

brain, is overwrought; but the true reason, in most instances, is the lack of the habit of application. Facility of memory and quickness of perception allow much time for hurtful leisure. By degrees, a contempt is engendered for close and continuous study. And in after life, when success depends upon perseverance, the dunce of the class may take the lead in respectable usefulness. Success in study is due, in a great measure, to strict application and rigid abstraction. The student must obtain the mastery of the senses, passions, and faculties, of knowledge. We may not shrink from labor. "Much study is a weariness to the flesh." But there is no royal road to learning. In intellectual, as in material pursuits, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich."

## ARTICLE V.

### A DENIAL OF DIVINE RIGHT FOR ORGANS IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

An article in favor of organs, as instruments to praise God with, appeared in the last number of this REVIEW, from the pen of one of our most learned and eminent ministers. It may be fairly considered, therefore, (especially as it is well known that he has given years of meditation and research to the subject,) the embodiment of all that can be said on that side of the question. We propose to give the essay a candid and fair examination.

Dr. Smyth begins his argument for the use of machines in God's worship, with this statement: "It is by no means improbable that the mystic words attributed to Jubal," [*Lamech?*] (see Gen. iv. 23,) "*may be* [his own Italics] a penitential song to which he was led to adapt the pensive tones of the harp and the ORGAN by the guiding providence of God's redeeming mercy." And he refers, apparently as authority for this conjecture, to "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible—Art. Jubal." That article says nothing like this. The article *Lamech* also, amongst various

explanations of this poem, makes no suggestion such as Dr. Smyth has allowed himself to ascribe to this work. The article concludes thus: "Herder regards it as Lamech's song of exultation on the invention of the sword by his son, Tubal Cain, in the possession of which he foresaw a great advantage to himself and his family over any enemies. This interpretation appears, on the whole, to be the best that has been suggested. \* \* \* \* This much is certain, that they are vaunting words, in which Lamech seems from Cain's indemnity to encourage himself in violence and wickedness."

From this altogether unsupported conjecture about Lamech's adapting his "penitential song" to one of Jubal's organs, our author immediately draws the weighty conclusion: "From the beginning, therefore, instrumental music, both mechanical and vocal, has been consecrated to God's worship in the aid of penitence and piety."

Waxing rapidly stronger as he advances, his very next sentence is: "Certain it is, that such instruments as the harp and organ have been always regarded as sacredly associated with God's worship and the praises of his redeemed people, *under every economy* [the Italics his own] of the church militant," etc. He even pretends to identify Jubal's organ with ours, declaring this to be "the most ancient of all" instruments. It is named, he says, in Job xxi. 12; we will not dispute it—that is an account of the music of the wicked. It is named, he says, in Daniel iii. 5; suppose it be so—what of it? That is a description of Nebuchadnezzar's idol-instruments of music. Again, he says it is named in Psalms lvii. 8; but *our* Hebrew Bible does not read so. He says, once more, it is named in Psalms cl. 4; but that is not exactly the same word. He may find it named in Job xxx. 31. But no where else in the Hebrew Scriptures, as we believe, except in these three or four places, is this instrument mentioned. In truth, we know little, and Dr. Smyth also knows little, (and that little not very good,) about Jubal's *hug-gab*; but one thing is to be remarked—Lightfoot, in his elaborate description of the instruments of music in the temple,\*

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\* Lightfoot on the Temple Service, chap. vii. sec. ii.

does not mention it at all; so that, even if it were identical with our organ, it does not seem to have got access to the house of God. It may serve to moderate Dr. Smyth's confidence in his opinion of the organ's being undoubtedly a development of Jubal's instrument, if we add that Smith's Dictionary gives reasons for identifying the *huggab* with "Pan's pipe;" also with the Italian *viola de gamba*, which is in the form of a fiddle, and is played on with a bow of horse hair; and also, thirdly, with the psaltery; and, fourthly, with the dulcimer, which last two are perhaps something like the modern guitar.

Recurring to our author's introductory statement respecting instrumental music, we would observe, that in the sequel and throughout the whole article, there is absolutely no evidence whatever furnished for his extraordinary theory. Building it on a "by no means improbable *may be*," he leaves it to stand alone, without any attempt at proof to keep it from falling. Some few irrelevant quotations from authorities of little weight in this discussion (such as Prof. Bush, the poet James Montgomery and the pagan author Plutarch) are brought in, with frequent poetical extracts, the whole filling up six pages: but not a particle of evidence is offered to substantiate that opening conjecture nor the bold assertions founded thereupon!

The next eight or ten pages of this article contain nothing upon which it is necessary for us to make any comment, except that we cordially agree with the greater part of the distinguished author's sentiments as therein expressed. We join with him in urging upon every individual his duty, if possible, to take part in the praise of God publicly by joining in the singing. We reiterate what he says, (p. 528,) that "in our Presbyterian churches this is the only portion of worship in which the people generally can take an active and audible part;" and we add, that this is now one great objection to the organ and the choir, that they do tend, both of them and either of them, to rob the people of this, their ancient privilege, and that like complaints were made in the Church of old. (See Bingham's *Christian Antiquities*, Book III., chap. vii., sec. ii., and Book XIV., chap. i., sec. xiii.; and also Kurtz's *Text Book of Church history*,

vol. i., p. 234.) We particularly like what Dr. Smyth says of the relation in which the praises of God stand to “the responsible direction and the supervision of the spiritual officers of the Church.” We join with him in protesting that “it must therefore be considered as a most serious and fatal mistake when the whole order and arrangement and control” of this matter “is left so entirely; as it is in many of our congregations, to the choir or the corporation, instead of the spiritual government of the Church.” (P. 529.) In the Presbyterian Church, it is not the business of the *congregation, directly*, or of any fraction of the congregation, to regulate the praise of God. As well might they undertake to direct what instructions should issue from the pulpit, or what decisions the session must make upon matters of church discipline. Independency commits these affairs to the people directly, but our church government does not. The idea of the congregation’s meeting together and deciding to introduce or to exclude instrumental music; of their assembling to appoint a performer on the instrument, whether of good or of bad principles and morals; and the idea of a few members of the congregation, whether young or old, male or female, professors or non-professors of religion, assuming without a call from the rulers of God’s house to direct and control the methods of his awful praise, are quite subversive of Presbyterianism. Dr. Smyth would render a good service to the Church, if he would exert himself to procure a deliverance on this particular point, agreeable to his views, from our church courts, and to have it enforced.

We come at length to perceive clearly the use which our author designed to make of his introductory conjecture. On page 530, we read: “And if, therefore, the use of instrumental music can be shown to have existed in religious services from the beginning, the impropriety of its continued use can only be established by a plain and positive enactment of Christ, the great lawgiver of his Church, prohibiting its further use.” Is he about to furnish the needful proof of his first assertion, as might now be expected? Not at all. He is only repeating his original assertion, for the sake of the impression he hopes to

make by it upon the mind, expecting the reader to be satisfied with his repetition of the assertion; and designing to draw from it the inference that mechanical praise once established by divine authority, an express prohibition of it from God is necessary to its abrogation. Again and again, therefore, we find this mere empty assertion repeated, and the baseless inference again and again made, that the Christian Church is not to be restricted to praise with the human voice alone, without positive injunction in the Scripture to that effect. And thus we are brought to Part II. of the essay: THE DIVINE RIGHT ESTABLISHED AND OBJECTIONS MET.

