidden to legislate on either. And yet a declaration has been adopted by a majority in the last assembly recognizing instrumental accompaniment as an *incident* of the ordinance of praise, and this in disregard of our memorial, and in the face of our earnest and solemn protest against the irregular and unconstitutional proceedings which were evidently leading on to this corruption of the ordinances of God, and as a refusal of our reasonable and constitutional demand, that they must first submit it by overture to the presbyters. And we stand here *now*, in the presence of this issue; our constitution violated; our rights to decide this question by overture ignored; our external, our organic bond of union broken; *no longer a united or a happy people*.

The majority admit what we assert. In answer to our memorial, they say in the last Assembly, "It is *only by overture* that a declaration of the kind asked for could be authoritatively given." "*While overtures is the legitimate mode*, there is room for grave doubts of its expediency at this time." Then do they not in these declarations confirm our position, that a decision of this question *by the General Assembly is illegitimate, unlawful, unconstitutional*. This is their own declaration; their own mouth shall condemn them. But if *overture* is the only legitimate mode to decide, *why* and *how* did the Assembly enact a liberty? Or as the majority Pastoral has it, "*assert a freedom from legal restraint*." Is the Confession of Faith repealed? Is the declarations of what is required and of what is forbidden in the Second Commandment of no force? Is the judgment of the *church* constitutionally and authoritatively defining the praise ordinance for the observance of the church, an unmeaning and useless work? *Have the system of faith, the historic testimony of the church, and the sovereign right of the individual presbyter to a voice in the changes of doctrine, worship and government of the church all been swept away in the repeal of Section 5*? If not, is it not our duty under the constitution to *insist* that instruments shall stay out of the church until the voice of the majority of the *whole church*, not the majority of an Assembly, has made it lawful for them to come in?

Does any person believe that a majority of the Presbyters in the United Presbyterian Church would decide that instrumentation is a Divinely appointed part of the ordinance of praise; or that they would vote to permit instruments to be used in this ordinance, either incidentally or otherwise? If not, then a minority is forcing instruments into the praise ordinance, not only unconstitutionally, but against the *judgment* and *conscience* of the *majority*. This I believe is the *exact* and *true* state of this case. Now if our brethren believe that a *majority* would favor a change in our form of the praise service as described in the Directory, why don't they submit the question, and have it constitutionally settled? Let them answer for themselves. They say, "They fear the *strain* that it would put on the church." What would *strain* the church, the *vote* or the effects of it? They did not fear the strain of burdened conscience or continued agitation, but they feared the "*only constitutional method*" of relieving these. *They* then are responsible, *and they only*, for the present agitation; because by their own showing they reject the "legitimate" "*and only*" mode of settlement. And you should send them a "*Pastoral*" resort to "*this old form of address, so many times blessed and made effective in settling troubles and securing the peace of the church.*" But they say again, this constitutional way of settlement would be a failure. "*There would be but little expectation of a satisfactory result.*" Hence the proposition to set aside, repeal the constitution wholesale, and take a new method. They say, "Providence is pointing it out." *They call it forbearance, mutual forbearance.*" A misnomer; it is arbitrary usurpation. *They* virtually decide that instrumentation is *inevitable*, an *accomplished fact* in the United Presbyterian Church, without the church's consent; and *it must bear it*. Such a proposition breathes in its every inspiration the elements of anarchy, and *its* peaceful settlement can be nothing else than that which it has been already, *discord* and *strife*. Christian liberty can never safely and righteously submit to such arbitrary dictation; such unwarranted usurpation of power; such unscrupulous disregard of covenants and constitutions; and last but not least, *to a presumption which impeaches the wisdom of Christ in the ordination of the forms of his own worship*. As God has given to each presbyter in the church a like responsibility to bear, so he has

given to each a like power to control. In the legitimate exercise of this power, each presbyter *must be protected and secured*. In our form of worship we have always excluded instruments both by common and special law, both in theory and practice. We have entered into the most solemn covenant before God, as presbyters, that before we change this, or any other established form of worship, we will by overture obtain the positive approval by a majority of the *whole church*. Now under this constitutional compact, we insist, and we will continue to insist, that our brother presbyters shall keep their covenant. Do as they have bound themselves to do. Exclude the instrument until by constitutional authority it is *authorized*; until such change "*secures the approval of at least a clear majority of the votes of the whole church,*" of all the members in the *Presbytery having a right to vote*.

The Evangelical Repository says, "There is no probability that any Assembly in the near future will send the subject down to the Presbyteries." Be it so then; instruments are out by express constitutional legislation, *and they must stay out* until they enter by the constitutional door. And we are under no constitutional obligations to obey or honor the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church when she assumes to do that which she has no authority or right to do; and that which she has been *expressly FORBIDDEN to do by the organic law under which she was constituted*. We do honor her in her place, while she is the servant of God and the church, but when she steps out of her *sphere* and *invades* our *liberties*, we will deny her authority, and *resist her usurpation*. "*We must obey God rather than men.*"

Resolved, 1st, "That the General Assembly of 1881 transcended her power in her effort to amend by definition the explicit declaration, 'a clear majority of the votes of the whole church,' and she was also unfaithful to her trusts when she failed to execute the laws on those who, by the introduction of instruments, were violators of the most solemn covenant obligations.

2nd, "That the Assemblies of 1882 and 1883 transcended their authority, and in the face of constitutional prohibition usurped the reserved rights of the presbyters when they asserted a liberty, and incidentally introduced into the praise ordinance of God's worship, instrumental accompaniment, without either the command of Christ, the example of the apostles or the approval of a clear majority of the votes of the whole church.

3rd, "That we do not endorse and will not tolerate the exercise, by the General Assembly, of authority which has been expressly denied to her in our organic law."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH IN 1882

ON INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

BY REV. D. N. DICK, D. D.

The subject before the church for her decision in 1882 was the repeal of Sec. 5, Art. 2, Chap. 3, of our Directory for Worship. This being sent down in overture by the Assembly of 1881, carried with it apparently the fact that a part of our church was not satisfied either with the language of that section or with the dogma of the church on instrumental music. This gave occasion for the consideration of the whole subject. And as different men gave expression to their opinions in its discussion it became manifest that all the rulers in our church did not hold *one faith* in this matter. Some believed that God has authorized the use of instrumental music in the worship of his church; and Miriam, and David, and the temple worship, and the Book of Psalms, and the redeemed in heaven were all brought forward as proofs from Holy Writ, and even poor Psallo was tortured nigh unto death to compel it to give some kind of authority. Others believed that God has given us permissive authority for its use, leaving it with the worshiper to use or not use as he may judge to be for edification. Others, who never wished to have instrumental music introduced in the worship of God, believing that its use was not helpful to the Christian spirit in praise, yet, as this section did not well express their faith, wished to have it repealed. Some of them believing that we can better exclude instrumental music by the old common law than by any statute law. Others, that after the repeal of this, another rule excluding instrumental music, expressed in more acceptable language, could be adopted. Another class, but few in number, believed that the use of

instruments was but an incident of worship and needed no rule. All these, although differing greatly in their opinions, united on this one point that this section should be repealed. Then there was those who believed that God has given us the ordinances of his worship and the manner in which we are to observe them, keeping them "pure and entire," and as instrumental music is not among these, so faithfulness to God and to his church, requires that we should add nothing to, and take nothing away from any ordinance of his worship. "For such the Father seeketh to worship him always." And so these voted against repeal. Others again seem to have had no decided conviction and so did not vote. This is, so far as I can attain to it the position of the church on instrumental music in 1882. The conclusion of the matter was 621 ministers and sessions voted for repeal, 613 ministers and sessions voted to retain this section and nine members of the different Presbyteries were in doubt and so did not vote. The majority of the votes cast were in favor of repeal, but those opposed were nearly as numerous, and those who did not vote said plainly by their silence that they were not prepared to sanction the repeal of this section. Add these nine to the number of those who were opposed to repeal and we have the expressed opinion of the majority of the church that no change was desired in this section on worship. It is true that our General Assembly decided that a majority of the church as shown by the votes cast was in favor of repeal; and if overtures are simply an arena on which votes are to be cast and counted and the result decided by a mere technical majority, then this was right; but if the overture is a regulation to ascertain the judgment of the church, then plainly the nine, who were present in Presbyteries and did not vote said as plainly by their silence that they did not desire a change of that section as did those who voted no. The difference between those who voted no and those not voting was simply this; the one was satisfied with the language of this section in our Directory, the other was in doubt, but asked no change. Then while this was what I believe the honest judgment of a small majority of the church as expressed by their words and actions, that no change was desired of this section in our Directory, this does

not fully express what was the judgment of the church on the use of instrumental music in the worship of God. In the overture the fact submitted to the church for her decision was simply the repeal of Sec. 5, Art. 2, Chap. 3, in our Directory. The subject of instrumental music if at all before the church was simply incidentally so. As the question would naturally arise if that section is repealed what position will our church assume on the use of instruments in the worship of God. And the overture was so framed as to foreshadow nothing of the attitude the church would assume in case this section was repealed. And hence those who believe that God authorized the use of instrumental music in his worship and those who believed he had given permissive authority for its use, and those who believed that the repeal of this would leave us to be governed by our old common law, and those who believed that it was only an incident in worship, and those to whom the language of this section was not acceptable but who believed that if it was repealed, another rule better expressing the truth would be adopted, prohibiting the use of instruments in the worship of God. All these could and did unite in voting for repeal. Then if we say that all voting against repeal disapproved of the use of instrumental music and add to this the nine non-liquets who certainly asked for no change, we have a majority of the church. But in addition to these we have many who although voting for repeal said they never wished to see instrumental music introduced in their congregations. Holding these views I may count them in all fairness and honesty as opposed to instrumental music. Then if we add these to the others the fair conclusion is that so far as the church expressed a judgment, this judgment was that a large majority of the church were opposed to the use of instrumental music. While I come to this conclusion looking at the facts as fairly as possible, I do not wish to be understood as placing myself in antagonism with the decision of the General Assembly of 1882. They said that Sec. 5, Art. 2, Chap. 3, was repealed, but they claimed its repeal on the ground of a technical majority of votes cast and not as based on the expressed judgment of the church, for they paid no attention to the judgment of the nine, who said plainly by their silence that they did not desire repeal. My conclusion is

that the expressed judgment of the church was against repeal, but a technical majority of votes cast in favor of it. Then the General Assembly went further and after repeal, they define what was the judgment of the church on instrumental music as expressed by this repeal. They say "that this decision is not to be considered as authorizing instrumental music in the worship of God, but simply as a declaration of the judgment of the church that there is no sufficient Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule on the subject." That is, the decision of the Presbyteries in 1882, gives no authority to any congregation to introduce instrumental music, but it expresses the judgment of the church on instrumental music. This judgment it seems is declared in a negative form. To see clearly what it is, let us look at its rhetoric. "There is no *sufficient* Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule on the subject. That is, there is Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule, but this authority is not sufficient. I have been taught, and I do believe that when the Bible gives authority for anything that authority is sufficient. We may surely offer to God in worship anything he authorizes, and anything he authorizes us to exclude we can safely exclude. But then, perhaps, the General Assembly did not intend to teach us that we can have Bible authority which is not sufficient for a rule. Then they must mean that the judgment of the church was that we have sufficient Bible authority for an exclusive rule, but not for an *absolutely* exclusive one. The difference is, an exclusive rule, will admit of exceptions, an absolutely exclusive admits no exceptions. The judgment of the church then was when we put it in an affirmative form, that the Bible gives us sufficient authority for an exclusive rule on the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, but that exception may arise to this general rule. I know that the opinion prevails to a great extent in the church that the General Assembly in 1882, decided that we have no Bible authority for the excluding of instrumental music from the worship of God, and that now any congregation desiring it may introduce it. But if they meant this, why did they not say so? Surely the Doctors who wrote this report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures were men able to express the thoughts of their hearts in words that others could

understand ; and if they meant this, why did they not say it? Why should we accuse them of "darkening counsel by words without wisdom?" If they meant that the expressed judgment of the church was that the Bible gives no authority for a rule on this subject, why did they not say so? They said the reverse of this. That the Bible gives sufficient authority for an exclusive rule, but not one absolutely exclusive. The judgment of a church court should be expressed in plain language. In all fairness to that Assembly their resolutions carry the impression that they believed the great majority of the U. P. Church was opposed to instrumental music in the worship of God, and hence they accept the judgment of the church as against its use. The statute law is repealed, but the common law remains forbidding its use, and also they knew that there were many in the church earnestly desiring its introduction and to gratify these they leave the door a little ajar, so that those who wished might carry in the organ, and yet warn them not to do it in any congregation where it might occasion trouble or grieve the hearts of any of God's worshipers. Looking at all the facts it would seem a fair conclusion that the expressed judgment of the church in 1882, was against the use of instrumental music in the worship of God. This is the natural close of my subject. But as time and experience make wise heads wiser, so it is with some of those who wish to introduce instrumental music in our church. One year's consideration has led them to the conclusion that the General Assembly of 1882 did not say what they wished them to say on instrumental music. Hence the General Assembly of 1883, undertook to explain what the General Assembly of 1882 meant by their action. The Assembly of 1882, said that the decision of the Presbyteries was "simply a declaration of the judgment of the church that there is no sufficient Bible authority for an absolutely exclusive rule on the subject." The Assembly of 1883 explains this by saying that "to repeal that law as has been done was to declare * * * * that there was nothing in the ordinance of praise or any other Bible authority to justify such prohibition. That is the recorded judgment of the church." If the General Assembly of 1882 meant this, they should have said it. This explanation has the advantage over the resolution it explains,

that it is expressed in language we can understand. But by what means they discovered that this was the true interpretation of the language used by the General Assembly of 1882, they have not told us, and perhaps the General Assembly of 1884 will advance another step and explain this language to mean that God has given us permissive authority for the use of instrumental music in his worship. Time and experience does give us a clearer insight into things. The ministers of our church have certainly, many of them departed from the reformation ground on this subject. As leaders in the church they have taken a new departure. But brethren let us wait patiently upon the Lord. We know He has said, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a banner against him. Christ does reign the King and Head of his church. The issue has been forced upon us, let us witness a good confession, faithfully upholding Christ's *Crown and Covenant*.

Resolved 1st, "That our General Assembly of 1882 made a mistake in declaring Sec. V., Art. 2, Chap. 3, of our Directory for Worship repealed, based upon a mere plurality of votes, while the expressed judgment of the church was in favor of retaining it.

2nd, "That our General Assembly of 1882 erred when it gave encouragement to our congregations to introduce instrumental music into the worship of God, when they knew that it would grieve the hearts of so many of the worshippers of God, and was contrary to the convictions of a majority of the church.

3rd, "That the General Assembly of 1883 made a mistake when it attempted to explain the action of the Assembly of 1882 so as to energize and give some kind of sanction to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

REASON WHY

WE SHOULD NOT

TAKE A STEP TOWARD RITUALISM.

REV. S. F. MORROW, D. D.

In whatever way it may be accounted for, the fact itself can hardly be denied that there is among the Protestant churches of our day a strong tendency toward ritualism. In many of the high churches in England and America where the spirit of ritualism has culminated, there is hardly any disguise of full-fledged popery. And in proof that the tendency to ritualism is not confined to prelatical churches, I may relate this incident: Less than forty years ago, during a summer vacation of the Theological Seminary, I boarded with a family worshipping in an Old School Presbyterian church in the neighborhood. In the course of a conversation with my host, I referred to the introduction of organs in the Presbyterian Church. There were none then in use in that vicinity. While admitting that there might be organs in some of the N. S. churches, he could hardly believe that there were any in the O. S. Presbyterian church. But where will you find any Presbyterian church now without an organ? And within, perhaps, less than a score of years you might almost as well have proposed to introduce a crucifix or holy water into any of the United Presbyterian churches as an organ. But where are we now? Notwithstanding the exhortation of the Assembly of 1882, organs are being pushed into many of our congregations; and we are following at a respectful distance, it may be, but following steadily in the wake of other churches, and have now almost reached the point where they stood a few years ago. The spirit of ritualism "is in the air." It exhibits itself side by side with Rationalism and Liberalism. And although some brethren may scout the idea that the use of an instrument *as an aid to*

praise should be classed with ritualism, yet "so well informed and sagacious an observer as Mr. Gladstone points to the introduction of the organ into reformed churches as an unmistakable evidence of their general ritualistic tendencies."—*J. P. L.* The churches that make the greatest display of operatic music and attach the greatest importance to æsthetic taste and culture, are those which are most distinctively ritualistic in their worship. Can it be believed that this tendency is indicative of a healthy state of religion? Is it in any measure allied to the earnest and robust spirit of piety which characterized the reformation period of the 16th century? It is not rather a spirit begotten of the world, and the outcome of a luxurious and effeminate age? and is it not rather ominous of a return to that condition of things in the church from which the Reformation was an escape?

Among the reasons why the United Presbyterian Church, above all other churches, should not now take a step toward ritualism, I will mention,—

1. *The fact that as a church we have always testified against it and every approach to it.* If any one thing has distinguished us as a church from other protestant churches, and from other branches of the Presbyterian family, it has been our uniform defense of sound doctrine, and purity of worship, and our opposition to every departure from that simplicity of service which characterized the church in the apostolic age. In our pulpits, in the deliverances of our church courts, and in the columns of our religious periodicals, such testimony has been faithfully borne; our trumpet giving no uncertain sound. We have not been slow in giving warning against innovations as to doctrine and modes of worship in other denominations. In the ordination vows, voluntarily taken by our ministers and elders on their induction into office, they have solemnly engaged "through divine grace to maintain and adhere to (the doctrines professed by this church,) against all opposing errors—to maintain and defend them," (not merely to tolerate them because they are incorporated in the standards of the church; but to maintain and defend them, because they are true and scriptural; and not to follow any divisive courses, either "by complying with the defection of the times, or by giving themselves up to a detestable neutrality in the cause of God." We have pub-

lished to the world the principles on which we profess to stand, and which we declare to be a sufficient reason for maintaining a separate and distinct communion. And we have suffered no little reproach for the ground we have taken. We have been pointed at as narrow-minded and bigoted, governed by prejudice and habit rather than by principle. And we thought that in defense of the truth, we were suffering a kind of petty persecution for righteousness sake. (It is only of late that such flings have been thrown at us, by men who have arisen of our own selves.) Of course the fact that this has been our position heretofore, is no certain proof that it is right, and ought to be adhered to. It may indeed be humiliating to acknowledge that all our previous testimony in this direction has arisen from prejudice and ignorance, and that the charges brought against us by our more enlightened brethren have been just. But at the same time, no feeling of mortification ought to restrain us from giving up what is clearly untenable. Not even vows can bind us to do what God's word forbids. And now we should be willing to acknowledge our sin in maintaining unwarrantable divisions in the church of Christ. If duty to God requires us to take a step toward ritualism, we ought to go forward fearlessly, even though the church and the world may look on and laugh. But surely self-respect, if nothing else, should make us cautious. We ought to be very sure that we are right before abandoning a position so long maintained, and which we believe was sanctioned by the King and Head of the church.

2. *A fact that there is a general tendency toward ritualism is a reason why we should not now take such a step.* Some, indeed, would reason in an opposite direction. "Why make ourselves singular and ridiculous? Why make ourselves so much better than others? As well be out of the world as out of the fashion." But though it might be very easy and pleasant to fall in with the multitude and float along in the current, yet higher motives than personal ease or a desire to please men should govern the followers of Christ. The voice of the multitude is not necessarily the voice of God. Truth is not to be determined by the vote of the people, as elections are carried and political questions settled. A feeble minority may sometimes, indeed, be powerless under the rule of

an oppressive majority in the state, or in the church; but the minority is not therefore necessarily in the wrong. If there is a general decline in morals in any community, it does not follow that the obligation of the moral law is set aside. If there is a growing disregard of the Sabbath, this does not prove that the law of the Sabbath is no longer in force. And if there is a general tendency to ritualism and sensuous worship, it does not follow that this is more pleasing to the Saviour than the simpler and more spiritual service of the apostolic age. There was a time, (I do not say at what period), when "all the world wandered after the beast." But the worship of the beast was no less offensive to God then than in other days. It is just when the enemy comes in like a flood, that there is the greater need of lifting up a standard against him. It is when iniquity abounds that the love of many waxes cold. And it is at such a time that there is a special call to the friends of Christ to be firm and faithful—"faithful among the faithless." It requires no small degree of moral courage to stand fast against the demands of the multitude, the persuasions of friends, and the reproaches of adversaries. But is it not with any sacrifice to receive from the blessed Master such a commendation as this? "I know thy works—and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith." "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Another reason why we should not now take a step toward ritualism, is:—

3. *Because one step so easily leads to another.* It is proverbially true, that in difficult undertakings which we are afraid to enter upon, the first step is often the most difficult. And it is equally true that in departures from the faith, one step naturally and easily leads to another. The history of the church proves that when any course of defection is begun, it is rare to see that church retrace its steps. It is easy to depart from the faith, but it is not so easy to recover the ground that has been lost. The rites and ceremonies added to the Christian worship in the second century, according to Mosheim, were extremely offensive to wise and good men, and gave proof that declension from apostolic simplicity and pentecostal zeal had set in, and the changes then introduced issued in the great Roman apostasy. A reforming church—a church just emerging

from heathen or papal darkness, and which has but begun to feel after the truth, may be reasonably expected to come more fully into the light. But the church that has begun to leave the light in which she has been walking, may be as naturally expected, judging from the history of the past, to depart farther and farther from the faith. And why should it be otherwise? It is hardly a breach of charity to say, that a step towards ritualism is taken, not from principle, but from policy; not from a desire to be more exactly conformed to the divine will, but from a desire to please men, to gratify a worldly taste, or to add to the membership of the church. And if one step may be taken for such reason, what should hinder other steps from being taken? If the success anticipated is not realized, what more natural than that further experiments in the same direction should be tried? The novelty soon wears off. The new policy has ceased to create a sensation. Something else must be tried in order to keep up the excitement. A spirit of rivalry is awakened, and one church or congregation endeavors to outstrip another, in the rage for novelty. And if taste or policy may control in matters purely spiritual, what should hold it in check? If the church has a right to depart, in the least particular, from the divine pattern in ordinances of worship, why may she not make as many changes as her own wisdom shall demand? The right to take one step implies the right to take another. The same men, or the same generation that introduces this line of policy may not intend that it shall be carried to a dangerous length, but such a course once adopted has an educating influence on the body of the church, and especially on the youth. And another question, taught in such a school, will be easily persuaded to carry out the same line of policy to its legitimate results. But while one step in the direction of ritualism naturally leads to another, yet it is believed that, even as a matter of policy, the experience of Protestant churches does not prove its wisdom. They find the same difficulty in retaining their youth, and in dealing in the world, that other churches, adhering most strictly to their apostolic pattern, find. And many of their most pious members lament the steps which have been taken, and would be glad of a return to a purer and simpler service. What the wise man says in reference to strife, may well be said of ritualism, which is so apt to gender strife: "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out

water; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with."

But the special reason why we should not now take any step towards ritualism, is,

4. *That it is without warrant from the word of God.* It is not seriously contended by any one that ritualistic service is more in accordance with the divine pattern than the plain and simple forms which characterized the apostolic age, and which have prevailed in the purest branches of the church in subsequent ages. The utmost that is contended for is that such a service is allowable, because not forbidden. And the underlying principle which governs in this matter is, that a large measure of discretion is given to the church in respect to forms of worship; that the culture of the age requires something more than the bald and bare service which has hitherto prevailed in Presbyterian Churches; that such a service would tend to popularize the body, and thus enlarge its membership; and that there is a certain flexibility in the New Testament worship which can rapidly adapt itself to the age and circumstances of the people. But what proof is there that the ordinances of religion are not as distinctly appointed and defined now as they were under the former dispensation? And is it not an impeachment of the wisdom of the King and Head of the Church, to say that any of the ordinances of religion are incomplete? If the church may arrange forms and ordinances of religion at her own discretion, why may she not arrange doctrines also, to meet the "advanced thought" of the age? If the church may set aside the *manner of praise* which has been divinely appointed, why may she not set aside the *matter of praise* which has been divinely appointed? It is true that uninspired songs in the formal worship of God are not appointed; but where are they forbidden? The direction given to Israel of old implies that it is the duty of the church to obey the will of her Lawgiver, and not to usurp his prerogative: "What thing soever I command you, that observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." And the same direction, in substance, is given to the New Testament church by her King and Lawgiver: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." If anything like ritualism is commanded by the King and Head of the Church, either directly or indirectly, by his example, or by the authority of his inspired servants, then it not only may be observed, but it must

be observed. But if it is not among the things commanded, then it must not be enjoined by the church, nor observed by men. If human expediency may take the place of divine authority; if man's wisdom may improve on Christ's appointment; if the end sought (viz., the growth of the church,) will sanctify the means employed, though without appointment,—then what becomes of the great principle of Protestantism, that God is not to be worshipped in any way not appointed in his word? If the conviction prevails that the church is not making progress in the world, and that something is lacking to give her success in the work of converting the world to Christ, it is nothing more than carnal wisdom which will urge innovations in worship, or human contrivances, or popular usages, to add to her efficiency. Her great lack is, not new doctrines, or ordinances, or organizations, but the presence and power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, inspiring his servants with apostolic zeal, and giving efficacy to his word and ordinances already appointed. In a word, the question may be put to the leaders in this new movement in our church, which was asked by our Saviour of the chief priests and elders of his day, respecting the baptism of John: This ritualism in the church, whence is it? from heaven or of men? If it is from heaven, then why, after being so long in making the discovery, do you make it optional with the servants of Christ to conform to it, or to reject it? But if it be of men, then by what authority do you exalt it to an equality with the ordinances of divine appointment? Why teach for doctrines the commandments of men? Our beloved Zion has hitherto been in many respects a prosperous church. Going forth to the work of her Master in the ardor of her first love, adhering to the simplicity of gospel truth and gospel ordinances, she has been blessed in her work at home and abroad. But if now, adopting a worldly policy, she follows in the footsteps of those who made defection from the truth, rather than in the footsteps of those who have overcome "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," then we may well fear that the Saviour who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, will have this to say, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." And unless the admonition is heeded, "Repent, and do the first works," it may be truly said that her history is already written, and henceforth on her trailing and faded banner may be read this sad inscription, "Ichabod"—the glory is departed.

The above paper was not read, but referred.

THE SIMPLICITY OF WORSHIP REQUIRED
IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

BY REV. D. W. CARSON, D. D.

The most precious and sacred thing in our religion is the worship of God. Whatever touches that touches our spiritual life in its most sensitive part. To men of the world with whom the worship of God is itself a mere incident in their lives; whose minds and energies are taxed and engrossed with the mighty questions that underlie the filling of political offices, the price of pork and of dry goods, questions in regard to the mode of worshiping will always seem of trifling importance. But to those to whom that worship is the principal and all-important business of their lives even its circumstances will be no trifles.

To some, the deep feeling that has brought together and gives interest to this Convention, may be something to smile at, and to others a thing to be deplored. But after all is not a jealous sensitiveness with regard to the worship of God a good healthy symptom either in a church or an individual. It has ever distinguished the favorites of heaven. Moses was jealous for God in this direction. So was Phineas and Elijah. And the Lord Jesus Christ was so exceedingly jealous in this way that the disciples remembered that it was written of him "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." It is comfortable to remember that if *we* are agitated over innovations in our mode of worshiping God, we are in very good company.

The subject allotted to me for discussion on this occasion is "The simplicity of worship required in the New Testament Church."

The words of our Lord in his conference with the woman of Samaria as recorded, (*John* 4: 23, 24), are so pertinent to this subject that I shall take them as the basis of what I have to say upon it: "*The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*"

There was a controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans as to the place where God ought to be worshiped. This dispute about the place which might justly be said to be a mere incident of the worship in itself a matter of indifference, nevertheless involved questions in regard to the nature and character of God. The kind of worship due to him and the way in which it should be rendered, that affected the very essence of that worship.

Our Lord authoritatively determines the controversy by a sentence or two which go to the very bottom of the subject. This he does, not dogmatically, but by a clear logical statement of the principles which underlie the whole subject. Assuming as a fundamental axiom that both worship and worshiper must harmonize in nature and character with God, who is the object of all true worship, he tells us in a single sentence what God is, what we are, and what true and acceptable worship must be to be in harmony with the nature and character of God, and what it is in the "never coming that now is." "God is a Spirit." In the simplicity of his nature he is absolutely perfect, immaterial, without body or parts. "Infinite, eternal, unchangeable." We too are spirits. But on the other hand our nature is complex. In part "we are of the earth earthy." We are dust quickened by the breath of the Almighty. We live a life that is sustained from the earth and which will end when the body returns to the earth as it was. In part we are simply animals. Animals of a different species and higher order than our fellows that inhabit with us the earth or find their home in "the heaven above and the waters underneath the earth; but animals nevertheless.

Our flesh is of a somewhat finer mould, but it is flesh after all, material and earthly, and our life in the flesh has in it prop-

erties and qualities common to us with them. But thank God we are not mere animals. Nor so much animal as to be denominated from that part of our nature. There are indeed some very knowing people in these days who think that everything worth knowing is to be learned outside of the Bible, and who finding themselves, utterly unable, with all their learning to prove certainly without the help of the Bible that they are anything more than animals, seem willing to be classed with them. But if they are satisfied to be so classed, I thank God with this Bible before me, I am not. I claim for myself and for you, from this word of God, on which I rest serenely indifferent to either the facts or guesses of the entire scientific world, something higher and better. We have souls, and the soul is the chief part of us that which denominates us men. These souls are immediately from God, and in nature like his. "We are his offspring." They are possessed of essential properties common to all spirits and peculiar to spirits. They are susceptible of a life like gods, in which together with other spirits they have communion with God. These two parts of us, the one material, corporal, animal; the other spiritual, heavenly, moral, divine. God has mysteriously united to make us what we are. Each has its own peculiar powers and sphere of operation, but they are intended to act in unison, and we are not altogether improperly ourselves in any action in which both do not participate. In every right action or exercise, the soul, which bears the image of God, must be the master and the body the servant. But there are exercises that are altogether earthly in their character, which begin and end in the body are for the body only. They are not done without the soul, and they have a moral and spiritual side. But they are for the body as well as in the body, and the earth is their proper sphere of operation. And there are exercises that are altogether spiritual and heavenly in their character, that are the effects and manifestations of the divine life in us that only the soul can properly perform. Though not done without the help of the body they are purely and only acts of the soul, and such an exercise according to our Lord's teaching is true worship.

First. What then, in the first place, is the true worship of the Father, the hour or season for which our Lord declares is now come?

Taking the word in the sense in which it is evidently used in this passage, the worship of God is an exercise in which, according to Scripture, we put ourselves into the immediate presence of God. In Scripture language it is a "coming," an "access," a "drawing near" to God, an "appearing before God." Its primary end is to give to God the glory that belongs to him as God, and to him only, and that is due from us. One very important and essential part of which is that he is the Supreme good in whom is to be found the everlasting rest of our souls. Its very life and soul is the actual communion that is enjoyed in it between God and the worshiper. It is (in the highest sense of the word an act of communion), an exercise in which in the highest sense of the word, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." As often as it is properly engaged in, that ladder which Jacob had the vision of on that memorable night at Bethel, is set up with its foot on earth and its top in heaven, and souls go up and God comes down. (The worship therefore that is true, must be and can be only an act of the Spirit.) There is a worship and a worshiper; it is implied that is false, that is so in name only. The true worship has for its object the true God, the Father. Not God as we may suppose or imagine him to be, or would like him to be, but as he is revealed in his word, which is truth, and in him the word made flesh, who is the truth. It is a veritable and real, not a nominal and seeming coming into God's presence and having communion with him. Not an outward bodily exercise only, but an act of the soul that is performed takes place in heaven rather than on earth. But as performed on earth, and by spirits embodied, it must have a form and a body too, (and its form and circumstances, and everything connected with it is like itself, true.) Our bodies indeed are so much an integral part of us, that worship here would not be the worship of the person without the body. The soul even in its most spiritual exercise can act here only through the body and by the body. Our five bodily senses are the spirit's only medium of communication with the entire outside world, whether of matter or of spirit. That disembodied "spirits of just men made perfect" worship in heaven I know; how, I do not know. That God can commune with our spirits directly, I doubt not. But all

God's known methods of communication with us here are such, constituted as we are, that even inspiration did not enable Paul to know whether it was in the body or out of the body that he was caught up to heaven. The one thing certain was, that whether in the body or out of the body, what he saw and heard, it was not possible for him, not possible for a man to utter.

Worship therefore, even in spirit as performed by men in the body is in some measure a bodily exercise, has itself a bodily form. But its form as well as its essence is truth. It does not consist in senseless and irrational rites and ceremonies, but is the embodiment and expression of truth adapted to the use of a spirit endowed with intelligence, will and heart. Its forms are consequently throughout only such as God has instituted for the purpose, for only God knows truly what he is himself, and what we are, and what are the just relations in which we and all things else stand to him and to one another, and only he can represent them as they should be represented in worship. Ideas of things which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," that have their origin in the eye or the ear, or the imagination of man's heart, must necessarily be false and delusive, and the emotions to which they give birth can only be like that which produced them, devoid of truth—a delusion such a worship—a worship of God's institution, a worship for the spirit, a worship which in its forms is intended to embody and express for the soul in its intercourse with the infinite Spirit truths the most sublime and purely spiritual must in the nature of things be simple, as simple as nature itself, and as God has instituted it, as it comes to us with his signature stamped upon it. It is pre-eminently so, made in heaven and brought from heaven, as ordained by God it is absolutely perfect in its adaptation to the worship of a Spirit by spirits. There is no provision in it for the flesh, the merely animal in us is ignored and will find nothing here for its gratification. The body is chastened, kept strictly under, made to be simple and only the organ and instrument of the soul in its out-goings and up-goings to God, and not allowed to interpose itself in the way of God's down-comings and in-comings to the soul.

And for this what more and what else is needed besides God's truth and God's spirit. If there is anything under heaven whose perfect simplicity will not bear the touch of human fingers, it is the worship of God's institution. Among all the creations of his wisdom, this stands pre-eminent, the masterpiece. If they will, let men try their hand upon nature, this visible creation. It is within the scope of their faculties and senses, but let them beware how with their muddled brains and filthy hands they meddle with that divinely simple arrangement whereby the spirits of just men yet imperfect on earth, and the "spirits of just men made perfect" in heaven are brought into communion in worshiping the Father of spirits

Second. Such being the nature and essential characteristics of true worship, we are prepared with this in view to consider in the next place what it is in that "hour that now is" to which the Saviour refers, that is in the New Testament Church.

By the New Testament Church, understand, is not intended another or a different church from the Old Testament or Jewish Church. Nor is it intimated by our Lord that the true worship of the Father differs now in any essential respect from that of any former period. God is unchangeable. There has been since the fall, and can be but one way of acceptable worship for sinners, and the worship itself is the same in its nature. We still worship in the same church with Abel and Enoch before the flood, and Abraham, Moses and David, and all the people of God since, the same God in the same way and with the same kind of worship. But it has pleased God to appoint for his church, which is the body of Christ, as he did for us, and as he did for the human nature of the Church's Head, her several ages of growth, her periods of progress and development, a childhood so to speak, and a manhood. The New Testament Church is simply the church in her state of maturity and full development in this world. There is a perfection still future not to be attained here that belongs only to heaven. But as to this world, this is the church's full age, "the last days," "the fullness of times," wherein her worship, her entire organization and equipments have reached the completeness of perfection. "*For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing of a better hope did.*" The time is come when as the apostle

speaks in his letter to the Corinthians, "the wisdom of God" as seen in the institutions of his worship as well as in every other part of the plan of human redemption is to be "spoken among them that are perfect." When "childish things are to be put away."

Two great events have occurred in these last days that left them immeasurably above all preceding ages, and which concur to give that character of completeness and perfection, are particular to everything pertaining to the worship of God, which can be exceeded only by the state of glory in heaven. In the first place the Son of God has come in person and assumed the body prepared for him, and having in it finished the work given him to do on earth as mediator between God and men, has ascended up to heaven to be our advocate with the Father. And in the second place the Holy Spirit, who is the third person in the Godhead, has come in person in the name of the Father and the Son, to take charge of the part that belongs peculiarly to him in this grand scheme, and which is to give it completeness. His part is to give the finishing touches, if we may so speak, to this new creation.

These two most remarkable events in the history of the church and of the world—two separate, visible comings of two persons in the Godhead, following each other in close succession, the one to procure for us the privilege of coming into God's presence as worshipers, opening up the way to it, and the other to enable us to make use of the privilege—showing us the way and actually bringing us by that way into the full enjoyment of our great privilege—are the consummation of all that the wisdom of God has provided for this purpose. Our worship of God in all its provisions and arrangements is thereby brought to a state of completeness and perfection that leaves nothing to be desired; nothing possible in the way of addition or improvement in this world, that is only to be surpassed by the state of glory in heaven.

Let us, if possible, understand precisely in what this perfection consists:

1. Our way into the presence of God in worship is now so clearly manifested that the entire system of things provided by

infinite wisdom to instruct the church in the knowledge of that which is so vital to true worship, is become obsolete and useless. The one purpose and use of all that ceremonial and symbolic worship instituted by God, with its splendid and imposing ritual, its accompaniments of types and emblems, making it so picturesque and striking, was to instruct the church in the knowledge of things which could be learned only in that way. That they were ever intended to captivate or delight the senses, or minister to the gratification of the sensual and animal part of our nature in the worship of God, is in itself incredible. That God ever appointed anything in his worship with a view to its scenic and dramatic effect, in order to please men as we do children with pictures and baubles, is contrary to all we have learned of God from his word; and the Epistle to the Hebrews effectually disposes of all such ideas in connection with the Old Testament ritual of worship. But as a system of instruction it has been superseded by ordinances, the excellence of which is their simplicity and plainness. Instruction and devotion are still inseparably joined together in our worship.

Institutions of worship under the gospel, as under the law, are replete with truth. For not ignorant, senseless devotion, but rational intelligent worship is their end. But the glory of gospel as compared with Mosaic institutions is, that in them "we behold with open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord." The risen Sun of Righteousness has scattered with his healing beams the mists and fogs that hung like a veil between the church and the object of her worship, and turned the twilight of morning into the brightness and splendor of clear noon-day. The use of any part of that obsolete system, either as a part or an accompaniment of worship, can only be regarded as a hindrance out of character and keeping with the new state and order of things. It is like closing up the windows and lighting candles at noonday. The law as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ was dismissed when the Master himself came in person. Instead of the old tutors and governors once so useful and necessary, he has put us under the immediate tuition of the Holy Spirit himself. And with the gospel as our text-book, and the Holy Spirit as our indwelling and abiding teacher, the method of instruction has entirely changed. What was prophecy is now

history. What had no being except in the purpose and promise of God, is become matter of fact. The representation of things not yet existent, which was necessarily by emblems and types selected from things existent, has given place to representations that are necessarily historic, and to signs and emblems that are designed to help the attention and memory rather than the understanding and imagination. They are, therefore, both simpler and plainer. What had to be told in dark sayings and pictured out in similitudes that even an angel could not clearly see into, can now be told in words so plain and simple that even a child can grasp their meaning. The great facts contained in the four times repeated story of the gospel contain the truth which is the life-principle and soul of all true worship; and their exposition and proclamation by preaching has taken the place of that entire system of types and emblems, and swept them all out of the worship of God. They were beautiful, indeed, as everything that God makes and does is beautiful in its season; and truthful as they were beautiful—veritable copies of the heavenly things of which they were the patterns. Beautiful and instructive they are still; but as forms or accompaniments of worship they are all obsolete. The Holy Spirit has hung them up in the gallery of Holy Scripture, to be useful to the end of time, in the exposition of the gospel. Their former place and office is superseded by the plain preaching of the word, in connection with such simple forms and rites as Christ has instituted to illustrate and commemorate the finished character of the work of redemption.