The author's *first argument* in favor of a divine right for using mechanical instruments in God's worship, is its accordance with the feelings and the practice of men, which he chooses to characterise as "the best feelings and most sacred and holy practice of men in all ages."

Dr. Smyth refers upon this point to the admissions of "*The London Ministers*." Now, we are willing to accept what the authors of that celebrated treatise did really say on this subject; but it appears to us that our author has not exactly apprehended their meaning. They properly represent the light of nature as mere "relics," "fragments," and "glimmerings" of the original light; and they say truly, "So far as this light of nature, after the fall, is a true relic of the light of nature before the fall, that which is according to this light may be counted of divine right in matters of religion." It is not "the light of nature," but "the *true* light of nature" they value; just as we always distinguish between reason and *right* reason. Our author himself had told us (p. 259) that man is by nature carnal, worldly, formal, and ritualistic in his spirit and taste." It is not, therefore, what this carnal and ritualistic taste approves in worship that can be said to be in accordance with the "true" light of nature. The London ministers say rightly (Part I., chap. ii., p. 23): "All human inventions herein, (that is, in doctrine, worship, or government,) whether devised of our own hearts or derived as traditions from others, are incompatible and inconsistent herewith [that is, with divine right]; vain in themselves and to

all that use them, and condemned of God.” “Surely Dr. Smyth does not need to be informed that every religious doctrine and every religious institute which man’s heart devises has always been and must always be abominable before God.

The *second argument* of our author is from Scripture examples. But most of these are from the Old Testament, and so we pass them by in silence. He comes at length to the New Testament argument, and we look now to see him put forth his strength. We expect at least several pages of solid Scripture reasoning. We are put off with only two pages, (pp. 543, 545,) not very solid, nor very scriptural. First and foremost, the introductory *conjecture* about Jubal, that had no proof, is appealed to. Instruments have been lawful under all former dispensations, and a prohibition is now requisite before they can be condemned. What a pity the author had not taken more pains with the foundation work of his edifice! Evidently he himself is not satisfied with it; but he proceeds to adduce his examples from the Gospels. These are of course very few, and the proof they furnish rather slender. Let us examine them.

The first is from our Saviour’s “uttering no reproof” to the minstrels in the ruler’s house: as though he must be understood to approve all which he did not in words reprove, and as though we could argue from his tolerating the hiring of minstrels for mourning in private houses to his sanction of the use of instruments in God’s house. In point of fact, however, Dr. Smyth cannot say that our Lord uttered no reproof whatever; for Mark, narrating this same event, tells us that Jesus saw the tumult made by those noisy minstrels, and said to them, “Why make ye this ado?” and then put them all out of the house. (Mark v. 38, 39.) His first example, therefore, breaks down completely under the weight he requires it to carry.

The second example is where Jesus “does not hesitate to *liken himself* unto children calling to their fellows and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced,” etc.. Dr. Smyth says, in Italics, that Jesus likened *himself* to these children; but Matthew says he likened *that generation* to those children. Surely, however, this example, even if Christ’s comparison had

been of himself, furnishes but slender proof for the use of machines in God's worship. It proves too much for Dr. Smyth; for it makes out, on his principle of interpretation, the divine right of dancing as well as organs in the house of God.

The third example is from the use of music on the return of the prodigal son; as though we could reason from such private customs of the Jews to the public worship of God. But we may say of this example, also, that it proves too much for Dr. Smyth. It warrants dancing as much as instruments in the house of God, for they are mentioned in the parable together.

Now, after searching the New Testament diligently for "Scripture examples which are made obligatory by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ, by whose Spirit those examples were recorded in Scripture for the imitation of believers," (p. 537,) these three are all which our author is able to adduce. Let the reader consider them attentively, for they constitute the whole argument, from New Testament examples, for the divine right of machines in the worship of the New Testament Church. The noisy minstrels, whom Jesus did reprove, used instruments of music; the children in the market places piped and danced; and the prodigal's father rejoiced with music and dancing; and therefore the organ is of divine right in the Church! ! Would not Dr. Smyth's argument have been a little better, if he had not made any appeal to New Testament examples at all?

Our author next refers to the symbolical representations in the Book of Revelation: "John saw and heard harpers in heaven." We need only remark, that if the Lord shall actually give his saints real harps to harp his praises on when they reach the upper sanctuary, they will, of course, have the highest divine right to be *there* used. All that is lacking in the divine right *here* is the commandment of the Lord by his apostles, either perceptively or by example. But with reference to the harps mentioned in this symbolical book, let it not be forgotten, that as truly as John saw *harpers*, so truly he saw *a lamb* in the midst of them, and that a lamb *as it had been slain*. Manifestly, it will not do to press any argument from these symbols, or it might be proved that the redeemed in heaven worship a

lamb in its blood, and also that we might introduce such an object of worship into our churches now. So also it might be proved that we should all be clothed in white robes and have branches of palm in our hands whenever we assemble in the house of God.

Dr. Smyth attempts only one more proof from the New Testament. It is founded upon Eph. v. 19 and Col. iii. 16, where “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and melody in the heart to the Lord, and singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord,” are enjoined. He argues that psalms were anciently sung with musical instruments, and must, therefore, to be sung with perfect propriety, be still united with instrumental music.” (P. 544.) But the apostles did not sing them with instrumental accompaniments, and was their singing therefore not “with perfect propriety?” And our Lord sang one of them with his disciples just before he was crucified, with no instrument accompanying; and was his singing, too, therefore not “with perfect propriety?”

But our author argues from the etymological derivation of ψάλλοντες (which is the touching or striking of the chords of a stringed instrument,) that we must praise God with machines. The difficulty with his argument is this: the word ψάλλοντες here is not used alone, but the apostle connects with it τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ. And thus it is a *striking of the chords in our hearts to the Lord* which he commands; or, as our translators write it, “making melody in our hearts to the Lord.” Indeed, the language of the apostle entirely excludes instruments, and authorises only praise with the voice; for he plainly tells us to *speak* to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and to *sing* and to strike the chords (not of harps, but) *of our hearts* to the Lord. We may well say, therefore: “*Non vox sed cotum; non musica chordula, sed cor; non clamans sed amans psallit in aure Dei.*”

But the Doctor brings in Poole’s name, and would have us believe his views are sanctioned by that high authority. He will necessarily be understood by the reader as signifying that Poole asserts the word ψάλλοντες to allude to an instrumental accompaniment of the human voice in the apostolic Church!