2. The full and clear discovery which has thus been made of the nature and personality of the true God to whom as the Father our worship is rendered through the Son, by the Spirit, has clearly manifested the true nature of that worship as a purely spiritual and heavenly exercise, and given to its forms and accompaniments a simplicity that accords with the spirituality of the worship itself. God's revelations of himself to men since the fall have been gradual and progressive in their character, and the forms and institutions of his worship have varied accordingly. When it seemed necessary in the wisdom of God to choose for himself a visible dwelling-place on earth, to which all true worshippers should be required to bring their offerings

and direct their prayers, and to represent himself and the habitation of his glory and the way into his presence, by material forms and appearances, a ceremonial and ritual of worship was also necessary which would correspond with this material and local representation of himself. These earthly signs and symbols, however, necessarily veiled even what they revealed of God as the object of worship, and especially in the spirituality, immensity and infinity of his being, and his wonderful three-fold personality. The ritual of worship which was thereby rendered necessary, while it was so ordered as at the same time to instruct and be helpful to the spirit, and discipline, and chasten, not please and gratify the flesh, nevertheless gave a prominence to the body in worship that rendered it impossible for any but the spiritually enlightened and renewed to realize the true spiritual nature of the worship. But since the Only Begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father has declared him, God's revelation of himself is complete. When the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, the humanity of Jesus Christ became henceforward the only residence of the Shekinah. When he who was the "brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, became God manifest in the flesh," all other pictures and representations of God, though once divinely appointed, became henceforth idolatrous and forbidden. The holy of holies for us is the place where Jesus appears in the presence of God for us, and our ritual of worship the simple forms prescribed by him, who is the Son over his own house, to take the place of the entire temple ceremonial. And it is made for the soul, not for the body. He has put the whole business of worship, as it is conducted here on earth, in charge of the Holy Ghost, who has come personally and assumed the charge of both it and the worshipers. He only has power to make and consecrate temples of worship, and his only temples of worship on earth are human bodies, which are used as the medium and instrument of the worship of sanctified souls. He is the only painter and sculptor who has the right or power to ornament and adorn the worship of God, and his work is altogether in the hidden man of the heart. The only prayers that pass through the hand of our Advocate with the Father are those he has made and they are all "unwrought." He is now

the Chief Musician and Master of Song, and the only songs that are authorized are those he has himself inspired—the only music whose melody is heard in heaven, the place of our worship, is that which is made under his training and by his gifts and graces, and it is the melody of the heart.

Jesus has withdrawn even himself from the scope of our bodily senses, in so far as he was once seen, looked upon with the eyes and handled by the hands of men, he is no longer with us here. We shall know him after the flesh as once he was known no more. The sight and touch of faith are all that is possible to us while in the body, and that is to be attained through the influence of the Spirit. Jesus has purposely, as more expedient for us, put himself out of the reach of all our bodily senses until these bodies are spiritualized as well as sanctified, that they may not come between the soul and the object of its faith and love in true worship. He has thus left neither reason nor excuse for anything in worship that is not needed as a help to faith, and put there by Christ himself. Having removed every legal and moral barrier out of the way of our access to God, he swept away also every material and earthly obstruction to faith as well. No temple built by human hands, no material altar, no human priest with sacred robes, is permitted to interpose between us and the Father in worship. Not in our bodies, but with our spirits, we draw near to God in heaven itself, and of forms and ceremonies for the body only, of worship by sights and sounds, and smells that are earthly in their suggestions and influence, let there be as little as will consist with what is all but being in heaven, and let it be strictly conformed to what God has appointed and made obligatory.

3. The perfection of Gospel institutions of worship consists in no small degree in their adaptation to the needs and work of the church as now organized by her risen Head for the conquest of the world. If, in the words of another, "it is by means of her ordinances of worship that the kingdom of Christ makes its aggressions upon the surrounding and opposing powers of darkness," the excellence of gospel ordinances for this purpose is their simplicity. So long as the plans of infinite wisdom required that the church should be confined to a single family,

which afterward grew into a nation, her separation from the world, and the purity of her worship was secured by giving her worship a peculiarly local and national character, and hedging it around with a multitude of restrictive rites and ceremonies. Her influence was exerted on the world as a witness for the truth, not by going forth and confronting its false worship on its own ground with the true, but by taking her station in the centre of the earth, as then known, and throwing her light over the surrounding darkness and attracting men thereby to come to her. But under the New Testament the church is organized, furnished and equipped for aggression, not for defense simply. She is no longer a stationary but a missionary witness for Christ. The command to true worshipers is no longer to go up to Jerusalem, but "go into all the world." New Testament forms and modes of worship are therefore world-wide and universal in their character. This universality is the result not of their flexibility but of their simplicity. They are so few in number so natural, so entirely within the scope of the faculties common to men, that they are always available for immediate and universal use. They may be fully and acceptably observed in any place on the face of the earth and by people of every nationality, in every class of life, and of every variety of natural gifts and parts. The only requisite to their acceptable performance is the gifts and grace of the Holy Spirit. The church's separation from the world is now secured by the spiritual and heavenly character of her worship, and the purity of her worship by its absolute simplicity. Besides the living teacher furnished with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the church needs no other furniture or equipment for the complete worship of God as Christ has instituted it, save the now finished Bible and Psalm book which he has put into her hands. The Holy-Spirit finds and consecrate temples wherever there are human bodies with souls in the image of God. The prayer book consists of intercessions within us, (unwrought prayers,) with groanings that cannot be uttered. The Bible and Psalm book are translated into the tongue of every people on earth. The only instrument of music that was ever used with Divine approval in connection with the worship of God that has survived the destruction of the temple on Mount Moriah, is the human voice. He who

anointed David to be the sweet Psalmist of Israel, is here himself in person. Instead of David's material harp, which like the fingers that touched its strings is long since turned to dust, we have these deathless songs which the spirit of the Lord breathed somehow through David's harp and tongue to charm with the sweetness of their heavenly strains the hearts of God's people to the end of time. With *this* harp in our hands, *these* songs in our mouths, and the Holy Spirit breathing in our souls, we need no help from any modern substitute for either David's inspired psalms or instruments, to make with our heart what will be indeed "melody to the Lord."

And now, what is the bearing of these as it seems to me, scriptural principles, on the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, according to the latest phase of the question, namely, as a "help to vocal praise?" I desire to say nothing derogatory of the just respect that is due to the deliverances of the highest court of the church of which we are members, and it is with much diffidence that I venture to express myself publicly in dissent from, or disapproval of the judgment of brethren whom I acknowledge to be in every way entitled to my highest regard and Christian love. But our common Master in heaven has forbidden us to "call any man" which includes any member or body of men "master on earth." And it is sometimes proper and dutiful, according to the Scripture, for the church's children to "plead with their mother," I take the liberty therefore to say :

1. That according to the principles I have stated instrumental music cannot be considered as a help to vocal praise, as that is a part of our New Testament worship. For what is the exercise of praise as it is a part of the church's now perfected ritual of worship? In other words, what should it be? what will it be when it is as nearly a purely spiritual and heavenly exercise as it is possible for it to be this side of heaven? What are the outward forms and accompaniments which will most perfectly harmonize with that which is its great end—to magnify God—to be the medium through which the soul may give expression to its sense of his greatness and glory, and lead other souls to magnify him, while at the same time it enters

into communion with him and puts forth all its powers in his praise? It must be vocal we know, for praise that is only felt, not expressed, is not praise in its perfection. And the only possible expression for human praise is in words. Articulate sounds by the human voice is man's glory and is intended chiefly for this purpose. And I do not know that there is anything even in the heavenly state that will preclude their use. Neither does the New Testament perfection forbid that the sounds shall be musical as well as articulate. The Saviour sang. Singing psalms is a New Testament ordinance. But are we not warranted in saying that vocal praise in its New Testament simplicity is praise that is purely the expression of the soul when under the direction and influence of the Spirit of God? It is praise expressed as only the human voice, and nothing else under the sun can express it; that is "praise with the spirit and with the understanding also." It is praise rendered in forms and words of the spirit's own make by an organ which has in it a living soul possessed and actuated by that spirit himself. It is praise the excellence and perfection of whose expression is that it is in sounds that are both intelligent and intelligible, that contain and convey the purposes and feelings of an enlightened and sanctified soul. Musical they may be since the human voice is musical, and since God has made the organs of speech and of music in the human body the same, and since he has so ordained. But it is praise the excellence and perfection of whose music is not that by its artistic beauty it captivates and charms the senses, but rather that by its simplicity and freedom from human art, it is in unison with God's infinite greatness in whose praise it is used—with the simple grandeur and solemnity of the words with which the Holy Spirit has furnished the soul with a suitable expression of its praise, and (that it) does not interfere with that melody of the heart which is God's delight. The one thing in praise wherein more than in any other part of it, it is liable to degenerate into a mere artistic performance, in which men without a spark of grace or of the Spirit of God, may excel, and the gift for which may be entirely wanting in those who nevertheless may be "full of the Holy Ghost," is the music. It is therefore the thing of least consideration in the whole service except to prevent it from having undue prominence.

Since the Spirit of God makes so little account of it in the perfected arrangements for our worship, and since the simpler it is, and the better adapted to universal use, the better it is, for what purpose do we need aid or accompaniment other than to keep it in its proper, that is, subordinate place? For what after all is the purpose intended to be subserved by music in connection with vocal praise? Is it that by that means our praise may be rendered in a manner more acceptable to God? Surely not. To imagine such a thing is to entertain ideas of God not less gross than those condemned in the 50th Psalm. It is to "think that God is altogether like ourselves," and likes what we like. Wherein was the worshiper of the olden time who acted as if he thought that God could make a feast on "bull meat and goat's blood," which a little money could procure and a little skill and art could dress into a very palatable dish, and who preferred that sort of worship to the more spiritual, but much harder work of "thanksgiving and paying of vows" that never has been and never will be a popular sort of worship, one whit less gross and absurd in his ideas than the modern worshiper who flatters himself that with a little expense of money and the help of some skill and art in another direction, he can worship God and gratify the flesh at the same time? Or is the purpose of music its effect on ourselves? Is it for the purpose of producing and exciting emotions and feelings, which are either in themselves worship or put us in a better frame for worshiping? What then is the nature of the emotions to which musical sounds, considered simply as such, give birth? Are they anything else than animal feelings, the natural effects of the sensations produced by vibrated matter on a sensitive organism? Essentially different from the supernatural effects of truth accompanied with the influences of the spirit on the soul. What relations have they to the outgoings of the understanding, will and affections of a human soul in its communion with God? Wherein was he a bigger fool who thought he was providing for his soul by laying up goods in his barns, than he who imagines that his soul can appropriate and use in its worship of God what is as purely material and bodily in its effects as the food he eats? What purpose then does music serve in the praise of God? With all deference to the

judgment of my brethren, I answer that it seems to me its use in worship will be found to be included mainly in these two things: 1st. To be a help in directing and fixing attention to the words by which only we give vocal expression to our praise of God. And 2d. To enable a number of worshipers in social and public worship the better to unite their voices, and by that means give outward expression to that unity and harmony of soul which under the influence of the Spirit of God and in the exercise of his grace is the true beauty and glory of public worship. With the help of music an assembly of worshipers can more easily and harmoniously blend their voices into one and thus "with one mouth" as "with one mind glorify God." In as far as these purposes are concerned, I submit that an instrument is a hindrance rather than a help.

2. Allow me to say further that the declaration of the highest court of the church, as the judgment of the church, that the use of instrumental music in the worship of God is to be considered henceforth a matter so trifling as to be unworthy the serious consideration of sober-thinking people—of no more importance in fact than the use of a tuning-fork—is certainly an entire change in our position as a church on this subject. This was not the position of the church on this subject in the time of David. This was not the position taken by the Reformers and heretofore held by us on this subject. This new departure cannot be claimed as a "going on to perfection," in the apostolic sense of that word in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We may safely say that it is not in the direction of reform in worship as that was begun by the Reformers themselves. This is not putting us farther away from, but turning back towards, Rome. If it is not actually coming down to the world's level in its ideas about the worship of God, it is at least looking in that direction. For whence comes the demand for this change in our mode of praising God, and the new light which with it has dawned upon the church? Did it originate in the desire and purpose to bring our worship more fully up to the Scripture standard of simplicity and purity, at which our fathers aimed, than they were able to do? Or did it not rather have its origin in the desire to have our worship conformed to the society standard of taste and culture, so called, in music? And what,

let me ask, are the characteristic tendencies of taste and fashion in modern society? Thoughtful men, "having understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," are everywhere deploring the materialistic tendencies of our times, not in religion only, but in science, art, literature, everything in fact. But the truth is, that the world, the world I mean in our Saviour's sense, the world has always been materialistic. The nations of the world are no more eagerly to-day than in our Saviour's day "seeking what they shall eat and what they shall drink"—pursuing after bodily gratification in some form. Now, as in the apostle John's time, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life," sum up the world's aspirations and pursuits. The only difference between one age and another is in the comparative success or failure of the church in her efforts to overcome these tendencies. For that is the great end of her organization. He who conquered the world by the cross on which it crucified him, organized, furnished and equipped his church in her worship, as in all her other appointments, in express and designed antagonism to all the world's ideas and tastes. And *his* command is not to conform to the world, but to *overcome* the world. The world's materialism is to be met with a spirituality and simplicity in worship which is in all respects its opposite. Not by music or any other accompaniment of our worship that will commend it to the world's taste, do we overcome the world. "*This is the rule that overcometh the world even our faith.*" And it is well for us to remember that the world does not applaud those by whom it is overcome. We cannot expect to win its "well done" and the Master's too.

3. Once more: this innovation will only add another to the already too numerous "offenses" that mar the fellowship and retard the visible manifestation of the real unity that exists among the true followers of Christ. For while it heals no division that already exists, it makes division where there was none before. It only brings us into nearer accord in worship with other and larger denominations of Christians in so far as it is an evidence that our entire position on the subject of God's praise is a false one and should be abandoned, while its effect will be to cloud and hide from view the unity on this subject that really exists among ourselves as a denomination—putting in apparent

antagonism those who are in reality, as well as by profession, one. Our General Assembly, by placing instruments of music among the things that are entirely outside of the worship, has shown that we are really about one as to the position they ought to occupy; and if a simple act of Assembly could only put them there and keep them there, I for one could cheerfully acquiesce and await the result. But having been always heretofore considered, both by those who used and by those who forbade their use, as being the same relation to the worship that vocal music does, it is not to be expected that if used at all they will hereafter be regarded in any different light.

The existence of sects and denominations in the Church of Christ, our own among the rest, while it may be necessary in the same sense in which the apostle affirms that heresies are, is nevertheless an evil to be deplored. The justification for our own existence is to be found in the scriptural simplicity of worship, as much perhaps as in any other one thing. That indeed is our crown of glory as a church. With special emphasis comes to us, as it seems to me, at this time the watch-word of the Spirit to the churches, "HOLD THAT FAST WHICH THOU HAST, THAT NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN."

Resolved, "That the use of instrumental music, either as a part or an accompaniment of the worship of God, is inconsistent with that simplicity which is the peculiar excellence and glory of the New Testament worship, and the maintenance of which has been the glory of the United Presbyterian Church."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.



INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC

NOT AN

INCIDENT OF WORSHIP.

BY REV. JAS. HARPER, D. D.

THE OCCASION OF THIS DISCUSSION.

At its meeting this year (1883) the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America saw fit in the face of strenuous remonstrance, to decide that the use of instrumental music is a mere incident, which, according to option, may or may not be conjoined with singing in divine worship, and that it is one of those circumstances in relation to worship which do not require any specific appointment by God, but are left to be regulated by human taste and sense of propriety.

Against this decision, a protest, numerously signed, was entered and it was placed among the official records of the Assembly. In support of that protest and of others of a kindred nature offered at the previous meeting of the Assembly, and with the desire and hope of rendering them effective and of vindicating what we believe to be the true constitutional position of our church in regard to the matter in dispute, we are at this time convened.

To the charge that we who persevere in combating the policy and principles lately espoused by the Assembly, are factious troublers of Zion, our reply may be, that one of the declarations of our Confession is that synods and councils may err; that it is our settled conviction, that in more particulars than one, our General Assembly has seriously erred in its treatment of the question of instrumental music; that we claim it as our right, and deem it our duty as well, to labor by pen and tongue to convince those who abet the Assembly's action that they are mistaken, and

that the responsibility for the agitation so much to be deplored must rest upon those who have persistently striven to induce the church to repudiate a principle which it not only had received by a venerable tradition but also had deliberately adopted, and who, moreover, have now confessed that, in their view, the matter about which they have made such stir is only an incident so insignificant as to need no Divine appointment, and to be used or dispensed with at pleasure.

THE STATE OF THE QUESTION.

Although the attitude assumed by the General Assembly in regard to instrumental music in worship has already, in general terms, been indicated, it is advisable to revert to that point and treat it somewhat more fully.

First, then, the Assembly professes continued adherence to the principle which pervades all our standards, that the only acceptable way of worshipping God is that which he has himself appointed.

Second. It repudiates the view for which so many among us so stoutly contended not long ago, that instrumental music has been appointed by God as an ordinance to be observed in his worship under the present dispensation, and denies that it is an ordinance, or any part of an ordinance of New Testament worship.

Third. It is clearly enough, though somewhat circuitously, declared that instrumental music may lawfully be used in worship now.

Fourth. The apparent contradiction between the last position and the two previously stated, the Assembly tries to evade by asserting that the use of instrumental music is a mere incidental matter belonging to the same category with the use of a tuning fork, of particular tunes, and of musical notes.

The problem which the Assembly sought to solve was this: Unable, however willing, to prove that instrumental music in worship is now of Divine appointment and being bent on opening the way for its use in our religious services, how can we pronounce its use lawful without palpably trampling on the

doctrine of our standards that every part of our worship must be of Divine appointment? The happy solution which presented itself and was adopted is this: That instrumental music is not an ordinance of worship, and no part of one, but merely an incident, or circumstance about worship, and having no necessary or prescribed connection with it.

Thus labeled as an "incident," not an ordinance, instrumental music, it seems to have been presumed, could more easily be smuggled into our church.

In its deliverance on this subject, the Assembly uses language vague enough to allow room for many things commonly regarded thus far with disfavor among us.

Thus it says, "Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for example, must be observed by the exclusive use of the elements appointed for each. But there may be mere incidents of an ordinance or helps to its observance, no part of the ordinance itself, which are not placed under such restriction." Again it says, "Now the question is to which of these classes does instrumental music belong, the essentials or the incidentals of worship?" Then it proceeds to show that instrumental music belongs to the class of "incidentals" which need no appointment in order to be legitimately used in worship.

Does the Assembly then teach that provided water be used in baptism, and bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, it is a matter of no importance, or an incidental matter, how these ordinances are observed? If so, it is immaterial, a mere matter of taste and option, whether baptism is performed by sprinkling or by dipping, and whether the Lord's Supper is received in a sitting or in a kneeling posture.

The truth is that there are two classes of "incidentals," between which the Assembly failed to make any distinction, namely, such as are necessary to the *full* and *regular* observance of an ordinance, but not to its *validity*; and such as do not affect either the validity or the completeness and regularity of an ordinance. In other words, there are some things which, though appointed by God and of intrinsic importance, do not so belong to the essence of an ordinance that their absence

renders it utterly invalid. One born blind may still be reckoned a human being though he lacks what belongs to human beings in their normal and complete condition; and one who has lost a hand or arm and who is the victim, moreover, of disease, does not for these reasons cease to be a human being. In like manner we recognize as substantially valid baptism and ordination as performed by many denominations against whose forms of baptism and ordination we earnestly testify. Baptism by dipping or with the sign of the cross is valid but not regular. Ordination by a Protestant diocesan bishop, though not regular, that is in strict accord with the law of God's house, we concede to be valid. There may be defects or additions in the administration of an ordinance which do not so far vitiate it as to render it null and void, and yet against these irregularities of administration we may and should most resolutely witness as being mutilations or corruptions of divinely prescribed ordinances. Now in the sense indicated, instrumental music in worship is incidental, for we do not hold that its combination with vocal music renders the worship utterly void; yet we protest against its use as an unwarrantable element or adjunct, and, on that account, a corruption of the worship.

But there is another class of "incidentals," the right to use which is implied in the right to perform a certain act or service, which therefore need no specific appointment, being naturally warranted by the obligation, or the right to do a certain thing. For instance, if we are told to sing in worship, we must, if we would act rationally, or to edification, use some tune, or some style of singing; if we are directed to meet for worship, we must have some mutually understood time and place of meeting; if we are to take up a collection as a part of our worship, we must make some arrangement conducive to the end in view.

Manifestly the Assembly has ranked instrumental music in worship in this latter class of incidents, or circumstances, but by failing to discriminate between this and the other class of incidents which we have pointed out, it has given to its position an air of reasonableness which does not properly belong

to it. The question, then, which we are to treat is this: Can instrumental music be lawfully used in worship without divine appointment? or, Is instrumental music in such a sense an incident that, though not appointed by God, it may warrantably be used in his worship?

Let it be understood that in the sequel, we shall use the word, incident, in the sense attached to it by the General Assembly.

REFUTATION OF THE "INCIDENTAL" THEORY.

It may be proper to suggest at the outset of our strictures on the "incidental" doctrine that there is some difficulty in arguing upon it, for the reason that if one do not almost instinctively perceive that instrumental music, when used in worship, is an integral part of that worship, so far as form is concerned, arguments to prove it to be so are very likely to prove unavailing. Should any one demur to the proposition that one and one added together are equal to two, all you could rationally do to convince him of the truth of the proposition, would be simply to explain the terms used in it, and appeal to his common sense, or intuitive perceptions. In like manner, he who, after listening to worship rendered with an instrumental appliance, does not grant that the music of the instrument forms a part of the service, will probably be slow to feel the force of any arguments used to establish that point. Still there are arguments which appear to us sufficiently cogent to confirm the impression which would most naturally be made on the mind of a hearer, that instrumental music employed in worship is a real part of the worship with which it is blended.

I. There lies against the "incidental" doctrine a presumptive argument derivable from history.

1. If instrumental music is a mere incident to be used at option in worship, surely the church in the apostolic age and that which succeeded it, extending onward in our era for some centuries, would have had some knowledge of this fact. It would be most singular if the apostles, in their intercourse with the churches, should never have given a hint of the liberty enjoyed under the New dispensation, as is now alleged, to employ

or to refrain from employing, according to pleasure, the tones of a harp, or of other musical instruments. Did they never in their travels encounter a community so cultured or so rude as not to crave or need instrumental help? Among the people to whom in the first three centuries of our era, the gospel was carried, instrumental music was very prevalent, as any one familiar with the Greek and Latin classics must know. Can it be that in no place where the church was established under apostolic supervision, the liberty was taken, which according to the "incidental" theory existed, of resorting to instrumental aid in worship? or, that no hint was given by the apostles that the use of instrumental music was lawful, and might be helpful in worship? And if no such hint was given, and no such liberty used, the wonder increases when we consider that the Jews had used, at least in their temple worship, the music of instruments, and that the Pagan Gentiles, no less than they had been accustomed to it in their religious rites. Moreover, in the "Hymnal" of the apostolic church, that is the inspired Book of Psalms, frequent mention is made of musical instruments and of the duty of using them, a circumstance which might have suggested even to the dullest minds the question whether or not it was not proper and even a duty to use instrumental music in the services of the New Testament Church? This was no subtle question of doctrine which might occur only to acute and inquisitive minds, but one which lay on the very surface, and likely in the circumstances to obtrude itself on almost every mind. Besides, had not the apostles, writing by inspiration, employed in different instances the verb, *Psallo*, to indicate the ordinance of rendering praise to God? And however that word may have lost its earlier meaning, it could hardly fail to suggest to the Greek-speaking people that earlier meaning, which was to play on a stringed instrument. Would it not be most unaccountable, if, indeed, the apostles held the "incident" theory, that they should never have met or made an occasion on which, either by word or deed, they might suggest to the church the glorious liberty into which it had been brought, that of using instrumental music in its worship, or of refraining from the use of it? If any such suggestion had been given by any of the apostles, we may be sure from all we

know of the tendencies of human nature, and of its workings in the church, even of the first century, and still more of the following centuries, that the hint would not have been forgotten, and the liberty to which it pointed been unused.

Yet we may fearlessly defy any man to prove that in the New Testament church for some centuries after its organization, instrumental music was ever used in worship. Not only this, but in the writings of the Christian Fathers who flourished in the age referred to, we have overwhelming evidence that in their time the practice of using musical instruments in the formal worship of God had no existence, and was deemed utterly inadmissible in the Christian church. Even Dr. Killen, whom I venerate as one at whose feet I sat in the study of church history, but whose recent departure from his earlier views, I deplore, is forced, with manifest reluctance, to admit that the early Christians never used in the proper worship of God the help of musical instruments.

Let no one bury his head in the sand, as does Dr. Killen, in the latest edition of his work, "The Ancient Church," and try to evade the force of our argument by saying that the Christians of those times were either too poor to equip themselves with instruments for use in worship, or too much afraid to use them because of persecutors, or too much dejected in spirit to have any heart to employ them; for very inexpensive instruments were procurable then, and in many instances the Christians were wealthy, while they were not afraid to sing so loud as to be easily heard by enemies and to confess Christ in the very face of death, and that with "a joy unspeakable and full of glory." Nay more, the use of instrumental music would have tended to avert the suspicion and ill-will of their heathen neighbors, who were wont to reproach them as "atheists," and therefore dangerous members of society, because, forsooth, they had no temple, no altar, no sacrifice, and no splendid ritual.

The "incidental" theory as to instrumental music, we feel confident found no place for at least several centuries in the church of Christ after its New Testament organization, and on this ground in part we contend that the theory in question is wrong.

2. A second item of the presumptive argument to be drawn from history is this, that the "incidental" theory is of modern origin, or at least only of late years has obtained any prominence. In days long past there were discussions, keen and learned, as to the propriety of using instrumental music in worship, but the advocates of that practice were wont to plead either that it was prescribed, or that it was clearly commended in Scripture, or that the church was vested with authority to decree rites and ceremonies not expressly forbidden in Scripture, and might therefore employ as an aid or embellishment of its worship instrumental music. Even so late as the time of Dr. Candlish, of Edinburgh, whose life was bounded by the years 1807 and 1873, the notion that instrumental music is an incident on a par with a tuning fork, though it had been mooted, was deemed so crude and absurd that, acute thinker as he was, he declared that the man who seriously propounded such a view was not fit to be reasoned with.

It is a noteworthy circumstance also that in the stricter churches, as for instance in our own and in the Presbyterian Churches of Great Britain and Ireland, recourse is had to the "incidental" theory only after the attempt has been made, but without success, to prove that the Bible either enjoins or favors the use of instruments of music in worship during the present dispensation. The wish to have the so-called liberty to use instruments of music being met by the argument which the Bible yields against the practice, and moreover being confronted with the law of worship as formulated in the Westminster Confession of Faith, it was deemed expedient to make a flank movement, and try to secure the admission of this music under the plea that it is only an incident. The fact that this doctrine is of comparatively recent origin, forms in itself no adequate argument against it; but the fact that it seems an after-thought, resorted to only in a strait and in order to gratify a desire which has become almost ungovernable, does beget in us the suspicion that the theory in question is born rather of the passion for music, which has sprung up, than of reason, or of the study of the Bible.

II. A second argument against the "incidental" theory is this, that in the only case known to us in which instrumental music was

certainly used in worship with divine approval, it was prescribed by God himself and formed a constituent element of the worship rendered to him, an adjunct, it is true, of the vocal music, yet as distinctly appointed as the vocal music itself, not a mere optional incident, the use or the omission of which was to be regulated by mere human discretion. This fact, which we may assume to be such, should make us cautious about accepting the theory that instrumental music has now fallen to the grade of a mere petty circumstance to be admitted or rejected according to the dictate of human taste or prudence. Where has God signified it as his will that what he once legislated about so particularly may now, under the character of an incident, be employed or omitted in worship according to the capricious taste and erring judgment of worshipers? What authority is there for placing now in the list of trifling incidents that which God himself once prescribed as an element of his worship? Has this music so changed its nature in the lapse of time that, though formerly by divine authority a part of the service of praise, it is now but an incident, subject to the direction of human prudence, or even of the whim of fashion?

III. A third objection to the "incidental" theory is, that carried out logically it would involve the admission of appliances and arrangements which even its advocates might regard with repugnance. The argument amounts to this, that the plea for instrumental music as an incident would prove too much for those who advance it, at least if they are disposed to steer within the limits of the Westminster standards. Instrumental music, it is claimed, may be used in worship, if not, indeed, positively required, because it is, or may be, a help to the observance of the ordinance of praise. Now might not the same plea be as valid for the use of a prayer-book, as for the use of musical instruments in worship? Some think that a prayer-book, not only may be used, but even should be used, conducing so greatly, as they judge, it would to the rounded and decorous observance of the ordinance at least of *public* prayer. Such persons might urge that the use of a prayer-book is only an incident which needs no divine appointment, and that its manifest utility as a guide and aid in prayer, should, in these circumstances, secure for it a place in many, if not all, pulpits and congregations. If instrumental music is allowed on the plea of being a help in praise, why deny the right to use

use a prayer-book as a help to prayer? Our assembly might not at present be prepared to admit that a prayer-book is a help in prayer, and on this ground might refuse to sanction, or permit, its use; but might it not be that in the Assembly of 1890, the party of progress, having tasted the sweets of license in regard to music, would propose to license a prayer-book also, and succeed in carrying a vote in the assembly in favor of the doctrine that a prayer-book is a mere incident, which ministers and others who consider it helpful are at liberty to use? If an assembly, without an overture on the subject, could determine, in the face of great resistance, that instrumental music is an incident of worship and a help to it, why might not an Assembly pronounce a prayer-book to be an incident of worship and helpful in it? And in favor of such action, it might be urged that a prayer-book much less obviously connects itself with the service of prayer, than instrumental music does with that of praise.

Why also might not dancing as a help to the excitement and expression of religious fervor receive sanction as an incident and a help?

Why, too, might not the observance of Christmas and Easter, now coming ominously into fashion in denominations formerly hostile to the recognition of such festivals, be legalized by some future Assembly under cover of the "incidental" doctrine?

Nay, what is there to prevent, according to the drift of the Assembly's action, the employment among us, publicly and privately, of the sign of the cross, of crucifixes and of pictures as aids to devotion? If any one should be so unenlightened as to demur to the use of these alleged auxiliaries to devotion on the ground that God never appointed them as such, he may at once be silenced by the "incidental" talisman. Let these appliances be forthwith pronounced mere incidents helpful to piety, especially to prayer, and at once they may take rank among us as allowable, if not highly commendable, expedients. And judging by the past we may hazard the prediction that many a one who now, in relation to the changes suggested, would be disposed to ask incredulously and indignantly, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" might in the drift of events be found willing to grant license to those forms of will-worship, if a movement for them should arise.

IV. For a fourth and final argument against the "incidental" theory we may appeal to the common sense of men.

It is an essential feature of the Assembly's theory that instrumental music is no part of the service of worship with which it may be connected, that it is no ordinance and no part of an ordinance. As the Assembly shrank from the task of proving that God has appointed the use of instrumental music in the worship of the New Testament Church, and as it professed continued adherence to the principle that every lawful form or part of worship must have divine appointment, it was logically compelled, when it would declare it admissible, to deny that instrumental music is any part of worship. Now to this denial we oppose the argument of common sense, alleging that instrumental music when used with vocal song, and blending with it, forms an integral part of the entire offering made to God in the way of praise.

In developing this argument it may be best to allow our thoughts to pursue the track suggested by an interpretation and application, much relished by some, of a certain clause in the Westminster Confession of Faith. In that calm and weighty formulary, (Chap. II. Sec. 6,) occur these words: "There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed."

Now it is claimed that instrumental music is a circumstance such as the words quoted describe, and therefore that it may be used in worship without any violation of the Confession.

The question then arises, What is the general nature of those circumstances to which the Confession in the clause quoted refers? In determining this point some stress is to be laid on the proof-texts cited in support of the sentiments expressed in the clause. The texts adduced are *I. Cor.* 11: 13, 14, "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him;" and *I. Cor.* 14: 26, "How is it then, brethren, when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a

revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done to edifying;" v. 40, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Now these texts simply indicate that in the matter of dress or costume, and the wearing of the hair, the common decencies or conventional proprieties of life and that the order requisite for the appropriate transaction of business by any ordinary society be observed by Christians in their assemblies. If applied to the matter of music in worship, they merely teach that that part of the service should be performed in a becoming manner, but they do not warrant the addition of instrumental music to vocal music, if vocal music alone has been appointed by God, unless the position be taken that music of a suitable sort for worship, public and private, cannot be produced by the human voice unaided by an instrument. But neither nature, nor experience, nor Scripture gives any countenance to such a position. There is no text, be it observed, quoted by the authors of the Confession to show that in the rendering of praise to God, musical instruments, as mere circumstances, might be employed. If it were proved, indeed, that such instruments either should or might be used in worship, then the proof texts actually quoted would enforce the duty of using the instruments in an edifying way.

Notice how cautiously the clause in the Confession is worded. Instead of the phrase "circumstances of worship," which might be understood to mean things involved in, or blended with, the worship, the language used is, "circumstances concerning worship." The "circumstances," moreover, are explained to be "such as are common to human actions and societies," that is such as are implied in the right to do a certain thing, or in the right of a lawful society to operate for the proper ends of its organization.

Now it seems clear that, so far as regards worship, the "circumstances" contemplated in this clause of the Confession are distinguishable by these two marks, namely:

1. They are only circumstances *concerning* worship, not elements or parts of it.
2. They are circumstances so naturally implied in the acts of worship to which they pertain as not to need a distinct or separate appointment.

If instrumental music in worship is to be admitted under the shield of this clause, it must be a circumstance of the sort now *indicated*. Let us apply the tests just specified and see the results. First. Is instrumental music, when employed in connection with worship, any part or element of the worship? or is it a mere circumstance concerning it? So far from forming no part or ingredient of the worship, instrumental music, when used, is always an obvious, and in most cases an obtrusive and dominant element of it. We may venture to say that no man, unwarped by theory or the desire to gratify a taste, would form any other judgment. So far as the external service is concerned, the combined volume of music, instrumental and vocal, married to certain words, is the offering which, in the case supposed, the worshiper presents to God. Unlike the preparatory use of a tuning fork, or the silent, unnoticeable use of musical notation, the instrumental music audibly pervades from beginning to end the service in which it is employed, and as really as the vocal, with which it unites, is to be deemed a part of the service. To any who can be present in a worshipping assembly where instruments are brought into use, and not *feel* the truth of our position, it is difficult to carry conviction by any process of reasoning, just as it is difficult if not absurd, to reason with any one who stoutly repudiates the evidence of his senses as to the existence of an external world. Is not the use of the voice in praising God a form or mode of worship? And is not instrumental music, when used in combination with vocal music, a form of worship also, or a mode of expressing homage to God? Why should the one be called a form or mode of worship, and the other not? If a stranger to our religion were to enter a church while the service of praise in vocal and instrumental music was in progress, would he not inevitably conclude that it is a part of our religion to play to God as well as sing to him? Then, when to all this is added the consideration, that music of an instrumental sort was once appointed by God as a substantive part of the forms to be employed in his worship, the conviction is forced upon us that such music, if used now, constitutes a mode or form in which men express to God their praises. But if this music is a part or element of the worship, it is not one of the circumstances contemplated in the clause under which instrumentalists take shelter, and cannot be allowed under cover of that clause.

Second. Having applied the first test and found that instrumental music cannot be classed among the circumstances concerning worship, let us proceed to the application of the second test. Is the right to use instrumental music so naturally and clearly implied in the command of God to praise him with the voice in song, that an intimation that we are at liberty to use instruments in the exercise of praise was needless? Does the direction to praise God with the voice in song carry in it beyond reasonable doubt permission to add instrumental to vocal music in that service?

Here let it be noted that the law of worship, as it is formulated in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, is, that everything is to be excluded from the worship of God except that which he has appointed. Hence we ought not to offer to him a service as to the divine appointment of which we are in doubt. In this point of view "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Even Cicero, though a heathen, felt the force of this principle, for he wrote thus: "*Bene praeceptum qui vetant quidquam agere, quod dubites aequum sit an iniquum,*" that is, They teach well who forbid you to do anything about which you are in doubt, whether it be right or wrong. Now is it so clear that the command to sing and especially to sing in solemn worship, bears wrapped up in it permission to supplement the vocal, with instrumental music, that there can be no just doubt as to our liberty to do so? Is the right to make this addition so clear that no warrant to do so is needed beyond the mere command to sing? We think not.

The command to Moses to make two silver trumpets authorized him to take such steps as were needful, according to human custom and discretion, to produce those instruments, but it did not authorize him to prepare any other instruments to be joined with these as helps or adjuncts. Why then should the command to sing be counted a warrant to annex playing to singing? Can singing not be performed appropriately without instrumental aid or accompaniment? Doubtless it can.

On the night of his betrayal, the Saviour and his disciples sang a hymn, but without instrumental aid; and what he did or countenanced, was right. Should it be said that men often

sing badly, it may be replied that men often play on instruments badly, and sing badly besides, even when led by instruments of music. We conclude that the right to use instrumental music is not naturally implied in the precept to sing the praise of God, and hence, according to this second test, instrumental music is not one of the circumstances meant in the clause cited from our Confession.

Corroborative of our view touching the import of this clause is the fact that the Church of Scotland, at a time when she was unquestionably hostile to the employment of instrumental music in worship, adopted heartily the Confession of Faith, in which is found the clause on which we have been commenting. That church, moreover, was, at the time when she first adopted this Confession, peculiarly alive to the peril of admitting into worship anything destitute of divine appointment, for she had passed through a long and deadly struggle with prelacy, which aimed at adorning the simple worship of God with sundry devices alleged to be helpful to piety and not prohibited in Scripture. Yet the keen eyes of such men as Alexander Henderson and George Gillespie could detect in the clause under notice, no pretext for the introduction of instrumental music, else, we may be morally sure, they would never have assented to the clause in question, or allowed it to stand unmodified.

A kindred fact lending support to our interpretation of this clause is this, that for more than two hundred years, the Church of Scotland never understood this clause to afford an opening for the introduction of instrumental music into her worship. In the beginning of this century, when that church was far from being strict in her adherence to the most important parts of the Confession, an organ was introduced into one of the congregations of Glasgow, but the matter having been brought before the Presbytery having jurisdiction, that court issued a peremptory order that the use of the organ should cease, as being contrary to the word of God and the constitution of the church; and thus the organ was ignominiously silenced, no appeal even in its behalf being taken, we believe, to any of the superior courts of the church. In the Relief Church, also, which was far from being very stringent in its order and discipline, a similar attempt was, in 1829, made in a certain congregation, with a like result.

So, also, in the Irish Presbyterian Church, this clause was never supposed till recently to be elastic enough to permit, under the character of an incident or circumstance, the use of instrumental music in worship. Nor even yet has that church sanctioned that view. Its General Assembly this year decided simply that it was inexpedient to adopt the course of appointing a commission to deal with certain congregations which contrary to the law of the church were using instruments in worship.

We need hardly say that the position taken by the late Assembly of our church is a novelty in its history. Indeed we are not aware that any church has ever fairly and formally committed itself to the position assumed by our General Assembly. The action of our Assembly does not fairly commit our church to the position in question, for we hold that the Assembly in its action in this case, usurped power denied to it by our constitution. There is thus a strong historical presumption against the interpretation of our Confession which the supporters of the Assembly's doctrine are constrained to give. The interpretation in question seems to be the product of that consuming desire for a sensuous worship, which has invaded our own denomination in common with nearly all others. Against the doctrine that instrumental music, when used in worship, is a mere incident, or "circumstance concerning worship," we appeal from the intoxication of the present hour to a time when the sober common-sense of man shall regain its sway.

Extended as has been this discussion, we cannot close without expressing regret and astonishment that an Assembly like ours, whose members, every one, were solemnly pledged to maintain purity of worship according to the spirit and the letter of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, should, at a single bound, have leaped to the position that instrumental music is only an incident or circumstance which may legitimately be employed in worship or in connection with it, without any appointment by God. Was then the Assembly so sure that this is the right view, and a view consistent with our standards, as to have felt no compunction in removing as far and as fast as it could, obstructions to the employment of instrumental music in our worship? Was the Assembly so sure even that this music *is* a "help" to the singing of the praise of God? Had the Assembly ever seriously investigated

even this secondary problem, that, namely, as to the helpfulness of instrumental music in worship? Certainly it had never asked the mind of the church on this particular point. Instead of rushing to such a conclusion, would it not have been more seemly for the Assembly, and especially in view of the earnest petitions addressed to it, to have pronounced the use of instrumental music in our worship irregular and illicit, until the mind of the church on the question could be legally ascertained? Even if not absolutely required by the provisions of our constitution to take this course, which we are convinced it was, the Assembly would have presented a more dignified, courteous and judicial aspect, had it adopted it. If instrumental music is only, as the Assembly declared, an incident which no one is under obligation to use, why should there have been such haste to open the way for its admission, with the certainty of thereby giving offense to the consciences of many, and at the risk even of rending the church?

But when we thus speak of the Assembly, we have in view only the majority of it; for on its roll were found the names of not a few who manfully withstood the course of the majority and who when worsted in the vote, not in the debate, placed on record a solemn protest with their names affixed. Let us stand by that protest and by the kindred protests offered at the Assembly of 1882, and let us strive to make them effective.

Resolved, "That the incidental theory to which the General Assembly at its late meeting committed itself, touching the relation of instrumental music to worship, is at variance with the teachings of Scripture, and with our subordinate standards."

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.



FORBEARANCE IN LOVE. WHEN APPLICABLE?

BY REV. JAS. P. LYTLE, D. D.