As sometimes happens, however, when a writer is given to quoting, the very authority he appeals to is against him here. Upon this very passage, (Eph. v. 19,) Poole remarks as follows: "Psalms are songs, as those choice verses of David and others, which in the temple were accustomed to be fitted to harps and psalteries. In those are many things which Christians may profitably recite amongst Christians. But the Response to the Orthodox No. 107, by Justin, (or whoever the author may be,) teaches that the primitive Christians sang with the voice alone, not with any instruments accustomed to be added."\*

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\* In the *Corpus Confessionum*, we have the *Orthodoxus Consensus* made up of testimonies from the fathers, and amongst them of Justin Martyr, who lived from A. D. 114 to A. D. 165. In Articulus x., p. 214, this sentence is attributed to him: "Ecclesia non canit instrumentis inanimatis, sed cantu simplici." *The Church does not sing with inanimate instruments, but with simple singing.*

Referring to the book from which this is taken, viz., to the *Questiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos*, (published amongst his writings, though considered as not from Justin's pen,) we find the sentiment thus expressed in fulness: "Non canere simpliciter parvulis convenit, sed cum inanimatis instrumentis canere et cum saltatione et crotalis: quare in ecclesiis reseca-tur ex canticis usus ejusmodi instrumentorum atque aliorum parvulis convenientium, ac simplex relictus est cantus." Simple singing does not suit little children, but they must sing with inanimate instruments, and with dancing and clapping of hands; wherefore in our churches the use of that sort of instruments and of the other things which befit little children, is cut off, and simple singing is left. The allusion evidently is to the puerile estate of the Jewish people, for whom, as children, instruments of music and things of that sort were provided. In the same way, Calvin speaks of instrumental music as "childish elements provided for the Jews as under age." See Comment. on Psalm xcii. 4. He adds: "Now that Christ has appeared and the Church has reached full age, it were only to bury the light of the gospel, should we introduce the shadows of a departed dispensation."

The "learned Joseph Bingham" himself, of the Church of England, gives a full account of the service of God's praise in the early Church. "From the first and apostolic age," he says, "singing was always a part of divine service in which the whole body of the Church joined together." "The whole assembly joined together; men, women, and children united with one mouth and one mind in singing psalms and praises to God. This was the most ancient and general practice till the way of alternate psalmody was brought into the Church. Thus Christ and his apostles sung the

We have now considered the whole argument of Dr. Smyth, and we submit that he has not made a single point. Founding his edifice upon a mere conjecture, which will not bear the slightest examination, he argues all the way through from misconceptions and misapplications of Scripture. To show a divine warrant for using instruments in God's house under the Christian dispensation, he reasons, first, from what he conjectures may have occurred amongst the seed of the accursed Cain in their separation from the believing line of Seth; next, he builds on the feelings and tastes of our fallen nature; then he appeals to a variety of examples from the Old Testament—many irrelevant and not one of any force in the present discussion; coming after this to the New Testament, and professing thence to *establish* the divine right of instrumental music, it is the hired minstrels mourning and wailing, for show and for hire, in the ruler's house; and the children piping and dancing in the market place and the mercenary musicians and dancers in the house of the prodigal's father, whom he would have our New Testament Church imitate, although we have inspired apostles to set us a different pattern of worship. Finally, the appeal is to some passages in the epistles of Paul, from which is wrung out a meaning which they

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hymn at the last supper, and thus Paul and Silas at midnight sung praises unto God." The reader can find in Bingham's *Antiquities* a full account of that antiphonal singing which Dr. Smyth appears somehow to mix up so strangely with instrumental music. But he will also find, with this, the invectives of the fathers, quoted by Bingham, against the introduction of "secular musick into the grave and solemn devotions of the Church;" of "theatrical noise and gestures," and of "singing after the fashion of the theatre in the Church." "Let the servant of Christ," says Jerome, "so order his singing that the words which are read may please more than the voice of the singer,"—an admonition which at once rebukes the levity of our choirs oftentimes, and condemns the very principle of any attempt, under a purely spiritual dispensation like the present, at praising God with solemn sounds which have no sense—mere wind. See Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book III., chapter vii., and book XIV., chapter i. See also, for many interesting details of the history of psalmody and hymnology, and what subsequently becomes ecclesiastical music aided by instruments, Kurtz's *Text Book of Church History*, Vol. I., pp. 70, 124, 125, 233, 443, 481.

will not bear, and to a symbolic representation in the Revelation. And is our erudite divine forced to acknowledge that this is the whole of what can be said for the divine right of machinery in the praise of God?

We proceed now to set forth briefly the grounds upon which we object to instrumental music in the public worship of God. We say the public worship of God, because the question, as we discuss it, concerns nothing less and nothing else. In the language of John Owen, "it is of the instituted worship of his public assemblies that we treat."\* In the private worship of the individual, there may be more liberty, because there is less rule. And we are commanded to stand fast in our liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. (Gal. v. 1.) Easy indeed is it for us to be "entangled again with the yoke of bondage," and dangerous to be volunteering the sacrifice of any portion of our freedom. Calvin says: "We are not forbidden indeed to employ musical instruments in private life, but they are banished out of the churches by the plain command of the Holy Spirit, when Paul, in 1 Cor. xiv. 13, lays it down as an invariable rule that we must praise God and pray to him only in a known tongue."† The same distinction he points out elsewhere, in these words: "Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints only in a known tongue."‡

To the following statement of principles we suppose true Presbyterians in general will cordially agree:

1. God is a jealous God; not less so now than he was under the former dispensation. God is also most holy, and cannot behold evil. Having violated law and become a fallen and polluted creature, man naturally could offer no greater insult to God than to draw nigh to him with institutes and forms of worship. Such presumption must provoke God to consume the insolent offender. The offering of such worship at all to God by a fallen creature must, therefore, necessarily be a commanded thing, or else it will be insulting and wicked. In the very na-

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\* Discourse Concerning Liturgies, chap. ii, works vol. xix., p. 405.

† Comment on Psalm lxxi. 22.

‡ Comment on Psalm xxxiii. 2.

ture of the case, worship must originate not with man, but with God. It must not be a thing of man's invention, but of God's permission—nay, command; although, of course, the command might be general, and in many particulars the individual be left to the use of liberty.

But if God should condescend to set up his house on the earth, and to invite sinners into it for his worship; if he should take in hand to erect a Church in this world, which should be his chosen abode, where his people should enjoy the special manifestations of his presence; then might we expect to find him peculiarly jealous respecting all his own appointments in and for that house. Such an institute might be expected to be from beginning to end and in all its parts a positive one, having for its most essential feature and its most fundamental requisite a *Jus Divinum*. It follows that it would necessarily be a matter of pure revelation, and must always be practised precisely as revealed. Not earth-born, but descended from heaven, it would be not the offspring of our will, but of God's will made known. Our place would therefore be not to volunteer any additions to it, nor any improvements of it, but carefully to follow his directions concerning it. A most awful thing, this public worship of God would have to be paid by us in reverence and godly fear; not in a slavish but filial spirit. Now, God has done this very thing, and it becomes us to be afraid lest, by any corruption of his holy, revealed, public worship, we should prove to be offensive in his sight. He requires of us a docile spirit respecting the methods of our worship in his house. The reason why will-worship is so abominable is that it is essentially the offspring of irreverence and pride. Hence, the very thought of our undertaking to improve this institute of God ought to be dreadful to our minds. In vain could we hope to worship him acceptably according to the commandments or the devices of men. Such things have always been abominable with God, and he has repeatedly resented any intermeddling with his most sacred institutes.