A misapprehension appears to exist in regard to the nature of that "forbearance in love" which the Scriptures enjoin. Many seem to think it a clearly defined and easily recognized duty, in regard to which there need be no mistake or uncertainty. That like the tabernacle made by Moses, or the ark of the covenant, it is just so long and so broad—"a cubit and a half shall be the height thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and two cubits and a half the length thereof." So far from this being true "forbearance," in the scriptural exhibition of it, it is a duty as wide as the world, and as long as the ages, and as varied as the various conditions of individuals, churches and nations. *Eph.* 4 : 1-3. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." *Chap.* 6 : 9, Masters are exhorted to "forbear" threatening against their servants; and *Col.* 3 : 13, it is named with such duties as "putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." God himself is represented (*Rom.* 3 : 25), as exercising a forbearance toward the sins of men for four thousand years, or until his own Son appeared in "the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." If any one will take the trouble to compare the texts of Scripture in which the term forbearance is employed, he will at once see that it is not a specific, clear-cut, well defined duty, but one of the most general and indefinite kind, the nature and limits of which cannot be determined

from the term itself, but must be gathered from its surroundings, and from the general tenor of scripture.

It may be assumed that the design of placing this subject on the programme of this convention, was not to draw forth a discussion of the duty of forbearance in its more general aspects, but rather in its application to the important subject of church fellowship.

There is a "forbearance in love" which professing Christians of different denominations should exercise toward each other, and which their denominations as such should exercise. But the more special subject of inquiry in this discussion is in relation to the forbearance which is required by the law of God to be exercised toward brethren within the same ecclesiastical fold; or to state the question differently, how far may those who are joined with us in the same public profession be permitted to depart from the principles of that profession before we on the one hand, in the exercise of discipline, are justified in excluding them from our fellowship, or on the other, are required to withdraw ourselves from their communion?

It will be apparent therefore, that the subject assigned involves the doctrine of the communion of saints, as stated in the Confession of Faith, chapter 26, and as explained in the 16th article of the Testimony of the United Presbyterian Church. It involves the question of the proper exercise of discipline, and of the lawfulness of separation from corrupt churches. It involves the principles on which the Reformation of the 16th century was founded, and also those on which fathers of the secession withdrew from the National Church of Scotland, as also those on which the union of Associate and Reformed Presbyterians took place in 1782, by which the Associate Reformed Church had her existence, and the propriety of the stand taken by Messrs. Marshall and Clarkson against this union, by which the Associate organization was continued; and it also raises the question of the scripturalness of the union of 1858, in which the United Presbyterian Church had her origin.

Such being the nature and bearings of the subject of "Forbearance in love—when applicable?" it is not to be expected that it can be exhausted in this discussion, and it can scarcely be hoped that any discussion of it will be entirely satisfactory, or that even light can be thrown on a subject so profound and intricate, and

which has exercised, and I think I may say, baffled, the strongest and acutest minds which have undertaken it.

As illustrating the subject under discussion, I might here recite the entire argument and illustration of the 16th article of our Testimony, the design of which is to give the reasons why we cannot join with other professed Christians in the sealing ordinances of grace, or admit them to fellowship with us in these ordinances. And as being somewhat more to the purpose, I might quote entire the chapter from the Testimony of the Associate Church, showing the warrantableness of separation from corrupt churches.

Perhaps nothing better on this difficult and perplexing question has ever been written than is found in "The Discussion on the Unity of the Church," by Dr. McCrie. But after all that is said in these well considered and able productions, it still remains a practical difficulty of the greatest magnitude to know just how and where to apply the principles stated in them; or to know what degree of corruption in a church requires our withdrawal from her fellowship.

Two general theories have been entertained and advocated in relation to the subject of church fellowship: 1. That the whole system of revealed truth is to be embraced and maintained in our Christian profession, and in the standards of the church. Though every part of revealed truth is not of equal importance, yet it is equally divine and of equal authority. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, neither shalt thou diminish from it," *Deut.* 32 : 12. The knowing, willful disregard of any revealed truth is a dishonor to the Author of truth. The neglect of one truth leads to the neglect of others. "He that is unfaithful in that which is least, is unfaithful also in much." All divine truth is necessary to our Christian perfection. "He that findeth me findeth life. . . . He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all that hate me, love death."

2. The second theory of church fellowship is that nothing should be embraced in our profession but what is essential to salvation, or, as it is sometimes stated, fundamental in Christian doctrines. This theory involves the difficulty of knowing and determining what, and what alone, is essential to salvation,

and what, and what alone is fundamental in Christian doctrine. We take no risk in saying that this difficulty is an insuperable one. None but the Omniscient One knows the least amount of truth the knowledge of which will save the soul. To contain any sense at all, this theory must mean the least *possible* amount of truth necessary to salvation. If our profession should happen to contain one grain of truth more than was absolutely necessary to salvation, the principle of church fellowship would be, according to it, violated. It may be sufficient answer to this theory of church fellowship to say that no branch of the church has ever been founded on it; and it is not risking anything to say that none ever will be. The theory is purely visionary, and does not come within the sphere of an actual world.

The other form in which this theory is sometimes stated is scarcely less objectionable, viz: that nothing should be embodied in our profession but what is fundamental in Christian doctrine, while it is possible to lay our fingers on some Christian doctrine and say, these are fundamental: as Luther declared the doctrine of justification by faith to be "the doctrine of a standing or falling church," and Dr. Cook in his discussion with the Arian, Dr. Montgomery, declared the doctrine of our Lord's divinity to be "the doctrine of a standing or falling world;" and while we may be able to point out other doctrines as non-fundamental, yet there remains a broad field between these extremes thickly strewed with the gold and precious stones of divine truth which we could not possibly classify, and dare not risk the attempt lest God should regard us as having no more discernment in such matters than "swine." There would be a twofold danger in such an attempt. On the one hand we might get one of the non-fundamentals on the near side of the turn, (the side nearest the world,) which would be fatal to the theory; and on the other hand we might omit one of the fundamentals from the other side, (nearest the Scriptures,) which would be fatal to the church. The advocates of this theory overlook the fact that doctrines are fundamental to each other. The one fundamental doctrine of natural religion is that of God; and the one fundamental doctrine of revealed religion is that of the God-man. All other religious doctrines are founded or built on these, and then on each other. So that the old lady's remark

about the foundation of the world is true here, "there are rocks all the way down."

In the present state of the church and of the world, the adoption of the principle of church fellowship on the basis of a profession of belief in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity is encumbered with many practical difficulties. In any supposable enumeration of fundamentals, we could scarcely leave out the doctrine of sovereign election, and what Luther termed "the doctrine of a standing or falling church." Yet this would exclude the whole Arminian world, which is perhaps three-fourths of the Christian world. While this would not form an objection to us, it is not what the advocates of this theory are aiming at. Again the church of Rome holds what may in a general way be called fundamental truth. The first thirteen articles of the Council of Trent are orthodox, yet they are overlaid with a mass of super-added doctrines and superstitious ceremonies, which effectually bury them out of sight. Still further, many hold fundamental truths, and are nevertheless fundamentally wrong on moral questions, as many of the former slaveholders. Others again make a comparatively sound profession and yet practically deny the whole Christian system by uniting in the blasphemous rites and unhallowed worship of secret lodges. There are, moreover, among Christians who hold fundamental truth, differences in relation to church government which are wholly incompatible. In any and every view of the matter, therefore, the theory of church fellowship on the basis of a professed belief in the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures is an impracticable and visionary scheme.

What then remains? "Buy the truth and sell it not." "Whereto we have already attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." "Be established in the present truth," and "keep the word of Christ's patience," and ye shall be "kept from the hour of temptation which cometh upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth."

This is our duty individually; this is the duty of the United Presbyterian Church. We have been called in the providence of God to witness, as a distinct branch of the church, not only for those doctrines of the Divine word which may be denominated fundamental, but also for some others which cannot properly be

thus classed. These truths are important and precious. They have been committed to us as a "trust." It is a denial of the goodness of God not to recognize them as such. Among these are the articles in our Testimony on the subjects of Psalmody, Communion, Secret Societies, Slaveholding and Public Covenanting; and until recently the rule of our Directory for Worship, prohibiting the use of instruments of music in the worship of God. I believe it is not fashionable and regarded as scarcely polite to mention these things in public any more. The discussion imposed on me at this time must serve as my excuse.

To apply, then, the principles which we have endeavored to elucidate, the United Presbyterian Church ought not, and cannot consistently exercise "forbearance in love" towards those within her own pale who deny and oppose the doctrines peculiar to her profession, by continuing them in her fellowship. Nor can she extend "forbearance in love" to those without her pale, who are of similar principles and practice, by admitting them to her communion. Such a course is plainly suicidal. Either these doctrines should not be embraced in her profession, or they should be administered in her government and discipline. There are few United Presbyterians, (there are a few, however,) who are ready to drop these things entirely from her profession. Can it be said there are but few who are unwilling, or who neglect to administer them?

I am aware that I am approaching delicate ground, and that brethren are very sensitive just about here. I recall an incident that occurred in the Assembly of 1880, and of which I might say as one of the old Trojan heroes did, "*magna pars fui*." I was a considerable part of it myself. An effort was made to secure the enforcement of the law against the use of instruments in worship. And the reason was urged that in different parts of the church the rule was openly violated. A worthy brother from the central part of the church stood up and stoutly maintained that he had no knowledge that the law was violated, though the violations had been going on for years and had been published to the world. We can suppose a theory on which his declaration was true. Like other men, he is probably endowed with five senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling. Now he must have *heard* that

organs were being used in the church, but then he had not seen them, nor felt them, nor tasted them, nor even smelled them. He had four of his senses testifying one way and only one the other—four against one—how could he be expected to know that organs were used?

Even so now. We hear of United Presbyterians singing hymns, of United Presbyterian ministers singing them, we hear also of the members of secret orders being in the church, and that ministers are not ashamed to own that they never say anything on the subject, and make no inquiry of applicants for admission to the church in regard to their connection with these orders. And yet we have never actually seen these violations of our principles, we have never felt or tasted or smelled them, and how is it possible for us to know anything about them? Take one of these brethren aside who so stoutly deny in public that there is any unfaithfulness in administering the law of the church in regard to these things, get on the soft side of him, win his confidence, (and don't betray it either,) and the whole truth will come out with a frankness and simplicity that is refreshing. I have tried the experiment.

I take the responsibility of declaring my deliberate conviction that our entire profession, so far as it is distinctive, is in danger, and that the danger is greatly increased by the success which has already attended the efforts of restless innovators. The gushing expressions of loyalty to the church which this declaration may call forth is a poor answer to known facts. There are those who stand ready to deny the facts, and to call for the proof. But if we were to send through this city, and some others not one hundred miles from it, a man with a roll of parchment and "a writer's ink-horn by his side,"—a notary public—and secure the written testimony of a score or even an hundred unimpeachable witnesses to these facts, and come and lay it before these men, they would, as did a class in the days of the prophet Ezekiel, "put the branch to the nose," and say, "Well, what difference does it make?" A brother who had left a congregation in one of our cities gave me as his reason for so doing that the members would sing hymns whenever opportunity offered, and that the secret orders had such a hold that it was not safe to say anything against them.

Amid the flowing tide of defection which is sweeping around us, and which threatens to carry everything before it, our duty is to stand firm. Let each one in his own place wisely teach and faithfully administer the principles of the profession he has vowed to maintain, resolving with Joshua "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

But what shall be said in regard to that part of the profession of the United Presbyterian Church which has been eliminated from her standards by the recent overture? I do not hesitate to say that the same principles are applicable to it as to others of her distinctive doctrines. The violators of her law were not entitled to the exercise of "forbearance in love," but deserved to be subjected to discipline to restrain them from their lawless course, and in case of persistence in their breach of ordination vows, to exclude them from her fellowship. All the loss which the church would have sustained in pursuing this course would have proved to be an ultimate gain. She would have gained in self-respect, and in the estimation of other churches; she would have, moreover, gained in internal peace and mutual confidence, and also in spiritual power. The contempt which some other branches of the church feel for her former professions, and the glee with which they anticipate her future abandonment of other distinctive principles, is but poorly, if at all, concealed. Men respect those who have convictions and who stand by them. They cannot respect those who go about with their principles in their hands ready to sell or barter them. Respect and admiration are involuntary, not voluntary principles. Paul does not say, "Now, please don't despise Timothy;" but to Timothy, "Let no man despise thee." If others despise us it is our own fault.

But if this be the course which faithfulness to the Master required of us, and if the violators of the law against instruments were not entitled to the exercise of "forbearance in love," what is our duty when we are outnumbered, and find ourselves in a minority, and consequently have not the power to exercise discipline to the exclusion of offenders? This is the solemn and momentous question which this convention has been called to resolve. Here I feel like one groping in the dark. I could wish for more light. The suggestions which I may make are not put forward with any

confidence, and I would have preferred to have kept them to myself had it not seemed discourteous to the brethren who have honored me with a place on the programme of this convention.

You will be aware from what is already before the public, that I am not prepared to advise the disruption of the church by secession on account of the repeal of the law prohibiting the use of instruments in worship. It may seem difficult to reconcile this position with some things that have been said in this discussion.

In prosecuting this discussion, I shall grope my way by the best light I can obtain ; others need not accept the conclusions unless they can see their way to do so.

There is then, I believe, a broad distinction between the toleration of evils which we have power to prevent, but refuse to exercise, thereby imparting to them an implied sanction, and the endurance of the same evils when we are without power to correct them. The ever ready answer to this is, that we can clear our skirts of complicity in evil by withdrawing from the fellowship of those who practice or tolerate it. That this is proper and necessary under some circumstances, is readily admitted. Hence we have the Reformation. But that it is necessary or proper under all circumstances, may admit of a doubt. It is, I believe, a question of circumstances, and to be determined by the circumstances of each particular case as it arises. The peculiar circumstances which surrounded the Old Testament Church justified the toleration of several evils of great magnitude, as, for instance, polygamy, divorce, if not for "every cause," as the Jews of our Lord's day stretched it, at least for many comparatively trivial reasons ; also, the buying and selling of men and women under certain conditions. It will be said Moses had Divine authority for such regulations. True ; but why did God authorize him to promulgate them. Our Lord supplies the reason, "Moses suffered you because of the hardness of your hearts." It was the manners of the age, or in other words, the circumstances, which demanded these regulations. Now that these circumstances have passed away, they are no longer proper. The apostles and elders assembled in council at Jerusalem, so far yielded to Jewish prejudice as to impose in part the yoke of the ceremonial law for a time on the infant Christian church as a term of communion. But this obligation has long since passed away

with the circumstances which gave rise to it. The historian, D'Aubigne, gives a deeply interesting account of a conference held at Marburg, between Zuinglius and other Swiss reformers with Luther and some of his fellows in reference to the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the supper. There are few, it is believed, who, considering the circumstances surrounding the reformers, do not share the regret expressed by the historian, that the obstinacy of the great German reformer defeated the union and co-operation of the two leading sections of the reformation at that time. And yet, the circumstances being now materially altered, there are just as few who would be willing to enter a union on the basis of a connivance with the doctrine of consubstantiation.

In the light which has been shed on the nature of the Lord's presence in the supper by long and thorough discussion, it would be treason to the truth to even tolerate the semi-popish doctrine of Luther. But reproduce in all respects the precise conditions existing at Marburg, and with the altered circumstances, would not the path of duty lead in a different direction? Suppose it be granted that it was better for the reformation that the efforts of Zuinglius at pacification and co-operation should have failed, does this Divine over-ruling condemn his aims and efforts? The fathers of secession tolerated the open propagation of Arminian and even Pelagian errors in the Church of Scotland, the exercise of patronage in some of its most offensive forms, and so far as appears from the history of the times, had no thought of withdrawing from the communion of the established church, until they were deposed from the office of the ministry, and thus compelled to choose between the alternative of surrendering their sacred office, or of disregarding an abused authority.

We all know too, that there was a time of ignorance in regard to the sin of human slavery, and of the traffic in intoxicating drink, at which the church winked, as she dare not do now. The theory that it is the duty of the church to "hold fast" all her "attainments" and to go on to perfection, is true and scriptural; and yet it sheds but little light on the duty of a faithful minority who are contending against her backslidings. If any one doubts this, I might ask whether "Bible songs" do not travel at least half the distance between a Divinely authorized Scripture and a merely scriptural psalmody?

These illustrations from the history of the church are not given to determine what circumstances justify and demand the exercise of forbearance, but in order to show that the condition of the church at any particular time is a factor in the question of forbearance or secession which cannot wisely and safely be overlooked. No cast iron inflexible rule can be given in regard to such matters.

Does any one for a moment suppose that the fathers of the secession, if they had found themselves in a majority in the Assembly would have tolerated the Arminian and Pelagian errors of which they complained? Yet the circumstance of their being in a minority so far controlled their action that they were willing, if freedom of speech and action in testifying against these errors had been allowed, to have remained in the fellowship of the church which did tolerate them. And so at this present time; if the conduct of these eminent and faithful men is to be regarded in the light of an example, though we could not in faithfulness have allowed the introduction of instruments in worship had we been in the majority, and thus had power to prevent it, now being in a minority we may submit, leaving the responsibility with the majority, and with the mere reason that the unchallenged right remains to us to maintain our convictions and advocate our principles. If any one will take the trouble to compare the grievances of which we complain with those which oppressed and finally drove out of the established church of Scotland the Erskines and their associates, he must be struck with the difference in their gravity. .

As bearing on this question of the controlling influence of circumstances in regard to such matters I may repeat a statement made by the Rev. James Martin, D. D., formerly professor of theology in the Associate Seminary at Canonsburg. The church never produced a man of clearer mind or firmer principle. The statement was made to his class, and was heard and repeated to me by Dr. R. H. Pollock. "I can conceive of circumstances," said he, "in which I would feel it my duty to unite with the Presbyterian Church." The circumstances, of course, were those in which he had no opportunity, and no prospect of any, of uniting with those who came nearer to him in faith, worship and order. He did not feel it to be his duty in the circumstances supposed, to be out of the church altogether. No man who knew

him will question his secederism. Now what is this but saying that the whole question of our distinctive principles is one of circumstances. God forbid that I should undervalue them, or betray them. I esteem them true and important and precious, and by grace will maintain them, and had I the power, would administer them in discipline on those who violate them. I regard them as "a trust" committed to the United Presbyterian Church which she is to "keep." And I cannot respect those who profess them and yet betray them.

But suppose that Dr. Martin is misrepresented in that statement, or that he did not make it. Is any one in this convention willing to be altogether without church fellowship? Can we not conceive of circumstances in which we would feel it to be our duty to hold fellowship with a Schwartz, a Martyn, a Carey, a Judson, a Moffat, or a Williams? And what is this but to admit that the maintenance of much of our public profession is demanded by the circumstances in which God has placed us.

In regard to those questions which formerly agitated and rent the Church of Scotland, as between Resolutioners and Protestors, Indulged and Non-Indulged, Burghers and Anti-Burghers, etc., while my sympathies are with the "stricter sort," and my convictions are also with them on the abstract questions involved, I do not know that they were always guided by unerring wisdom in the application of their principles. So far as I am able to judge of such matters, the reformation which began in the 16th century and culminated an hundred years later in what has been known as the "Second Reformation," when the "Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England and Ireland," was entered into and sworn, was the work of the Spirit of God. When the fathers of the secession church in America declared in their testimony that "with what may be called the civil part of these covenants, (National and Solemn League,) it is what they neither have, nor ever had anything to do, they appear to me to have abandoned one-half of the reformation so far as it was a "covenanted" work, viz: the civil part, or the duty of nations to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as king over (not of) them, to give and administer God's law. And when the testimony of the United Presbyterian Church shifted all mention of these covenants from the

Declaration, which is recognized as a term of communion, to the Argument and Illustration which is not so regarded, the other half, viz. : the descending covenant obligation to maintain the religious part of these covenants, or the duty of the church to preserve the doctrine and worship of the reformation, was abandoned so far as it was a covenanted reformation. And if this view be correct, it is no wonder that many on board the United Presbyterian ship feel that she is without captain and pilot, and is in danger of being "broken in pieces" in the place where the "two seas" of liberalism and ritualism meet. When greater matters in our public profession have long required the exercise of forbearance, the less are borne with more equanimity.

We cannot go back to correct the errors of the past, if indeed they were errors. But God overrules the errors of men for the glory of his holy name, and will yet make Zion to "shine forth as the morning, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners," at the period of a "third and more glorious reformation." And for aught that I know he may then say to the United Presbyterian Church as he once said to "treacherous and backsliding Judah," "Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger, and I will give them unto thee for daughters, *but not by thy covenant.*" The change effected in the circumstances of the church by the revelation of Millennial glory will blend the "sisters" (different branches of the church) into one, but not probably in exact accordance with the letter of any of their Articles, Confessions or Testimonies.