The Scriptures furnish many signal instances of God's severity against those who, by ignorance or carelessness or wilful

neglect, have (to make use of John Owen's expression) "miscarried in not observing exactly his will and appointment in and about his worship." Such was the case of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron (Levit. x. 1, 2); of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Numbers xvi. 3, 9, 32, 33); of Eli and his house, the iniquity of which was not to be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever (1 Sam. ii. 28-30, and iii. 14); of Uzza, in putting the ark into a cart when he should have borne it upon his shoulders,\* (or perhaps for his rashness in touching it when shaken by the oxen,) referred to by the prophet David under the expressive phrase, "For that we sought him not after *the due order*" (1 Chron. xv. 13); of Uzziah the King, in venturing to volunteer the service of the priesthood in the very temple. (2 Chron. xxvi. 16.) In the revelation made by God to Moses respecting the tabernacle, and to David respecting the temple, God was very exact in the pattern each was to follow. (See Exodus xxv. 40, Numbers viii. 4, and 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 19.) Indeed, throughout the whole history of God's Church on the earth, the acceptable worship of God has been always that which himself ordained. Man, having the breath of God in his nostrils and made in God's image, has the Sabbath given to him, and is placed in Eden with a specific revelation of God's will, and his own duty. When he sins, God teaches him how to worship by sacrifice. He manifests himself continually to those who, in faith, approach him thus with the sacrifice of blood. Thus to Adam, to Abel, to Seth, to Enoch, and to Noah, (but not to Cain nor to his immediate descendants, so far as we are informed, whether to Lamech or to Jubal.) God constantly reveals his will; and these and such as these constitute his Church upon the earth, calling on the name of the Lord and separated from unbelievers. In the matter of Noah's salvation by the ark, very specific directions were given, and he did "according unto all that the Lord commanded him." (Gen. vii. 5.) The religion practised by Abraham and his sons was a revealed one. It is by faith he leaves his country, dwells in tents, offers sacrifices, and practises circumcision. When we come down to Moses' time,

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\* See Owen's Short Catechism. Works, Vol. xix., p. 501.  
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God very expressly says to him: “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it.” (Deut. iv. 2, and xii. 32.) Of Jeroboam it is recorded that he made calves and made a house of high places and made priests, which were not of the sons of Levi, and ordained a feast like unto the feast in Judah, and appointed a month for it, which he “had *devised of his own heart*.” (1 Kings xii. 28, 31.) Of Israel it is said, they provoked God to anger with their own inventions. (Ps. Cvi. 29, 39.) Jehovah denounces wrath and woe upon the people, because “their *fear* (that is, their worship) toward me is taught by the precept of men.” (Isaiah xxix. 13.) Coming down to the times of our Lord, we hear him saying almost in the same words: “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Matt. xv. 9, and Mark vii. 7.) Paul to the Colossians condemns all “will-worship,” where the very idea he communicates is precisely this: that whatever in worship is volunteered, that is not commanded, is forbidden. (Col. ii. 18, 23.) Moreover, he proves that the tribe of Judah had nothing to do with Aaron’s priesthood, from the *silence* of Moses: “of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood.” (Heb. vii. 14.) So that, in the words of an old divine, “we may use this apostolical argument against Popish inventions (and Protestant inventions, too): Neither Moses nor any other penman of Scripture spake any thing of worshipping God in such and such a manner; therefore these human appointments are no more acceptable to God than Uzziah’s offering of incense.

2. In this aspect, God’s worship appears to be just as far above the domination and control of man as are those other two divine institutes, viz., the doctrine and discipline of his house. These three are equally of divine right; and alterations of either are equally dishonoring to God. All three are perfect, and we insult him, who reveals them whenever we pretend that either one of them needs improving, or that we are capable of mending it.

But God, who is the author of these three institutes, exercises his sovereign right of developing and completing the doc-

trine and of altering at pleasure the forms and methods of the discipline and worship of his house. At first, every father of a family was the priest of it; then Aaron and his sons were called; now every Christian is a priest unto God. At first, sacrifices with blood were the most special and acceptable mode of worship to Jehovah; now they would be sins of the very deepest dye. Moreover, at first, these sacrifices were as acceptable to God in one place as in another; afterwards they were acceptable only when offered at the tabernacle, and after that again only at the temple; and to offer them elsewhere was extremely offensive to the august majesty of heaven. So, also, once there was a temple and a temple service divinely ordained, with its altars of sacrifice and incense, its priests of different grades, its holy and most holy places, with their different appurtenances; its purifications and its festivals; its choirs, its instruments of music, and all its gorgeous as well as complicated and burdensome ceremonial. But all these things were only for a time and a purpose. They were to be a schoolmaster to point to Christ and to train the Church, then childish and ignorant, for his coming. Then, when he came, it was abolished, and no part of it now remains. The Abrahamic covenant with its promises, and the government of the Church by elders and the simple forms of worship of the synagogue, continue and shall continue to the end, for so the New Testament teaches us. But we may not go back to the use of any part or parcel of what belonged to the temple. All of it might as well be introduced amongst us of the Christian Church, as any part of it. Once lawful, all of it, because commanded; now no part of it is lawful, because not commanded by the inspired apostles, either perceptively or in their example.

3. The only question open to us, then, respecting the divinely revealed doctrine, government, and worship, is, What did the apostles establish? Until they discharged their commission, all three of these institutes of God were yet incomplete; but it was their office to perfect and finish them. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, in order to complete the canon of Scripture;

leaving then in our hands the whole word of God, unto which nothing is ever to be added. They were also inspired to organise the Christian Church and establish it in the world. They did so. Christ himself had ordained the Lord's supper and baptism. It was for the apostles to declare that these were to supplant circumcision and the passover. It was for them to declare the abolition of the ceremonial law and the confirmation of the moral. It was for them to make known the severance now and forever of Church and State, and that the Church was now to embrace Gentiles as well as Jews, and being no longer shut up in Judea, was to spread over the whole earth. It was for them to identify the Church of their day and of the whole future with the Church in Abraham; to proclaim the universal priesthood of believers and the sole eternal high-priesthood of Jesus; to make known a government by presbyters to be the only lawful rule in God's house, then and now, as of old; and to legalise for us and for the Church to the end—what forms of worship? the temple forms, or any portion of them? No! but the forms of another divine pattern lying far back of that. They gave us a copy of an ancient institute for the social and continual assembling of Israel every Sabbath and oftener, all over the land, in places convenient to them, and not, as in the distant temple at Jerusalem, only three times a year. They gave us for our model the synagogue worship, (as they did the synagogue government,) with its reading and preaching of the word, and its singing with the voice, without any instruments accompanying,\* and its praying, and its fellowship in collections for the poor, and its discipline of charity and faithful love.

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\* Lightfoot says: "Every synagogue had its trumpet to publish the coming in of the New Year and the Sabbath day, and also the excommunication of any." Vitringa adds to these, the use of it for their "fast days." Lightfoot finds in no Jewish writer any account of the trumpet in the synagogue at almsgiving, and suggests that the Saviour spoke (Matt. vi. 2) metaphorically. In the worship of the synagogue of old, there appears to have been no use of instruments whatsoever, and it is inadmissible amongst the modern Jews, except where they forsake the strict rule of their ancient religion. But in the synagogue, Vitringa tells us, they made use of all "the moral worship of the temple, and sang God's praises with the voice; and that "from the synagogue this practice was transferred to the orato-



Now, if it had been the 'pleasure of God that we should make use of machinery in his praise, why did he not so instruct these apostles? He has ever manifested his interest in all that concerns the worship of his sanctuary; nay, declares himself jealous about it. It was, of course, not ignorance on the part of the apostles which led them to adopt the simpler praise of the synagogue, instead of the instruments of the temple with which they were so familiar. Was it poverty? How easily, with the liberality of the churches in those days, could instruments of some sort—a harp or the psaltery, or some cymbals at least—have been provided in every congregation! Was it thoughtlessness or forgetfulness which caused their negligence and their silence? Impossible! They were the amanuenses of the Spirit! And yet they never commanded, either by precept or example, the use of any other instrument in praise but the human voice. Such is the teaching of men, sent by God, “*in these last times,*” to make known his sovereign pleasure respecting the worship of his sanctuary. There shall come no other teachers divinely inspired. The canon of Scripture is complete; the government and worship is established. And it is a solemn responsibility which any man assumes who ventures to add anything to the heavenly structure.

4. All which has been now said is agreeable to the doctrine of our fathers on the other side of the flood, that in the worship of God’s house, “whatever is not commanded is forbidden.” This doctrine flows necessarily out of the principle that God is the originator of worship and has himself revealed it to man. Nay, we must go further and apply this maxim to everything in religion, for religion is altogether devised and revealed by God. He

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ries of the Christians.” Lightfoot also tells us that in the temple itself none but Levites were allowed “to join voices with the vocal music, which was the proper song and the proper service, but only to join with the instrumental;” a private person, if he had skill, might “put in with his instrument among the instruments,” but “among the voices he might not join, for that belonged only to the Levites.” (See Lightfoot’s *Exercitationes upon St. Matthew*, chap. vi. 2, and on the *Temple Service*, chap. vii. sec. ii. See also *Vitringa De Synagoga Vetere*, Lib. I., Par. I., cap. 10, and the *Prolegomena*, cap. 5 and cap. 6.)

is and must be its sole author; or else it is false and vain. Man had no part in originating it; nay, he has never of himself done any thing with it but corrupt it. And what is very remarkable, perhaps every one of the human corruptions of worship began in some apparently good way, and had its origin in the idea of improvement. To recommend Christianity to Jews and to Gentiles who considered it too bald and naked in its divine simplicity, “the Christian doctors (says Dr. Mosheim on the second century) thought they must introduce some external rites which would strike the senses of the people.” (Vol. I., p. 133.) Pliny and Justin Martyr and Tertullian all describe the simplicity of Christian worship in the first two centuries: yet the temptation to mend it and improve it was already felt. What an excellent end, supposing the almighty could consent to be assisted in his plans! Hence, “in order [we use Mosheim’s words] to impart dignity to their religion,” the mysteries of the Greeks and Orientals were imitated in the exclusion of all but the initiated from beholding baptism or the Lord’s supper. In the third century, the passion for Platonic philosophy amongst the Christian teachers leads to exorcising the evil spirit out of the baptized. Early in the fourth century, Constantine adopts Christianity and undertakes to improve the worship as well as the government of the Church. Then is witnessed a great tendency to adorn church buildings with images of the saints, all intended to excite devotion, though operating really to bring in idolatry. By the time we get down to the period of Augustine and Ambrose, (which Dr. Smyth refers to with so much satisfaction, p. 546,) there is such a vast increase of rites and ceremonies springing out of this excellent desire to attract the Greeks and the Romans and the other nations to Christianity, that Mosheim tells us: “The observation of Augustine is well known, ‘That the yoke once laid upon the Jews was more supportable than that laid on many Christians in his age.’ ” He adds: There was of course little difference, in these times, between the public worship of the Christians and that of the Greeks and Romans. In both alike, there were splendid robes, mitres, tiaras, wax tapers, crosiers, processions, lustrations, images, golden and silver

vases and numberless other things;" also, that they supposed God, Christ, and the inhabitants of heaven, equally with us wretched mortals, to be delighted and captivated with external signs." (Vol. I., pp. 276, 7.) In his account of the fifth century, we read: "In some places, it was appointed that the praises of God should be sung continually, day and night, the singers succeeding each other without interruption; as if the Supreme Being took pleasure in clamor and noise and in the flatteries of men. The magnificence of the temples had no bounds." (Vol. I., pp. 351.) Of the sixth century, we read: "In proportion as true religion and piety, from various causes, declined in this century, the external signs of religion and piety—that is, rites and ceremonies—increased." And he speaks of "the new mode of administering the Lord's supper magnificently:" also of baptism now being only to be administered "on the greatest festivals." (Vol. I., pp. 413, 14.) So marched on the profane and wicked though "pious" attempts of well-meaning men to improve the institutes of God: culminating, at length, in the complete prostration of what the Almighty had set up, and the substitution for it, in his house, of a pagan system baptized into the Christian name! And yet, be it observed, so far down as we have traced the progress of these human improvements, there yet appears no sign of machinery to praise God with. That is the fruit of a later, and of course a grosser, development.

5. The doctrine of our forefathers, that whatever in religion is not commanded is forbidden, answers to the good old Protestant maxim, that the Scriptures are the sole and the sufficient rule of faith and practice. They are the sufficient rule—that is, they furnish every needful direction concerning either faith or practice. They are the sole rule—that is, no other rule is admissible. Not any thing is lawful for which you cannot produce a "Thus saith the Lord."

This doctrine is set forth in the Westminster Confession, which is ours, in these words: "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.” (Chap. i. 6.) All that concerns God’s glory, which of course includes his *worship*, is in the Bible, and for us, in the New Testament; and unto what is there written, or thence deducible, nothing may be added. The Almighty has a definitive will or counsel respecting his worship, and he has revealed that counsel to us in the New Testament; and therefore we must not venture to attempt any improvements of it.

In like manner, our Larger Catechism sets down among the sins forbidden under the second commandment, “all devising, counselling, commanding, using and any wise approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself.”

This doctrine was very fully held and taught by Owen, and was applied by him, specifically, in more than one of his works, to the matter of human inventions in worship. We are confident that we have not, in this article, put forth one sentiment for which we could not produce Owen’s authority as an interpreter of God’s word. Speaking of the “outward worship of God,” he says its “sole foundation was in his will and pleasure.”\* Quoting sundry scriptures, he says: “That which these and the like testimonies unanimously speak to us is this, that the will of God is the sole rule of his worship; \* \* and consequently that he never did, nor ever will, allow that the will of his creatures should be the rule or measure of his honor or worship. \* \* \* It is enough to discard any thing from a relation to the worship of God, to manifest that the appointees of it were men and not God. Nor can any man prove that God hath delegated unto man his power in this matter. Nor did he ever do so to the sons of men—namely, that they should have authority to appoint any thing in his worship, or about it, that seemeth meet unto their wisdom. With some, indeed, in former days; he intrusted the work of revealing unto his Church and people what he himself would have observed; which dispensation he closed in the person of Christ and his apostles. But to intrust men with

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\* Discourse concerning Liturgies, Owen’s Works, Vol. xix., p. 405.