Resolved, 1. That while we are constrained to regard the repeal of the rule of our Directory for Worship forbidding the use of instruments of music as a departure from the purity and simplicity of New Testament worship as established at the reformation from popery in the 16th century, and at the second reformation in Scotland in the 17th century, as well as from the principles of the Associate and Associate Reformed churches, as also of the United Presbyterian Church; yet we do not judge this instance of defection as of itself sufficient to demand or justify the disruption of the church by secession.

2. That the crisis through which our church is now passing, affords an opportunity and should be regarded as a Providential call to organize within the church for the defense and preservation, by orderly and lawful means, of other distinctive principles of our public profession which are endangered by the step of defection which has already been consummated, and to bring the church back to the purity of worship formerly maintained.

Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.

ACTUALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES

OF MISCHIEF IN THE

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY REV. R. A. BROWNE, D. D.

The discussion of evils is not pleasing. Our present subject is not a *soothing* one, but there is something better for us than to be soothed when evils are upon us. We should open our eyes full upon them and face them like men. He who lifts a warning voice against them, however, does so at disadvantage to his personal popularity, ease and safety, and is often accused of *making* mischief, when he only exposes and resists it. "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Ahab said to the prophet who was only standing up for the purity of the divine worship against his own corruptions. "I have not troubled Israel," the prophet replied, "but thou and thy father's house." The reply was true, but it was not a truth that paved the prophet's way to promotion at court. Jeremiah, for declaring and resisting the evils of his day, had quarters assigned him in one of the king's dungeons. Let us be content; none of us will be required to suffer like that. We cannot sing the song of peace, for the sufficient reason to ourselves that it is not peace; but we can acquit our consciences and wait the approval of our Lord.

Let us look at the plain facts. At the close of twenty-five years of remarkable prosperity, the United Presbyterian Church suddenly beholds her work embarrassed, her very organization threatened, and a dark cloud, ominous of evil, hanging over her congregations. A chill has come between the hearts of brethren; a dark shadow falls between those who heretofore took sweet counsel as they went to the house of God in company. Pastors' hands

weakened; Aarons and Hurs found who hold them not up but pull them down. Vacant congregations are pressed with a new question, dividing them in the choice of pastors, and existing pastoral relations weakened or threatened with dissolution. There is a sense of wrong; there is a feeling of grievance; there is the belief that vows have not been kept. There is also a lowering of respect for the decisions of the highest court of the church, as having betaken itself to the shifts and expedients of unsound reasoning in order to maintain foregone and wrong conclusions; and we may fear that this abatement of respect for the court may be a disease that will spread and affect widely all the various interests of Christ's cause in our hands. And above all stands the question of the very existence of the organization—shall it continue, or is it destined to disruption and ruin? There is no safety in hushing up these statements. They are not false nor exaggerated. The danger lies not in asserting them, but in the facts they set forth.

Now these evils grow first out of what is called "*the organ question*" as a question, and next the danger of the use of "*the organ*," so called, as a fact. In other words the *doctrinal* question, "are instruments of music in God's worship right or wrong?" together with *the fact* that practically musical instruments *may be*, and in some instances *have been*, introduced in worship against the convictions of those concerned—these things, the one a question of faith and the other of practice connected with it, constitute the one disturbing force presently convulsing the United Presbyterian Church. There is in this twofold question "the power and potency" of incalculable mischief in our church. Part of this mischief has been named real or possible, but there are yet other actualities and possibilities belonging to "*the organ*" as a source of mischief in the United Presbyterian Church. Four of these I proceed to state more fully and yet briefly:

First.—The adoption and naturalization of "*the organ*" as one of the principles and usages of the United Presbyterian Church *vitiates our special character as a church, and makes us false to a special trust committed to us by God.*

Our church is lineal heir to the Scottish church of the Reformation, to the successive reformations that sprung up in it, and the

reformed organizations (Covenanter and Seceder so called) that descended from it. Among all the churches in the mother-lands or our own country, there is absolutely none nearer of kin to these than our own church. The purity of doctrine and the simplicity of worship which created those reformatations, and these church organizations, are the reasons why we exist at all as a church; and to maintain these is our especial duty. When we cease so to do, there is no more need of us as a separate church. For any church to leave its special trust—to fall back from its advanced line of attainments of truth as against error—is bad; but for such a church as ours, so *ancestored*, and so commissioned, thus to fall back is specially bad. It is also calculated to weaken the entire battle line of all God's host. We were needed just where we were. God himself required us to be just what he made us, and stand and fight just where he put us. The heavier battalions were all the safer that we stood in the front, between them and the foes.

The ground we had gained doctrinally in common with all the Reformed, and especially with all the Scottish Presbyterian churches and the churches descended from them, was this: that there must be a warrant in God's word for all professed Christian faith and practice, and that this is *specially* true in matters of religious worship. One entire commandment, thundered from Sinai, guards this worship from corruption; pre-eminently among all the commandments, warns us that "God is a very jealous God."

The point reached was thus announced, viz.: "The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is *instituted by himself*, and so limited by *his own revealed will* that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men." Also, having first mentioned prayer as one of the ordinances of God's appointed worship, we have the following: "The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear, the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the word in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith and reverence, *singing of Psalms* with grace in the heart; as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God.—*Confession of Faith, Chap. 21*. Observe "Singing of Psalms with grace in the heart" is one of "*the parts of the ordinary religious worship of God*," "instituted by himself and so limited by his revealed will that he may not

be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men." Thus stated there is nothing clearer than that this part of worship consists of singing Psalms and is limited thereto. It is—

1st. Singing as against playing.

2d. Singing Psalms as against singing or playing man-made songs.

3d. Singing in which *all* are required, as they can, to join, fulfilling the specific object of this portion of the service by taking a personal part, and as connected with,

4th. Grace in the heart.

That all are to take a personal part is a specific feature of this part of God's worship, is more fully shown in their Directory for Worship, and is set forth with the same fullness in the directories of our own and all other churches in any way descended from them, and this statement includes the Presbyterian Church of the United States.

But beyond most of the churches mentioned, and against all departures from this simple scriptural worship, our church has stood pre-eminently as a witness, by her example and her declarations. Singing—singing only—singing Psalms only—and that by the entire congregation, has been her grand distinctive. God has entrusted her to maintain it. The purity and simplicity of God's ordinance of praise has been in an especial manner her charge to maintain among the churches. One wrong step regarding this question is bad in itself, and involves others. It is the introduction of the unauthorized, the mechanical and the sensuous, instead of the scriptural, the personal, and spiritual. It is done right before the throne. It is untruthfulness to our profession and character, and betrayal of a trust we professed to have, and which we had from our Lord.

The organ question has been called by some a trivial question. A question involving character, honor, fidelity and life cannot be a trivial one. Whether we shall be ourselves or some one else is a question of *vital* importance. It is no truer of the individual than of a church. A church among the churches of Jesus Christ, having a special and honorable character and trust, can have no more

important question thrust upon her than the question, shall she surrender them, or anything that may be involved in them.

Second. A mischief essential to "the organ" is the bartering of a better system for a worse, in its practical aspects. It is included in what has been said that singing God's praise by all his people is his system. The introduction of the organ alters that. It does not do so merely by mingling its tones with those of the human voices where it thus becomes an intruder; but, eventually it silences them, and in large measure takes the place of them. I do but state facts that have been verified thousands and thousands of times. It is so with all artistic music in the church; the unartistic, who are the larger part, are intimidated, and at last hushed entirely, and "the music is then performed," to use the common and appropriate term, by the organ and the choir. The organ may at first be called only "a help," "an accompaniment," or as the Assembly of 1883 suddenly discovered and announced, "*an incident*;" but it becomes really a substitute. With the aid of possibly a quartette, the substitute for God's ordinance of praise in the finished musical performances of the sanctuary becomes complete. The pulpit, God's ordinance, at one end of his sanctuary; the man-appointed device of the organ and artistic sounds, vocal and mechanical, as a musical entertainment at the other. If it is said this result is not intended, I reply, therefore, we had best not begin. If it is said it is not necessary, I assert my conviction that it is scarcely to be avoided when we leave the principle that the music of the sanctuary is simply for praise and to be strictly limited by the divine appointment. Where shall the limit otherwise be placed on voluntaries, preludes, interludes, solos and other artistic efforts of trained performers. You will not be likely to license it, and then to regulate it. "As well regulate the explosive force of gunpowder." As comment upon this statement—recently a choir and organist in an eastern city rendered a voluntary in Latin, and on a later Sabbath in English, which proved to be a hymn to the Virgin Mary. The pastor then dissented from the pulpit. At latest report the pastor still held his place but his relations with his flock were much imperilled and disturbed.

It were well if the United Presbyterian Church could be taught by the experience of the Presbyterian Church which has already

traveled this path of danger. In his protest against instrumental music, Dr. Robert J. Breckenridge distinctly traces the organ with all other sensuous worship back to the apostasy of Rome, and shows how it was expelled at the Reformation, and a pure worship, including *singing* God's praise, restored. "But now," says he with voice of warning, "we in America are tempted and cajoled, on various pretexts, to begin once more the original process of corrupting this divine worship, by commencing at the very part of it in which alone every human being can take a direct active part, to wit: the *praise of God*, for *in singing alone*, of all parts of worship, can every follower of God take an active public part. How great is that subtlety of error and delusion that always attacks us, where the attack is most plausible, and if successful will be most fatal. For here, as soon as the sensual, mechanical praise has substituted and silenced the spiritual, personal praise, the *people* have ceased from their only direct participation in God's worship. A human device under pretense of honoring God has corrupted his worship in such a manner as to rob Christ of the public praise of his children, and to rob Christ's children of access to him in public praise! In return for which tremendous evils all it professes to be able to do, is to elevate our imagination and refine our taste. But the divine plan it supplants could sanctify our conscience and fill our souls with joy and peace."

This quotation from Dr. Breckenridge will show the experience and observation adverse to the practical benefit claimed for the organ of one, who, himself an honored member of the Presbyterian Church, had an opportunity to know that of which he wrote. Dr. J. W. Alexander in his "Thoughts on Family Worship," has shown how lamentably singing in congregations and families had ceased in worship, and yet he admits the decline was in connection with the increased musical culture of the age. I do not hesitate to say it grew in part out of it—thus far, that it grew out of the artistic in music transplanted into the church and installed where God ordained praise. Do not understand that it is meant that the playing of the organ is necessarily artistic—but simply that it only can be art in its best efforts; that it is only music—and that it may and does seduce from the spirituality of the ordinance of God.

Third. The third mischief accomplished for us by the organ is, it invades personal liberty of conscience and so is a usurpation of Christ's prerogatives as sole Lord of the conscience.

I must be brief here. The wrong done is done primarily to God as Lord of the conscience, and as having ordained all true worship of himself. Along with this, however, he has discharged every human being from bondage to the will of another in matters of worship. I have quoted the doctrine of the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Divines, and of the Church of Scotland, which is our own also, regarding the first of these, viz: The exclusiveness of his jurisdiction in matters of worship, including praise, and the singing of Psalms. But let us hear what is said on the second of these—Liberty of Conscience.

“God alone is Lord of the conscience and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to his word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship. So that to believe such doctrines or obey such commandments out of conscience is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring of an implicit faith and an absolute and blind obedience is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also.”—*Confession of Faith, chap. 20, Sec. 2.*

Now, the true Christian, a freedman of Christ, under the charter of his liberties given by his divine Master, is absolutely free from men in all matters pertaining to the divine worship; and the church fulfills her duty to her Lord upon one hand and his people upon the other, when she adjusts her prescribed worship to his prerogatives and their liberties of conscience, so that no man's liberties are made subject to another man's. That which God permits one man can never be recognized as giving him a right to trample under foot that which he equally permits to his fellows. Liberty to one shall not be bondage to another.

On this principle was our system of praise adjusted. Whether men received its statements in words or not, its practical application at least secured every man in his rights of conscience, and equal participation in a pure, because a divinely appointed praise, viz.: The singing of Psalms. The introduction of the organ changes all that. It matters not that a man pleads his liberty as

he understands it. It never can be understood aright to mean bondage to a man as good before God as he is, and in matters that are common to both. It is all the worse if he understands and acknowledges it to be to him only a *permissive* appointment or an incident. If so, why shall he make that which is only such to him a burden on his fellow?

I commend for study the following words of Luther, which might seem almost to have been written in view of this very question, involving Christian liberty, rights of conscience, and the peace and existence of the church: "In this life every one must not do what he has a right to do, but must forego his rights and consider what is useful to his brother. Do not make 'a must be' out of a 'may be' as you have now been doing that you may not have to answer for those whom you have misled by your uncharitable liberty." So far Luther. I know no way out of these troubles in the United Presbyterian Church that will honor Christ and Christian liberty of conscience, unless there be charity to forbear thrusting on this worship of an unwilling people as "must be's," that which to those who so do are only their "may be's." No Christian principle could arrogate such lordship over conscience. No true Christian principle could submit to it. "One is your Master, ever Christ," and all ye are brethren. Great as the mischief is now, tame submission to such usurpation would make it unspeakably worse.

Fourth. I see another mischief. The *surrender is made to the spirit of liberalism* of our times and is calculated to embolden new aggressions.

All the churches feel the effects of this dangerous spirit. In the presence of sister churches, ours has now thrown overboard one of her children to the howling wolves that are on our track. It is our sacrifice to the liberalism of the age, its vaunted freedom and its demand for a less scriptural and more sensuous form of entertainment than our sanctuaries can afford it. It does not increase its respect for us, or our power over it for good. It has exceedingly weakened us for our next encounter.

Yet, let us hope and pray that from the discussion of the principles underlying the question, we may reach a more clear scriptural

light, and that God's witnesses may acquire more firmness and courage for the great contest which goes on with sin around us. May God spare our beloved church and enable her to be his faithful witness, regain what she has lost, hold fast that which she has and be faithful unto the final day.



OUR ONLY NEED AS A CHURCH FOR MISSION WORK.

BY REV. JAMES BROWN, D. D.

Our only need as a church for mission work, is the theme assigned for this paper. The reading will at once suggest the idea that, the emphatic terms, in this proposition are the words, "as a church." That is, as a denomination, distinct from other branches of the church of Christ, and maintaining this separate organization, because we believe it a necessity, in order to faithfulness to the truth, as we have attained to it; and to the purity of the church, in her ordinances, and membership. The point then before us is, What is the *only* need of the United Presbyterian Church, with her separate church existence, and her distinct symbols of faith, in order to the successful prosecution of her missionary work?

To this question we answer:—

Her first great need is, the faithful preaching of the gospel. In this regard she, of course, occupies common ground, with all other evangelical denominations. The common charge to all the churches is: "Go preach the gospel." It was the charge from the church's King and Lord to his first missionaries, and to them, as the representatives of his church in every age; and to her, as his representative in the world, belongs the fulfillment of the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." She fulfills this commission, she discharges this duty, as she sends her missionaries to the destitute at home and abroad, under the charge: "Go preach the gospel."

Our Lord expands and explains the duty, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The missionary goes forth under instructions to which he must fully and faithfully adhere. He must preach that gospel, and *only* that, which Christ himself has given. He must carry out his instructions if he would have the presence of his Master, and accomplish the great end of his mission.

He must preach a gospel of which the Lord Jesus is not only the Author, but the object, the ever-present theme, the soul, the life, the all. The church's greatest missionary speaks for them all when he says in his letter to the people who were the fruit of his labors: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." He, in these earnest words, at once declares the high honor of his office—its object, its solemn responsibility, and the secret of his success. Every true missionary must follow this high exemplar, if, like Paul, he would win souls to Christ. He must, indeed, proclaim to men their true condition before God, their alienation from him, their enmity against him, their liability to his eternal indignation, and their consequent utter, and in themselves, hopeless ruin. But this, that they may feel their need of a Saviour and be ready to listen to the glad tidings of "a Saviour for all people," which is Christ the Lord. Christ crucified is the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation: and this is what and whom he must ever preach. Christ in his prophetic, his priestly and his kingly offices; Christ in the glory of his person and character, in the greatness of his love, in the all-sufficiency of his righteousness, in the fullness of his grace, in his readiness and power to save. Christ, the only foundation of a sinner's hope, the Lord our righteousness, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, in man's salvation. All the doctrines connected with and growing out of the great work of the Incarnate Redeemer, as revealed in the counsel of God, must he faithfully declare. And while he faithfully preaches the doctrines of the cross for man's belief, he must as faithfully enjoin the duties of practical godliness, holiness of heart, and life. Not as separate or separable from faith in the doctrines, but as the necessary and certain result. Nothing is plainer from the word of God, or more clearly established by human experience, than that the duties of practical godliness cannot be performed

apart from that faith which receives the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. And just as clearly do word and experience confirm the truth that a godly life is ever the fruit of saving faith. We live, if we live at all, by the faith of the Son of God. We enter our solemn protest against the idea that doctrine and practice are at all separable in the Christian life; or that would make a distinction between doctrinal and practical preaching. True doctrinal preaching is always practical. It renews the heart and reforms the life. Practical preaching is doctrinal as well, since it throws the soul back upon him, without whom it can do nothing, but through whom it can do all things. We regard the language as most unhappy that would depreciate doctrinal preaching; as if it were of secondary importance.

Is there not reason to fear that this talk against doctrinal preaching indicates indifference to, if not unbelief in, the precious doctrines themselves, which are the voices from the cross, the radiations from the Sun of Righteousness, that bring our Redeemer near to us and unite us to him? No; oh, no! There is not too much doctrinal preaching; we fear there is far too little. Why is it that year after year there comes up from all the churches the lamentation that conversions are so few, that coldness and worldliness are so prevalent, and vital godliness so seldom manifested? Can it be that "another gospel has largely taken possession of our pulpits," than the words of spiritual and eternal life? There is room, at least, for serious thought. For, certain it is, that from Pentecost to the present hour the successful preachers and missionaries have been pre-eminently doctrinal preachers. Such were the twelve at Pentecost; such was the great Apostle, our own first missionary; such were the reformers; such our Puritan and Presbyterian forefathers in England and Scotland, and the record ever since is in overwhelming confirmation of the truth, that the ministers, whose ministry God has most largely blessed for saving souls, have been those who faithfully proclaimed the *doctrines* of the cross, and did not shun to declare all the counsel of God.

This is the gospel God has *ever* blessed. And oh, what grand, glorious achievements this simple instrumentality has accomplished! If, from what the apostle saw, he could write concerning

it; "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds," how much more may we, looking back over all the ages and looking upon the world to-day, respond our earnest, our grateful, our glad amen, and go forth bearing and wielding the armor our Captain has given us, assured of final victory; for the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Shall we pause here to say that God has never blessed any other instrumentality? Ministers, in the pride and perversity of their hearts, have closed the word of God, and preached another Gospel than that we have received, and the scenes of their labors have been spiritual Gilboas, where there was neither rain nor dew, nor fields of offerings.

But we need more than the simple word itself. Paul, with all the power of his great mind may plant, Apollos, with all the persuasion of his eloquence may water, it will be all in vain, unless God shall give the increase. This is the word of the Lord unto his church and ministry, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. It was not the simple preaching of Peter and his fellow apostles that produced the wonderful results of Pentecost. The preacher himself explains: "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Of the first convert to the faith of the gospel in Europe it is said: "whose heart the Lord opened that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul." The word of the Gospel is the sword of the Spirit, but it is effective only in his hand. In the economy of grace the Holy Spirit is the direct agent in the bestowment of the blessings of salvation. He convicts of sin, he renews the heart, he enlightens the mind, he brings to Christ, he sanctifies the soul, he strengthens for duty, he comforts in sorrow, he leads to the land of uprightness. He does all this through the instrumentality of his word, but it is his own omnipotent energy accompanying the word that makes it effectual to these ends. It may be taken as an axiom that God will not promise blessings that are not needed. If he engages by so many precious promises to give us his Holy Spirit. If the Lord Jesus assures his church of the continual presence and works of his Spirit with her, the evidence is conclusive that that presence

and work are absolutely needed. Unless he shall work in and with his word, no hearts will be renewed, no souls converted, no sinners saved. Our preaching is vain, Christ is dead in vain. This fundamental truth no candid reader of the word, and of the gracious providence of God will deny. And all partakers of the blessings of salvation, all who have been brought to a saving knowledge of the deep things of God will heartily join in the apostle's grateful acknowledgment, "God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit."