authority, not to declare what he revealed, but to appoint what seemeth good unto them, he never did it; the testimonies produced lie evidently against it. Now, surely God's asserting his own will and authority, as the only rule and cause of his worship, should make men cautious how they suppose themselves like or equal unto him herein. \* \* \* But such is the corrupt nature of man, that there is scarce any thing whereabouts men have been more apt to contend with God, from the foundation of the world. That their will and wisdom may have a share (some at least) in the ordering of his worship, is that which of all things they seem to desire. \* \* \* The prohibition is plain—'Thou shalt not add to what I have commanded.' Add not to his words, that is, in his worship, to the things which by his word he hath appointed to be observed; neither to the word of his institution nor to the things instituted. Indeed, adding *things* adds to *the word*; for the word that adds is made of a like authority with him. All *making to ourselves* is forbidden, though what we so make may seem unto us to the furtherance of the worship of God.\*

Owen thus continues: "It is said that the intention of these rules and prohibitions is only to prevent the addition of what is contrary to what God hath appointed, and not of that which may tend to the furtherance and better discharge of his appointments." His answer is, that "whatever is added is contrary to the command that nothing be added." He proceeds to reason from our Lord's direction to the apostles to teach his disciples "to do and observe whatever he commanded them." And the conclusion which Owen draws is, that "the whole duty of the Church, as unto the worship of God, seems to lie in the precise observation of what is appointed and commanded by him."† Elsewhere he says: "A principal part of the duty of the Church in this matter is to take care that nothing be admitted or practised in the worship of God, or as belonging thereunto, which is not instituted and appointed by the Lord Christ. In its care, faithfulness, and watchfulness herein, consists the principal part of its loyalty unto the Lord Jesus as the head, king, and law-

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\* Ibid, pp. 441-4.

† Ibid, p. 445.

giver of his Church, and which to stir us up to, he hath left so many severe interdictions and prohibitions in his word against all additions to his commands upon any pretence whatever.”\*

Again, in the work last quoted from, Owen says: “The ways and means of the worship of God are made known to us in and by the written word alone, which contains a full and perfect revelation of the will of God as to his whole worship and the concernments of it. He quotes, to prove this, many passages of the word; and he proceeds to say that the Scripture every where “supposeth and declareth that of ourselves we are ignorant how God is, how he ought to be, worshipped. Moreover, it manifests him to be a jealous God, exercising that holy property of his nature in an especial manner about his worship; rejecting and despising every thing that is not according to his will, that is not of his institution.” He proceeds to set forth, from the Scriptures, how God hath frequently altered and changed the ways and means of his worship at his sovereign pleasure; particularly that “fabric of his outward worship” established in the temple; and still further to show that no other alteration by him is to be expected, for he has made his last and complete revelation in his Son, the Lord of all.†

Further on, we find Owen, in the same work, discussing the the question whether the Church may not appoint what may “further the devotion of the worshippers, or render the worship itself in its performance more decent, beautiful, and orderly?” His answer is: “No devotion is acceptable to God but what proceedeth from and is an effect of faith; for without faith it is impossible to please him, and faith in all things respects the commands and authority of God. \* \* \* To say that any thing will effectually stir up devotion, (that is, excite strengthen, or increase grace in the heart towards God,) that is not of his own appointment, is, on the one hand, to reflect on his wisdom and care towards the Church, as if he had been wanting towards it in things so necessary (which he declares against in Isaiah v.

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\* Owen’s Short Catechism on Worship and Discipline—Works, Vol. xix., p. 487.

† Short Catechism—Works. Vol. xix., pp. 468-71.

4—‘What,’ saith he, ‘could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done unto it?); so, on the other, it extols the wisdom of men above what is meet to ascribe to it. Shall men find out that which God would not or could not, in matters of so great importance unto his glory and the souls of them that obey him?’”\*

We quote another passage, wherein Owen says it is evident that “the suitableness of anything to right reason or the light of nature is no ground for a church observation of it, unless it be also appointed and commanded in especial by Jesus Christ.”† Thus is the principle plainly and broadly stated, that whatever in religion is not commanded is forbidden.

Similar to Owen’s is the testimony of Cartwright, the distinguished opponent of Whitgift and Hooker. He goes so far as to say that “Scripture is, in such sort, the rule of human actions that simply whatever we do, and are not by it directed thereunto, the same is sin.” “I say,” says he, “that the word of God containeth \* \* \* whatsoever things can fall into any part of man’s life. For so Solomon saith in the second chapter of the Proverbs: ‘My son, if thou wilt receive my words, etc., then shalt thou understand justice, and judgment, and equity, and every good way.’ ” Again we quote: “St. Paul saith, ‘That whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do it to the glory of God.’ But no man can glorify God in any thing but by obedience, and there is no obedience but in respect of the commandment and word of God: therefore it followeth that the word of God directeth a man in all his actions.” Again, Cartwright argues: “That which St. Paul said of meats and drinks, that they are sanctified unto us by the word of God, the same is to be understood of all things else we have the use of.” Once more, he says that place of St. Paul “is of all other most clear, where, speaking of those things which are called indifferent, in the end he concludeth, that ‘whatsoever is not of faith is sin;’ but faith is not but in respect of the word of God; therefore, whatever is not done by the word of God is sin.”

Replying to this last named point made by Cartwright, his

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\* Ibid. p. 494.

† Ibid. p. 505.

skillful opponent, Hooker, insists that Paul means nothing else by faith in this place except “only a full persuasion that that which we do is well done.”\* But Cartwright rejoins: “Whence can that spring but from faith? And how can we persuade and assure ourselves that we do well, but whereas we have the word of God for our warrant?”

Whitgift, in replying to Cartwright, said: “It is *not* true that whatsoever can not be proved in the word of God is not of faith; for then *to take up a STRAW*, to observe many civil orders, and to do a number of particular actions, were against faith, and so deadly sin; because it is not in the word of God that we should do them. The which doctrine must needs bring a great servitude and bondage to the conscience; restrain, or rather utterly overthrow, that part of Christian liberty which consisteth in the free use of indifferent things, neither commanded nor forbidden in the word of God; and throw men into desparation.”† But Cartwright answers: “Even those things that are indifferent and may be done have their freedom grounded in the word of God. So that unless the word of the Lord, either in general or especial words, had determined of the free use of them, there could have been no lawful use of them at all. And when he (Dr. Whitgift) saith that St. Paul speaketh here of civil, private, and indifferent actions, as of eating this or that kind of meat, (than the which there can be nothing more indifferent,) he might easily have seen that the sentence of the apostle reacheth even to his case of *taking up a straw*. For if this rule be of indifferent things, and not of all, I would gladly know of him what indifferent things it is given of, and of what not? And the same, also, I require of him in the other general rule of doing all things to the glory of God. For if that reach unto all indifferent things, it must needs comprise also this action of his; which, if it do, then as no man can glorify God but by obedience, and there is no obedience but where there is a word, it must follow that there is a word. And seemeth it so strange a thing to him that a man should not take a *straw* but for some purpose, and

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\* Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I., section 4.

† See not to Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I., introductory paragraph.



for some good purpose? And will he not give the Lord leave to require of a Christian man endued with the Spirit of God as much as the heathen require of one who is only endued with reason, that he should do nothing whereof he hath not some good end; and that in all his doings, whether public or private, at home or abroad, whether with himself or with another, he ought to have regard whether that which he doth be in duty or no?"

Such was the ground maintained so ably by Cartwright. On the contrary, Hooker, his able but unsound opponent cautiously questions whether "all things necessary unto salvation be necessarily set down in the Holy Scriptures or no?" "How can this be," he demands, "when of things necessary the very chiefest is to know what books we are bound to esteem holy, which point is confest impossible for the Scripture itself to teach?"\* Advancing still further in this semi-Popish strain, he more boldly avers: "It sufficeth, therefore, that nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort that they both jointly, and not severally, either of them, be so complete that, unto everlasting felicity, we need not the knowledge of any thing more than these two may easily furnish our minds with on all sides."† And so his ground (resembling too much that of our brother who now argues for the divine right of organs) is, that God "approveth much more than he doth command;" that "his very commandments in some kind, as namely his precepts in the law of nature, may be otherwise known than only by Scripture;" and "that it cannot stand with reason to make the bare mandate of Sacred Scripture the only rule of all good and evil in the actions of mortal men."‡ Still further on, this eminent and eloquent defender of the prelacy lays down four propositions, which have too much the same sound with a large part of what has been just written by our brother. The first is: That since the public duties of religion excel in dignity all other things in the world, and since the best things have the perfectest and best operations, therefore they should have a *sensible* excellency correspondent to the majesty of him whom we worship; and the external form of religion

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\* Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I., section 14.

† Ibidem.

‡ Ibid, Book II., section 8.

should be such as appears to beseem the dignity of religion. The second is: That we may not, in this case, lightly esteem what hath been allowed as fit in the judgment of antiquity. The third is: That the Church hath power no less to ordain that which never was, than to ratify what hath been before. The fourth is: That some divine and apostolic ordinances and constitutions the Church has the right and power to dispense with.\* These four propositions, as they will easily bring in the use of instruments by the Church, so they will also as easily bring in the vestments, the liturgy, the Apocrypha, and every other exercise of illegitimate Church power, and every other kind of will-worship ordained by the Church of England; for not submitting to which, as imposed on them, our fathers of old did grievously suffer.

We have thus brought forward, in support of our Confession of Faith,<sup>†</sup> (as the interpreter of God's word,) some high authorities against Dr. Smyth's position—Owen and Cartwright, as holding forth to us the testimony of that grand body of theologians whom they may be said to represent. Let us ascend the stream a little higher, and consult that prince among the teachers of God's Israel, John Calvin. First, let us hear him, in the Institutes, tell how God declares in Isaiah that he is our only lawgiver, so that none may "take it on them to order any thing in the Church without authority from the word of God." Again, he says Paul declares it (Col. ii. 20) to be "a thing intolerable that the legitimate worship of God should be subjected to the will of men." Again, he says that "when once religion begins to be composed of such vain fictions, there is no stopping till the commandment of God is made void through their traditions."

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\* Ibid, Book V., section 6, 7, 8, 9.

† The Cambridge Platform (adopted by the New England churches in 1648, in the days of their early purity of doctrine,) sets forth with great distinctness the very same views respecting the substantials and the circumstantials of church government which our Confession of Faith exhibits. (Chaps. i., vi.) It declares that "*the parts* of church government are all of them exactly described in the word of God;" while the "*circumstances*, as time and place, etc., belonging unto order and decency, are not so left to men as that, under pretence of them, they may thrust their own inventions upon the churches."

He refers to the well known fact that the pretended improvements of God's worship which are found in the Romish Church, "took their model partly from the dreams of Gentiles and partly from the ancient rites of the Mosaic law, with which we have nothing more to do than with the sacrifices of animals, etc." He quotes Augustine upon the simplicity of the rites in which "our Lord Christ bound together the society of his new people;" and he contrasts with this gospel simplicity the mass of childish ceremonies and all the external show which had been brought into the Christian Church, insisting that we are no longer children under tutors, and have no more need of these puerile rudiments. He declares that God "denounces this curse in all ages" uniformly: that he will "strike with stupor and blindness those who worship him after the doctrines of men." He insists that it is nothing but "rash human license, which can not confine itself within the boundaries prescribed by the word of God, but petulantly breaks out, and has recourse to its own inventions." "The Lord cannot forget himself, and it is long since he declared that nothing is so offensive to him as to be worshipped by human inventions." He demands if it can be "a small matter that the Lord is deprived of his kingdom, which he so strictly claims for himself? Now, he is deprived of it as often as he is worshipped with laws of human invention, since his will is to be the sole legislator of his worship."\*

Elsewhere we hear Calvin saying: "No worship is legitimate unless it be so founded as to have for its only rule the will of him to whom it is performed." He adds (what Owen, as we have seen, says also): The wantonness of our minds is notorious which breaks forth, especially in this quarter, where nothing ought to have been dared. Men allow themselves to devise all modes of worship, and change and rechange them at pleasure. Nor is this the fault of our age. Even from the beginning of the world, the world sported thus licentiously with God."<sup>†</sup>

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\* Institutes, Book IV., chap. x., sections 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 23.

<sup>†</sup> Calvin on "the true method of giving peace and reforming the Church."

"Irenæus," (Rev. Dr. Prime,) of the New York *Observer*, a high authority in such questions on the one side, recently writes: "In Russia, the bell is an instrument of music for the worship of God as truly and

Let us take a witness from amongst the very prelates, and he no other than Jeremy Taylor, Lord Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore. In his “Ductor Dubitantium,” we meet this question: “Whether in matters of religion we have that liberty as in matters of common life? Or whether is not every thing of religion determined by the laws of Jesus Christ, or may we choose something to worship God withal, concerning which he has neither given us commandment or intimation of his pleasure.” He lays down this principle in reply: “Since, therefore, that God accepts any thing from us is not at all depending upon the merit of the work or the natural proportion of it to God, or that it can add any moments of felicity to him, it must be so wholly depending upon the will of God that it must have its being and abiding only from thence. He, that shall appoint with what God shall be worshipped, must appoint what that is by which he shall be pleased; which because it is unreasonable to suppose, it must follow that all the integral constituent parts of religion, all the fundamentals and essentials of the divine worship, can not be warranted to us by nature, but are primarily communicated to us by revelation. *‘Deum sic colere oportet,*

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really as the organ in any other country. \* \* \* It appears to be stupid to cast bells so large as to be next to impossible for convenient use, in danger always of falling and dragging others to ruin in their fall. But when the bell is a medium of communication with the Infinite, and the worship of a people and an empire finds expression in the mystic tones of a bell, it ceases to be a wonder that a bell should have a tongue which it requires twenty-four men to move, and whose music should send a thrill of praise into every house in the city and float away beyond the river into the plains afar.” Whether this “praise” with bells found its way acceptably into the ear of the Lord of hosts, of course the writer does not pretend to say. That was, of course, a secondary question altogether. The idea seems to be a thrill of delight in every house floating afar into the plains beyond the Moskva River! Like the organ’s, this music of bells pleases *the people’s ears*, and that is the main point, whether God is pleased or not. This writer describes in glowing terms one particular occasion thus: “And all the churches and towers over the whole city, four hundred bells and more in concert, in harmony, ‘with notes almost divine,’ lift trip their voices in an anthem of praise, such as I never thought to hear with mortal ears—waves of melody, an ocean of music, deep, rolling, heaving, changing, swelling, sinking, rising, sounding, overwhelming, exalting. I had heard