This most important truth suggests another need essential to our work, and that is *prayer*, earnest persistent prayer. There is no success but as the Spirit shall accompany his word. But he comes in answer to prayer. To prayer on earth and prayer in heaven. On earth "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them;" in heaven, "I will pray the Father and he will give you the comforter, even the Spirit of truth." But the prayer from earth precedes and secures the prayer in heaven and the Spirit comes. Our missionaries themselves must be men of prayer, and so like Barnabas, men "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." They are not only to plead with men to "beseech sinners to be reconciled to God," but they must plead with God, that he would by his Spirit make their pleadings effectual with men. It was the privilege of the writer some years ago to join in worship with Mr. Spurgeon's church in London. He was more edified on that occasion by the prayers of that remarkable man than by his preaching. One so wonderfully gifted in prayer, or manifesting so much of the spirit of that prayer, which is "the pouring out of the heart," it has never been his privilege to hear. He left that interesting service, convinced that here largely and principally is the secret of his wonderful success; he has power with man for he has power with God. The Lord make all our missionaries, and all of us such men. O yes, our missionaries must themselves be men of prayer. But back of and along with their own prayers must be the prayers of the church. "Prayer must be made without ceasing of the church," that the power of the Holy Ghost may be ever present with them. Paul, the model missionary, deeply felt this need, and again and again entreats the prayers of the churches: "Brethren pray for us." Brethren pray for me, that the word of the Lord may have

free course and be glorified. Oh, for more of this spirit and practice of prayer throughout ours and all the churches. Have we not reason to fear that in connection with our mission work there is too much dependence on outward and human means, and too little dependence on and earnest prayer for, that Holy Spirit, without whose presence and power "we labor in vain and spend our strength for nought and in vain."

We can only merely notice that we need more, *far more*, of the spirit of liberality. Comparatively we are not behind other churches in this respect, but there are none of the churches at all up to the measure of their ability and duty in this respect. Oh! if we had a tithe of the spirit of our Master, if we knew as we ought to know, the grace, the *liberality* of him, who, though he was rich, yet for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich; the treasuries of the Lord, instead of being almost all the time empty, and often on the verge of bankruptcy, would be kept full to overflowing, our missionaries would be multiplied manifold, the promise would be fulfilled, "Many shall run too and fro and knowledge be increased," and the prophecy soon verified: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

The ground we have now passed over is common to us with all other Evangelical churches. Thus far their and our needs are the same, but we are a distinct branch of the church of Christ. There are a number of points of practical truth on which we differ from our brethren. These we deem so important that in order to hold and practise them, we maintain a separate church organization. This we believe duty to our Lord, to his truth and cause requires. We denominate these our distinctive principles, because they distinguish us from other churches. Now, our public profession is the banner we have displayed because of truth; and all that we have inscribed on that banner is, we believe, the truth of God. The truth he has revealed. Can it be necessary to say, that as a church for our mission work, we need fidelity to our testimony? Is it in faithfulness to God we have lifted that testimony, and in our united capacity still carry it aloft, and can we, as ministers, or missionaries, in faithfulness to our own covenant engagements fail or refuse to teach and preach the whole

truth as God has revealed it and we have received it? To this there is but one answer. We cannot. And, if so, it clearly follows that fidelity to our standards cannot be injurious to our mission work, but on the contrary, is just as necessary to our success on the mission field as in our regular work. Let it be that our principles are unpopular. Our past history is the proof that their unpopularity has not hindered our prosperity. Their unpopularity need not shake, but rather confirm our faith in their truth. True, our great object is to convert and save sinners, but it is our secondary object to make them United Presbyterians. How otherwise can we do this but by teaching and preaching our whole profession? We *must* do that or our distinctive principles will be lost, our church go by the board, and our mission work, so far from being our up-building, will be our ruin. The writer has had some experience in this direction. He has labored in more than one mission field. In two cities he built on no other man's foundation. In one he began with eight members, in another with eighteen. Not infrequently was he approached by outsiders and told how much greater success and prosperity he would have if it were not for his bigoted (that was the word used) adherence to the principles of his church. In one of these cities it was said to him more than once, that if he would only admit members of secret societies he would have the largest Presbyterian congregation in the city. I replied, "My rule is not the opinions of men, but the word of God, and numbers are not always an evidence of success, but not unfrequently the opposite." Seeming success bought at the expense of truth is too dear bought. It will prove a losing bargain. In one of our large cities, where the writer was sent to endeavor to gather up the *disiecta membra* of our congregation that seemed almost ready to die, he asked a very intelligent gentleman why it was that our cause did not succeed there. He at once replied: "The ministers you have sent here were not faithful to the principles of your church, they did not preach them, they did not enforce them. You were not, therefore, distinct from other churches, and as nothing was to be gained, or at least very little to be lost, people made convenience their rule, and united with other churches. "I believe," said he, "if you had sent ministers here that would have been faithful to your principles, through evil report and good report, instead

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS
AGAINST
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
IN THE
TESTAMENT WORSHIP.

BY REV. WM. WISHART, D. D.

First. The worship of God under the New Testament originated in the synagogue and not in the tabernacle or temple. It was little else than a continuation of the devotional services of the synagogue with the addition of the Christian Sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Our Divine Master honored the synagogue, not only by making it his custom while he was in the world, to teach and worship in it on the Sabbath day (*Luke* 4 : 15, 16), but also by selecting it as the pattern or model for his church under the present dispensation both with respect to government and worship. Hence by his spirit in the Apostle he exhorts his people in all places and at all times "not to forsake the assembling"—literally the *synagogueing*—"of themselves together as the manner of some is." *Heb.* 10 : 5. But in the worship of the synagogue there was confessedly no instrumental music.

Second. The New Testament is totally silent with respect to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God. Not a solitary text can be found to afford the least authority for it either by way of precept or example—in express words or by legitimate inference. We have in the New Testament both precept and example for vocal music in the worship of God, but not the slightest reference to instrumental as an accompaniment of it. Yet

when our Lord commissioned his Apostles to go and make disciples of all nations, he also required them to teach these disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded. *Matt. 28: 19, 20.* Can it be possible that it was his command or will that they should teach them to observe or employ instrumental music in the worship of God, when not a word of such teaching can be found in all their writings, nor a solitary example of such music among all the disciples whom they taught or in all the churches which they organized?

Third. As the New Testament is silent with respect to the use, so the old is equally silent with respect to the *optional* use of instruments in the worship of God. The optional theory which is the only theory for which the friends of instrumental music now generally contend, is as destitute of any foundation or warrant in the Old Testament as in the new. All the efforts that have been put forth in order to prove from the Old Testament that there is a *permissive* appointment of some things in the worship of God which does not require but merely authorize the observance of the thing appointed, have proved a complete failure. Is God so indifferent to his own appointments as to leave it optional with men whether to observe them or not? Is it consistent with his sovereignty, wisdom and goodness to appoint acts of worship and means of grace which men may either accept or reject at pleasure? It is not to be expected that an assumption so derogatory to the character of God, could find a warrant anywhere in the revelation of his will. Nay, there is no appointment of instrumental music in the Old Testament but what is imperative. The employment of it in the worship of the temple was in obedience "to the commandment of the Lord by his prophets (*II. Chron. 29: 25*), and the language by which it is prescribed elsewhere is in the form of authoritative command and exhortation. See *Psalms 33: 2; 81, 2, 3; 147: 7, and 149: 3.* But what warrant we would ask—does the imperative appointment of instrumental music under the Old Testament, afford for the optional theory, that *we may use it or not as we please.* If Old Testament appointment still remains binding under the present dispensation, it not only guarantees the privilege but imposes the obligation to use it, and those who under the plea of Old Testament appointment, claim the privilege, ought also to acknowl-

edge the obligation and duty. If not, they certainly should be able to show that there has been a change or relaxation of the original appointment by some competent authority, so far as to leave the use of instruments in worship to human choice or convenience.

Fourth. Instrumental music belonged to a carnal and typical system of worship which, we are clearly taught in the New Testament, was done away in Christ and to which we are exhorted not to return. This system the apostle described as a "shadow of good things to come," (*Heb.* 10 : 1), as "carnal ordinances imposed until the time of reformation," (*Heb.* 9 : 10), as "rudiments of the world" from which we are dead with Christ and "ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men" to which we are not to be subject (*Col.* 2 : 20-22), and as weak and beggarly elements" to which we are not to return (*Gal.* 4 : 9). To use instrumental music in New Testament worship, is to return to the weak and beggarly elements of a defunct system.

It may be said indeed that there were some things in this old ceremonial system which were of a moral and permanent nature, and did not pass away with the coming of Christ ; that the singing of Psalms, for example, was a part of that system and yet remains as an ordinance of worship under the New Testament. In reply we would say, might it not be possible that the singing of Psalms in *the form prescribed by the Old Testament ritual*, was after all but a ceremonial and typical service like the other services of a worldly sanctuary and that this ordinance under the present dispensation was founded on *New Testament* institution ? We cannot but think that the singing of Psalms by a select choir of Levites over the sacrifices, in connection with the music of harps and psalteries, and the sounding of the trumpets by the priests, was only a part of ceremonial and representative worship, and that the law which prescribed this form of *Psalm singing* has ceased to be in force under a dispensation in which we have neither Levites, nor sacrifices, nor priests blowing trumpets. Our New Testament law, which makes it the personal duty of all the faithful to sing *with grace in their hearts to the Lord* (*Col.* 3 : 15) or to *sing and make music*, not with harps and psalteries, *but with their hearts* to the Lord (*Eph.* 5 : 19), certainly seems to be a very different law.

It is believed and maintained by some, and that, we think, not without some reason, that all the instituted rites of Old Testament worship, as well as the worldly sanctuary in which it was performed, were ceremonial and transient, and so were abrogated by the death of Christ; and that New Testament worship has its foundation and warrant exclusively in New Testament appointment. It is indeed not the place in a summary of this kind to investigate this subject. But we may be allowed to say that it is not merely "the worldly sanctuary" but also the whole system of worship connected with it and called "ordinances of Divine service" (*Heb. 9:1*), that is declared by the Apostle to have been "a figure for the time then present" (verse 9). This whole system he also designates as consisting in "carnal ordinances imposed until the time of reformation" (*Heb. 9:10*), and as being "a shadow of good things to come" (*Heb. 10:1*). In other words he affirms of the whole system of tabernacle worship without indicating any specific or express exception, that it was typical and transient. Hence the presumption is, that all the ordinances of Old Testament worship, were abrogated by the death of Christ, and if any exception to this principle is claimed, the burden of proof rests upon him who claims it. He must be able to show—not merely that the ordinance or part of Old Testament worship which he claims to be moral and permanent, has not been specifically repealed, but that it is specifically recognized and approved in the New Testament.

Hence we lay it down as an incontrovertible principle that no ordinance of the Old Testament can still be in force under the present dispensation, unless it is clearly recognized and sanctioned in the New Testament. For if we go beyond this limit and introduce rites and ceremonies into the worship of God, solely on the ground of Old Testament appointment and without any recognition or sanction in the New Testament, then we shall have incense and altars and images and priestly vestments, and in the language of Dr. Candlish, there would be "no barrier in principle against the Sacerdotal system in all its fullness, against the substitution again in our whole religion of the formal for the spiritual and the symbolical for the real.

Fifth. It will add to the above argument when we consider that instrumental music is in its own nature external and

sensuous and in strict keeping with the peculiar externality and sensuousness of Old Testament worship. It naturally belongs to the category of carnal rites, imposing forms, and attractive ceremonies by which the worship of God under the former dispensation was adapted to the infantile state of the church; but is inconsistent with that simplicity and spirituality which is the distinguishing characteristic of New Testament worship and with respect to which it is so often put in contrast with the worship of God under the Old Testament. See *John* 4 : 23, 24; *Phil.* 3 : 3; *I. Peter* 2 : 5.

Sixth. That the praise of God under the present dispensation should be exclusively vocal, is intimated by the Apostle in *Heb.* 13 : 15: "By him therefore let us offer up the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." With respect to this passage let it be observed, 1. That it has reference to the formal worship of God; for the offering of sacrifice is formal worship. 2. That it has reference to the spiritual worship of the new testament, in distinction from, and in opposition to the symbolical and typical worship of the old; for it is the offering up of sacrifice through Jesus Christ, as our great High Priest, atoning sacrifice, and altar, "whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle," and to whom we can only come by forsaking the camp of Judaism and its ceremonial institutions. 3. That it has reference to the worship of God particularly in the ordinance of praise. The original words here rendered *sacrifice of praise* were used by the seventy to designate the thank-offering and are in the old testament rendered *sacrifice of thanksgiving*.—*Lev.*, 7 : 12. *Psalms* 50 : 14; 107 : 22, and 116 : 17. This sacrifice was offered under the former dispensation when some special mercy or great deliverance called for expressions of gratitude, and was the outward token and symbol of love and gratitude cherished in the heart and proclaimed by the tongue. The great salvation wrought out by Christ, of which all former deliverances were but faint shadows, calls for expressions of gratitude from all his followers. But this gratitude is formally expressed in the ordinance of praise. This is the part of formal worship especially intended for the exercise and manifestation of this grace. We offer up the spiritual sacrifice of thanksgiving or praise to God when we cherish love and gratitude in our hearts

and formally express it in the ordinance of praise. And this we are to do *continually*, that is, on *all stated and proper occasions*. But this praise—let it be observed—is particularly defined as being vocal: “it is the fruit of the lips giving thanks to his name.”

Seventh. When our Lord instituted the ordinance of the Supper, he and his disciples sang a hymn.—*Matt. 26: 30.* That is—as is generally admitted—they sang a portion of the inspired Psalter without any instrumental accompaniment, in the first institution and observance of this solemn ordinance—an ordinance which was to be observed as a memorial of Christ and of his gracious work till he comes again. And did he not leave us an example that we should follow his steps? Is not the Sacrament of the Supper to be observed not only in commemoration of his love but also imitation of his example? Is it then *Christ-like* for his professed followers to employ instrumental music in connection with the observance of this ordinance? But this is the great central ordinance of the new testament, with which all the other ordinances are connected and around which they cluster. And if instrumental music should not be employed in connection with the observance of this ordinance, it should not be employed at all, in New Testament worship.

Eighth. An argument may be derived from the history of the church: It speaks no good of instrumental music. It clearly shows the significant fact, that the purest and best periods of the church, since the days of the apostles, have, as a general rule, been marked by the exclusion of instrumental music from the worship of God, while its introduction and use have invariably been associated with the decay of vital piety, and with the blighting influence of a spirit of formality and worldly conformity. It is a historic fact which cannot be controverted, that it was not used in the primitive church, that the most eminent of the primitive fathers testified against it, that its introduction and use in the worship of God could not have been before the eighth or ninth century, or perhaps still later, when the church had become grievously corrupt—when the papacy had already arisen and the *man of sin—the son of perdition* that opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, was already revealed; that during the dark period of papal supremacy and domination, those faithful

witnesses for God, living in the valleys of Piedmont, who still continued to maintain the purity of apostolic doctrine and worship, excluded it from their worship—that at the time of the reformation from popery, all the leading reformers opposed it, and the best reformed churches excluded it from their worship—and that since that time, those denominations that have been most faithful in maintaining the principles of divine truth—most spiritual and devout, and most zealous for the honor of Christ and the glory of God, have still continued to exclude it. And if the present rage for it both in our own country and in Great Britain, is not the fruit and evidence of a serious decline of spiritual life and of a strong tendency to formalism and ritualism in the church, it must certainly be an exceptional case.

Ninth. Instrumental music tends to discourage and destroy congregational singing and so to contravene and thwart the true design of the ordinance of praise. This ordinance was evidently intended to be a medium through which all the faithful may and ought to express their love and gratitude to God—through which every mouth shall confess to God and every tongue extol his name. But when instrumental music is introduced into any branch of the church, the result invariably is, that to a great extent, the artistic and heartless music of a select few, is substituted in the place of the simple and heartfelt music of the many, who are all commanded *to sing with grace in their hearts to the Lord*, and the solemn ordinance of praise is degraded into a mere musical entertainment. It is vain to say that this result is not necessary nor intended. It is enough that it is, and always has been, the *actual result*, and that no good intentions have ever been able to prevent it. Nor will it ever be otherwise. Human inventions when permitted to have a place in the church, always have and always will make of none effect the commandments of God.



REPORT

OF

Committee on Resolutions.

Rev. D. W. CARSON, D. D., chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, submitted its report in the form of a series of resolutions :

WHEREAS, By the action of the General Assembly opening the way to the introduction and use of instrumental music in the worship of God, a crisis has been precipitated upon us in which it has become necessary to do something to secure our liberty and rights of conscience in the church, therefore, by this convention of ministers, elders and members of the United Presbyterian Church, it is

Resolved, 1. That whether the rule in our Directory was repealed or not, we assert that even without such rule, the Constitution of the Church, its Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Testimonies, Book of Worship, unwritten law and ancient usages preclude the use of musical instruments in worship in the United Presbyterian Church, and that they always have been and still are unlawful, and their intrusion on unwilling parties is a violation of personal liberty and the rights of conscience.

Resolved, 2. That standing, as we do, on the constitution and laws of the United Presbyterian Church as adopted at the time of the Union, we claim for ourselves the liberty of conscience guaranteed by that solemn compact, and we propose to remain steadfast and maintain our rights and liberties in the church by all legitimate means.

Resolved, 3. That without derogating from the just respect that is due to the General Assembly as the superior court of the church, we nevertheless claim that our obedience and submission is due to it only as its decisions are in accordance with the mind of Christ as expressed in the standards of the church.

Resolved, 4. That we concur in the protest of the minority in the last two General Assemblies against the action of the majority.

Resolved, 5. That the officers of this convention be instructed to memorialize the next General Assembly on behalf of this convention, asking the Assembly to declare that according to the standards of our church the use of instrumental music in worship is unlawful, and that in the event of its refusing this request the Assembly be asked to overture the subject on its merits.

Resolved, 6. That we pledge ourselves to stand by and support each other in the use of all legitimate means for the maintenance of the principles of our public profession and our just rights in the church.

Resolved, 7. That an executive committee of seven members, centrally located, with a corresponding member so far as possible from each Presbytery, be appointed, which shall be entrusted with the duty of giving effect to the action of this convention by calling ratification meetings in the different Presbyteries and in any other way judged advisable for securing unity and harmony of action throughout the church, and also have power to call a meeting of this convention at such time and place next year as shall be deemed advisable.

Pending the adoption of the first resolution, Rev. J. G. CARSON, D. D., addressed the convention as follows :

I think this is really the basis of the platform we are called upon to occupy. It presents to us this fact ; that instruments of music are unlawful in the United Presbyterian Church. And by unlawful, we mean that they are excluded by the authority of the divine law—the word of God as that word of God is expressed in the Confession of Faith and Testimony, the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter.

Mr. Chairman: I think it is time for us to clearly define this fact, that the law of the church is not in the Directory. The law of the church is in her standards which contain the statement of her principles—namely, the Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, larger and shorter, and the declarations of the Testimony. These are our banners, wherein we hold up and hold forth the law of God as we understand it, which is the only law in the church of Jesus Christ. There is no power in the church to legislate ; Jesus Christ is the supreme legislator, and all that the church has to do is to exhibit and apply the law of the King in reference to her government and worship. You may repeal the whole Directory for Worship, and yet we have got the law of God expressed in the Confession and Testimony, and it is by that law that we are governed, and there is no power that can repeal that. We say, therefore, that instruments of music in the worship of God can have no place in the United Presbyterian Church legally, unless they are there by the law of God—by God's authority. That is the only authority that we should recognize, and in all our history we have declared that by the authority of God they are excluded. How can they get into the United Presbyterian Church but in defiance of the authority of God's law ? Wherever they exist to-day in any congregation, they are there as intruders, in opposition to and in contravention of the law of God, as contained in the second commandment, as always understood by the church, which forbids

the use of anything in his worship which is not appointed. There is no power in one hundred General Assemblies to give liberty to any congregation or to any individual to do that which God does not give liberty to do. The General Assembly is only the voice of God, and it only has authority and respect when it speaks with the voice of God. To say that as a matter of opinion, congregations may use instrumental music carries with it no force that binds the conscience unless that opinion is founded on the word of God. To say as the last General Assembly did, that instruments of music are mere circumstances which do not require authority, is only a matter of opinion and is entitled to not one particle more weight than the weight that is to be attached to the judgment of those who voted for that opinion. I say they are not circumstances. They do need authority, and my opinion is just as good as the opinion of another one that says they are; let them point to the word of God; let them point to anything in our constitution and law that define them as circumstances, and then I submit. Now, Mr. Chairman, when we plant ourselves on this resolution, we are the United Presbyterian Church. They having instrumental music are rebels; it is assaulting our government. And although they are in possession of Washington, which the rebels were never able to take, still that does not affect the question of what is the duty of all loyal men to the government of God. If we recognize it as his law, it is our duty still to fight until we expel the rebels from the house of God, and restore the supremacy of his law throughout the whole church. That is the position that I have taken and is the position that I propose to occupy. As long as I have a mouth to speak and ability to utter my testimony, I propose to lift up my testimony in behalf of God's law, and the supremacy of that law in opposition to all forms of rebellion and intrusion, no matter how they may present themselves.

The first and second resolutions were unanimously adopted by a rising vote.

The third Resolution was then taken up.

REV. J. A. JAMISON, said:

"For my part I would like to stop with just what we have done. I feel, Mr. Chairman, that a large number who are in hearty sympathy with the resolutions just passed, are however, comparatively not posted with regard to the difficulties in the way, and from their standpoint of view will have such hesitancy in the matter, that our passing these ringing resolutions will have a tendency to keep them

from being united with us. Mr. Chairman, there are many families in the United Presbyterian Church that have had literature that has given them knowledge, and they are represented by this Convention. But there are very many families in the United Presbyterian Church who have not had these opportunities, who feel they must submit.

I submit to the wise-headed and good-hearted men and women here that we use a little policy as well as bravery.

REV. J. N. LEEPER, said:

When I remember of having heard and seen the presentation of one proposition after another from the minority of the Assembly of 1883, each of which was without much debate, answered—I was going to say with a heartless—I will say a ringing “no.” When a ruling majority is disposed to feel and act as though it owned the whole thing, there is a necessity, not by way of retaliation, God forbid that we should have or exhibit any such a spirit as that here, but that there is a moral necessity, so plain at least to me, that I am most heartily in favor of this resolution. Has the General Assembly not over-reached its power? We are not wronging it by the passage of this resolution. Has it gone too far? Then sir, the necessity is upon us to call a halt in that matter, in the spirit of Presbyterianism.

REV. THOMAS BALPH, D. D., said:

What is proposed here is to disclaim that we are in any sense rebelling against the authority of the General Assembly, or showing to the General Assembly, the Supreme Court of our church, any disrespect. We disclaim everything of that kind. We, however, claim for ourselves that there is due to the Supreme Court of any church respect and obedience in so far as the deliverances of any such Supreme Court are in accordance with the mind of Christ as expressed in the subordinate standards of the church, for the reason that the deliverances of such General Assembly are the mind of Christ. Now this is a proposition, brethren, to which I apprehend there can be no difference of opinion.

It has been hinted that probably we might get ourselves in the attitude of rebellion against the Supreme Court to which we have promised subordination, that is not our purpose, we do not place ourselves in antagonism to the General Assembly. We can only respect its authority, and it only asks us to respect its authority when its deliverances are in accordance with the word of God as embodied in our subordinate standards as we understand the word of God.

We are not then in rebellion here to-day, and we are not proposing rebellion in the United Presbyterian Church in what is presented in these resolutions.

REV. THOMAS BROWN, said :

I think this is a very important resolution we have before us now, and for this reason that it is the argument our brethren who are opposed to us, are making all the while. They are talking in their papers about us as rebels. They meet us on the street and tell us we are rebels. This convention is represented as a rebel convention. Some young brother in his enthusiasm compared us to the rebel convention that met somewhere before the war and declared war against the United States, the lawful authority of the country. It is no such thing. We are not a rebel convention. We do not propose rebellion. We are not in rebellion by any means.

We have all heard and subscribe to the declaration of one of our most eminent statesmen, when our country, our acknowledged country, that country to which we owe subjection, was legislating against the law of God in a very important matter. There is a higher law. We know no law higher than the law of God, and anything that comes in opposition to that law we are going to dispute.

The third and fourth resolutions were unanimously adopted, the vote being given by rising.

The fifth resolution was then taken up.

REV. C. T. M'CAUGHAN, D. D., said :

I think in some respects this is the most important resolution we have looking to the future work before us, and has some practical work in which we wish to be engaged, and therefore it ought not to pass, I think, without having our attention specially called to it. I don't know what is contemplated in the way of instruction to that committee. They are to prepare a memorial. I think that the resolution ought to go more into details, that the powers and duties of that committee should in some way be made more specific, as the practical work before us it will not be a small matter in the hands of that committee. True, to prepare a memorial may not be a very difficult or laborious matter, but the work that is desired to be accomplished by it in its successful circulation will be a large work. I don't know, Mr. Chairman, whether this is the proper time and place to enter very extensively into this matter, but I do feel that there are some small things connected with it that are important in order

to its success. A system is necessary by which the work will not be half done or quarter done, as it was before the last General Assembly.

DR. SAMUEL KERR, said :

Mr. Chairman, I think the circulation of these memorials is a very important matter, but I think it should be considered in connection with the conventions. If we wait for a little until we settle the matter of conventions, then we ought to appoint committees at that meeting, and let committees be appointed in every Presbytery, say three members in each Presbytery, and let these memorials be presented at these mass meetings, if I might so call them, because these conventions ought to be mass meetings. I believe in Butler Presbytery we can hold these meetings and perhaps have from one thousand to three thousand persons at each meeting. Mr. Chairman, you have lived long enough in Western Pennsylvania to know that Butler county is memorable for many things, but for nothing more than the number and quality of its United Presbyterians, and, can have, I think, from one to three thousand at some three points of Presbytery.

REV. THOMAS BROWN, said :

I feel that these resolutions will be of no benefit unless they are carried into practice, and hence I believe that this is one of the most important resolutions that you have before you. I doubt whether the plan proposed, at least I am not convinced the plan proposed will be the most successful in carrying it into effect, that is memorializing the next General Assembly. We had this tried once, and as remarked, it takes a great deal of labor to have these memorials circulated through the church. I know, sir, in the Presbytery of which I am a member, there were some congregations that did not know of the existence of that memorial at all, and the reason was their pastors frowned upon it and would not give notice that there was such a thing in existence. I know that was the case, Mr. Chairman, and I feel something similar would be the case now. I know, sir, that there are delegates upon this floor who were intimidated from coming to this convention, and the same spirit will be manifested in the circulation of these memorials.

ELDER HENDSLEY, said :

I am opposed to further memorializing. These instrumental pastors frown on any man who will circulate these memorials and charge him with stirring up strife. We do not want a divided church. I

am in favor of earnest, positive action, that will bring the church to realize her condition and secure from her an expression that will exclude instruments from her congregations.

SAMUEL ELLIOTT, said :

I am glad to see that this feeling is so unanimous throughout the church. These men who are afraid to work for the Master in opposition to the lower shepherd, it is high time that they should know their duty and that we are to work for God and fear God rather than man. There is a disposition, with all deference to the pastor in this convention, in the pastors of the United Presbyterian Church as well as other churches, to override and usurp authority as our assemblies have done at their last two meetings, and we can see the effects of that from the speeches that have been given here by the last two or three speakers. Now, sir, I am opposed to being priestridden by anyone. Now, sir, I like the way my neighbor from Butler county talks here, I think the only way you can reach this matter is by convention, calling people here in conventions of this kind. They are stimulated by being together. They are not so afraid of man as they are when at home. There are a great many people looking at this convention, and they have attempted to sneer at it, and I am very glad to say that this is something they cannot sneer at very cordially. When I came here, I came for the purpose of voting to disorganize or to separate. I have been looking at this question for two or three years, and I have been looking at it with regret. But since I have come to this convention I have changed my mind and will stick to the ship as long as I possibly can, and will do everything that I possibly can to open the eyes of our brethren to stick to the standards of the church, and if we cannot do that as has been intimated some time ago they will have to do away with us.

HON. JAS. DAWSON, said :

I think we have spent about as much time on this resolution as we ought to, and I want to say that I do not believe there is half the trouble in getting out a full sentiment of the church as a great many think for, I got signers to the memorial that was sent up here from eight congregations, and I went to them personally and presented them, and where I thought they might object I stated to them I would not for all the world have your name on here unless you want to have it there. We just want to give you a fair opportunity so that you will not complain you had not an opportunity to sign that memorial extended to you. You go all over the church in this way,

and you will find that the opposition will go down. All I should say my brethren, is, be strong and of good courage and go forward in this work. We must calculate to spend some time and some means to obtain this end. We must spend some money in putting the information before the people. That is necessary to reach those who are opposed to the present position of the church and to wake up the interest of the people.

REV. R. A. GILFILLAN, said :

There is one thought suggested by what has been remarked during the last few minutes to me. It has been suggested that the brethren on the other side of this question will suppress the circulation of the memorials, but if this Central Committee will make provision for reporting to the next Assembly all such attempts at gag law, and put that along with the memorial it would be just as strong as if it were signed and have as much effect. I believe where opposition is manifested to the circulation of these memorials, and where there is an effort made to keep it back and suppress it, by reporting that fact to the Assembly, you will make it work in favor of our position and against those that do not want it.

ELDER PUNTENNY, Esq., said :

I know from previous experience and am fully satisfied that we can never get with that memorial before the people. The purpose of this memorial as I understand it to be is to show the General Assembly of the church the number of the brethren of the church that oppose instrumental music in the church in worship, with two-thirds of the preachers against the elders, it is impossible to get anything like a showing of the strength of the United Presbyterian Church against instrumentation. And then again, I am opposed to it on a sacred principle, I want to give the General Assembly of our church to understand that when a memorial is presented to it by one single individual, if he has right on his side, if the principles of right are on his side I want to believe that my church will endorse that one single individual against the balance of the whole church. It looks to me like David numbering Israel, and I have an idea we will get into the same kind of trouble. Let us go forward in the truth, depending on our master and the loyalty of our church and we will succeed.

REV. CYRUS CUMMINGS, said :

I heartily agree with this assembly and this convention in about everything which I have heard, but with the sentiment of the brother who has taken his seat, I feel somewhat disposed to disagree. I hold

as he does that the law of God is on our side, and in respect to the standards of the church, and in respect to the teaching of the Bible on the great subject of instrumental music we are all right, and I believe that it is a lawful means which we may employ under the necessity of the case, and seeing that we are in the majority to memorialize the General Assembly and to reach as far as possible in Christian judgment every part and every congregation and person in the church, and if our ministerial brother is opposed to that memorial and will not give his consent, has he the right to keep his people under his peculiar notions of the matter?

REV. R. M'CREA, said :

I don't wish to consume the time of this meeting in regard to memorials ; I don't think it is anything that should make any trouble in the congregation. It is simply a means by which members can assert their rights in this matter, and it is the only means which members of the church have to assert their rights. In asserting these rights and in sending memorials to carry out their efforts, they are not interfering with the rights of any other member, or interfering in any way.

The Committee on Correspondence asked leave to report.

THE CHAIRMAN said :

There is so much of it that I have almost given up the idea of making a detailed report, and if you will permit it at this stage I will mention the names of persons from whom correspondence has been received. They are as follows: Andrew Fulton, Rufus Parke, H. J. Martin, Rev. J. C. Steele, D. Forsythe, J. B. Robertson, James Hill, James E. English, Rev. W. P. Currie, R. P. Patton, T. H. Pollock, A. P. Carmichael, A. F. Harper, Rev. Albert Gordon, William Ralston, James S. Thompson, Rev. J. N. Buchanan, J. L. Glasgow, Robert Burnside, W. C. Cooper, Rev. G. M. Wiley, Rev. T. C. Webster, Rev. W. C. Sommers, J. P. M'Culley, Rev. Jno. H. Bonner, Rev. J. A. McCullough, Rev. J. W. Johnson, Andrew Stranahan, Thos. McConnell, Rev. W. C. Lowreys, Alexander Knox, J. W. Buchman, and eight others ; and thirty-four members of Clarinda congregation, Rev. G. P. Raitt, W. P. Love, Rev. J. S. Buchanan, Andrew Stranahan, Rev. W. T. Moffett, Rev. J. C. White and Session, Rev. S. F. Clark and Session, John C. Rea, D. R. Littell, Robert Campbell, Rev. R. W. French, Rev. W. D. Ralston, Rev. J. T. Torrance, Rev. Jno. Cornin, D. D., Jno. M'Master, Geo. Morton,

Rev. J. A. M'Calmont, Rev. Wm. Melvin, Rev. J. H. Elliot and others, Rev. R. W. McBride, Rev. J. W. Logue, Rev. Robt. Armstrong, D. D., Jno. C. Lytle and others, John Jamieson.

THE CHAIRMAN :

This is assuming the form of a jubilee meeting and I desire to submit the following report. It is a most gratifying report. There are present in this convention persons from thirty-eight (38) Presbyteries, the number of elders and members, 399, ministers, 103, aggregating 502—half a thousand—460 of these are outside of Pittsburgh and Allegheny, extending from New York to Missouri. That should send a thrill of joy throughout the entire United Presbyterian Church, North and South, East and West.

The Discussion was continued.

DR. DICK, said :

According to the rule of Presbyterianism, the General Assembly is the highest court of the church, and is the last decision as to what the law is. The General Assembly may make mistakes, but undoubtedly according to our government the General Assembly has the last say-so as to doctrine, just as well as of discipline in the church. Now this is not a matter of discipline we ask, but it is for the General Assembly to say what is law. In other words, what is the doctrine on this subject? That is what we ask. We have expressed what we believe to be the standard of our church, and that law, we think, necessarily excludes the use of instruments; and we know that the General Assembly during the last two years has been adverse to this opinion of ours; but we are here planting ourselves on what we believe is the fundamental law of the Presbyterian Church, and we are standing as representatives of that church, and we ask the General Assembly to place herself as she should be, in the fore front of the United Presbyterian Church in maintaining the law, and to say that this is the law. And then there is more than this. The General Assembly not only has the right to say that is the law, but she has a right to say to every Presbytery to carry out that law, and if the Presbytery refuses, the General Assembly can exercise discipline, and she can exclude from the fellowship of the church any Presbytery that refuses to obey her. I know that our General Assembly three years ago, said, she had not the power to exercise it at once, but the fundamental law of Presbyterianism says that the General Assembly has the power, and that it is her duty, if any Presbytery refuses to carry out the laws or doctrine of the church, to exclude them from

fellowship, and put the Presbytery under discipline, just as the Session would put a brother under discipline for disobedience. I believe that is Presbyterianism. I believe that is what we ought to ask for. Then if the General Assembly does as the last two General Assemblies have done, misinterpret the law and send out bad influence, the church has a right to do what we are doing to-day, and you come together as a convention and tell that General Assembly that the position she has taken is wrong, and send a memorial to her, as the highest court of the church, as to what we want her to proclaim as law, and she will not refuse to do it.

REV. R. H. PARK, said :

There is one point I wish to be enlightened upon. I do not wish to detain the convention. It strikes me that even if this was granted, we have simply left ourselves open to another year's fight, from the fact that when we had the law, when the instruments came in, the Presbyteries would not do anything in reference to them. They refused again and again, when they knew the congregations were violating the law. I would like to have a clause added to this, that they will discipline these congregations. I believe that is the true sentiment, because as long as it is in the church, and no effort made to put them out, the time has come for us to act. Strike at it now. I am in favor of asking that of the next Assembly, which I believe will be of a different complexion from the last one. I have a doubt whether the standing committee on bills and overtures will be in existence.

REV. JOHN PATTERSON, said :

Mr. Chairman : The last two Assemblies have substantially said the very reverse of this. If the next Assembly has the right to reverse action of the two Assemblies, then has not the Assembly of 1885 the right to come in and reverse the action of Assembly of 1884? Then when will we get to an end? If one Assembly can undo the action of a former Assembly, and the next Assembly can undo and reverse the action again, so there will be no end. Now, I feel much safer to go before the people with the direct question, Shall instrumental music be authorized in the United Presbyterian Church, or something of that form? The use of instruments in our church, Mr. Chairman, has never been authorized by the people. It was simply a law that was not satisfactory, because of the reason embodied in it, and it was not contemplated when that law was before the Presbytery, that the repeal of it was the equivalent of the authorization

of the use of instruments, and the taking of instruments in. Under that is taking an advantage, as I believe, of those who voted on that overture ; but when the direct question comes before the Presbytery, Shall the use of instruments be authorized in the worship of God in the United Presbyterian Church? we have an entirely different question before them, and I believe on that question we have a clear majority.

REV. W. R. BALDRIDGE, said :

I want to say here that I want the action that is now taken to be on the direct question, because we cannot afford to stand before the world in the position in which we are now. I am in favor of an overture.

All the resolutions were adopted by a rising vote. (Want of space caused the omission of other matter.)

DR. JAS. HARPER, said :

A number of other papers have been prepared but not read. I would move this, that the convention express regret that owing to lack of time it is unable to hear all papers, but those prepared and not read be referred to the Committee on Publication, like the rest.

Motion was put and unanimously carried.

At 9:30 P. M., Gen. Ekin expressed regret that the time had come when he must leave, and on motion it was resolved, "That this convention express by a rising vote its great gratification in having been favored with the presence of Gen. Ekin, and its thanks to him as its presiding officer, for the dignity, courtesy and impartiality with which he has discharged his duties."

Gen. Ekin then took farewell of the meeting in the following words:

Chairman and Brethren of the Convention :—The hour has arrived that compels me to withdraw from the convention. Responsive to the request of the Chairman of the Central Committee I reported to this convention for the express purpose of attending exclusively to it and its business. I am compelled to leave in an hour for Louisville. I expect to be on the cars in the course of an hour, and to turn my face towards my official station. But before leaving you I desire with my whole heart to express the obligations I am under. I appreciate the kindness and courtesy that I received at your hand ; these remembrances shall be cherished so long as I live. I am rejoiced that in the providence of God I was permitted to attend this

great convention. I rejoice that an opportunity was afforded me to look into the faces of the brethren whom I have known for years, although many of them I had not met before face to face, and I shall carry with me to my home the recollections which I trust will never grow dim so long as I live, of the pleasant associations connected with this remarkable outpouring of the people. I have met those with whom I associated in former years, and some of the meetings to-day were very impressive indeed. I met brethren, and the tears rolled down their cheeks as they related to me the trouble through which the church was passing and the sacrifices they were willing to make in order to restore her to her proper place, claiming that they were the true United Presbyterians, and those who had departed from it were not in good standing in the church. One touching incident, though, I must mention. The widow of the Rev. M. McKinstry, formerly pastor of Bethesda Congregation, in this county, came to me and said she had come expressly to the city at considerable inconvenience to herself for the purpose of attending this convention and taking me by the hand. "I regard you," said she, "as the representative of my good, dead husband. You know where he would stand if he were here to-day." And there almost in the shadow of the church I remember that there is the grave of one whose name is a household word still in the families of our beloved church. From the grave of the distinguished John T. Pressly, who is sleeping within a few hundred yards of this building, comes down to us to-night from that silent home the admonition, "Be ye faithful until death, and God, even our covenant God, will give you the crown of life." I come drawn by my attachment to the church with which I have been connected for so many years.

For her my tears will flow ;
 For her my prayers ascend ;
 To her my care and toils be given,
 Until care and toil shall end.

I bid you all an affectionate farewell.

The Vice-President, Rev. D. W. CARSON, D. D., took the chair.

On motion:

Resolved, "That the Central Committee appointed during the meeting of the last General Assembly be a permanent Executive Committee to carry out the object of this convention."

On motion:

Resolved, "That the thanks of the convention be tendered to the officers and trustees of this church for their generous permission to the convention to use it for their meeting."

On motion:

Resolved, "That the thanks of this convention are due and are hereby given to all those who have afforded entertainment and accommodation to members of the convention, and to those who have so liberally subscribed to bear the burdens of publication."

On motion, the minutes of the convention were referred to the Secretary and Committee on Publication to prepare for publication.

On motion, the convention adjourned after singing a psalm and receiving the benediction.

This terminated the first great convention of those who are opposed to the introduction of instrumental music into the worship of the United Presbyterian Church. The meeting was characterized by its large attendance, more than five hundred delegates being present, by freedom of discussion and the general harmony of the views expressed, by resolute advocacy of their cause, and by determination to carry to success the object so dear to them. Enthusiasm pervaded the entire meeting.

A very pleasant feature of the convention was the reverent solemnity of the devotional exercises frequently engaged in during the extended sessions of the two days.

ED. F. REID, *Secretary.*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

REV. D. S. LITTELL, Clokey, Washington Co., Pa., <i>Chairman.</i>	
REV. R. AUDLEY BROWNE, D. D.	J. W. ARROTT, ESQ.
REV. D. W. CARSON, D. D.	WM. FLOYD, ESQ.
REV. J. M. FULTON.	HON. WM. HILL.



M.D.

SA

E.K.