*quomodo ipse se colendum præcepit,*' said St. Austin. Who can tell what can please God but God himself? For to be pleased is to have something that is agreeable to our wills and our desires; now, of God's will there can be no signification but God's word or declaration, and therefore by nothing can he be worshipped but by what himself hath declared that he is well pleased with. \* \* \* To worship God is an act of obedience and of duty, and and therefore must suppose commandment, and is not of our choice, only that we must choose to obey. Of this God forewarned his people; he gave them a law and commanded them to obey that entirely, without addition or diminution, neither more nor less than it: 'Whatsoever I command you observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it.' \* \* \* So that in the Old Testament there is an express prohibition of any worship of their own choosing; all is unlawful but what God hath chosen and declared. In the New Testament, we are still under the same charge; and ἐθελοθρησκεία, or 'will-worship,' is a word of an ill sound amongst Christians most generally. \* \* \* So that thus far we are certain: (1.) That nothing is necessary but what is commanded by God. (2.) Nothing is pleasing to

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the great organs of Europe, but they were tame and trifling compared with this. The anthem of nature at Niagara is familiar to every ear, but its thunder is one great monotone. The music of Moscow's bells is above and beyond them all. It is the voice of the people. It utters the emotions of millions of loving, believing, longing hearts, not enlightened perhaps like yours, but all crying out to the Great Father, in these solemn and inspiring tones, as if their tongues had voices, 'Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of thy glory!,'” This, of course, is very fine writing after the New England style, such as our untutored Southern cars are not prepared to appreciate; and, of course, these bells of the Greek Church can utter the emotions of believing hearts just as well as the organs in Protestant churches; but the difficulty is to know what either bell or organ ever does utter—whether truth or lies—and to whom it speaks its praise—whether to the true God or a false one. Certainly it is no Christian way to depend on bells to jingle or organs to blow the heart's emotions, while we have human tongues in our heads to speak God's praise. We once read of a machine used by a Hindoo to pray with, and surely praise by machines is no better than prayer by machines. Both are, as Calvin says, a “licentious sporting with God.”

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God in religion that is merely of human invention. (3.) That the commandments of men can not become the doctrines of God; that is, no direct parts of the religion, no rule or measures of conscience.”\*

Let us go to the Church of Scotland for two witnesses. Thomas Boston says: “The Scriptures are a perfect rule, and also it is the only rule. Every doctrine taught any manner of way in religion must be brought to this rule.” He adds that this doctrine may give us “a just abhorrence of the superstition and ceremonies of the Church of England, whereby they have corrupted the worship of God, rejecting the simplicity of gospel worship and regulating their worship in many things, not by the Scripture, but the dregs of antichrist. \* \* \* As if they were ashamed of simple Scripture worship, but they must deck it up in the whorish garments made by their own brains.” Elsewhere he says: “The command says: ‘*Thou shalt not make*, etc.’—that is, ‘but thou shalt *receive*’ the worship and ordinances as God hath appointed them, and not add to them of men’s inventions. Deut. iv. 2.” Again: “What we call for is divine warrant: Who hath required this at your hands?”†

Hear also what the great Presbyterian teacher, Gillespie, says: “The Jewish Church, not as it was a church, but as it was Jewish, had an high priest, typifying our great High Priest, Jesus Christ. As it was Jewish, it had musicians to play upon harp, psalteries, cymbals, and other musical instruments in the temple, (1 Chron. xxv. 1,) concerning which hear Bellarmine’s confession (De Bon. Oper., lib. i., cap. 17): ‘Justinus saith that the use of instruments was granted to the Jews for their imperfection, and that therefore such instruments have no place in the Church. We confess, indeed, that the use of musical instruments agreeth not alike with the perfect and with the imperfect, and that therefore they began but of late to be admitted in the Church.’”‡

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\* Ductor Dubitantium, Book II., chapter iii., Rule XIII., 7, 8, 9.

† Boston’s Body of Divinity, Vol. I., pp. 35, 36, 37, and Vol. II., p. 427.

‡ Gillespie’s Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland. Part I., chapter iii.

Let us take a witness from the Reformed Church of France, the famous John Claude, born in 1618. He says: "Religion is called a *commandment*, (I Tim. i. 5,) because in all its parts it ought to proceed from God. For, as he hath not left it to the choice of man to have or not to have a religion, so neither has he left it to his fancy to invent such a worship as he chooses; therefore St. Paul calls superstitions ἐθελοθρησκείας, will-worship. \* \* \* Whatever does not bear the divine impress can never be acceptable to God."\*

Let us close this argument with a testimony from another of the non-conformists of the Church of England. The Rev. John Wesley, Senior, (grandfather to the founder of Methodism,) said to Gilbert Ironside, Bishop of Bristol: "May it please your lordship, we believe that *cultus non institutes est ineditus*—worship not instituted is not due. \* \* \* Bishop Andrews, taking notice of *non facies tibi*,—"Thou shalt not make to thyself,"—satisfied me that we may not worship God but as commanded."†

In answer to our argument, we anticipate a twofold reply. In the first place, it will be said that the necessary circumstances of worship are not specifically commanded and yet are not forbidden; and that instrumental music is a mere circumstance of the praise of God, and as such is lawful. Now, we freely admit the necessity of the limitation upon its own doctrine, that all things necessary for God's glory, man's salvation, truth, and life, are revealed in Scripture, which the Confession places, viz., 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." (Chap. i. vi.) This limitation, "so cautiously and exactly stated," is, as Dr. Cunning-

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\* Essay on Preaching, with notes by Robinson, London, 1788, Vol. I., pp. 215, 16.

† Wesley's Works, Vol. IV., p. 207, and Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial, Vol. II., p. 169.

ham says, a “necessary” one. “Common sense requires this limitation and Scripture itself sanctions it. And it is the more necessary to attend to it, in stating and discussing this question, because it is very easy to misrepresent and caricature the Presbyterian doctrine upon this subject, as is done even by Hooker in his Ecclesiastical Polity; and because it is chiefly by means of this limitation, \* \* \* that the unwarrantableness and unfairness of the common misrepresentations of it [our doctrine] by Episcopalians are exposed.”\*

But what is the meaning of the doctrine of our Confession with this limitation appended? It is tantamount, we suppose, to the London Ministers’ statement of the true doctrine as applied to church government, in these words: “All the substantials of the government under the New Testament are laid down in the word in particular rules, whether they be touching officers, ordinances, censures, assemblies, and the compass of their power, as after will appear; and all the circumstantials are laid down in the word, under general rules of order, decency, and edification.”†

The “circumstances” and the “circumstantials” are, of course, the same.‡ Owen explains the term. “Circumstances (he says) are either such as follow actions, as actions, or such as are arbitrarily superadded, and adjoined by command unto actions.” He gives an example of the first sort: “Prayer is a part of God’s worship. Public prayer is so appointed by him. This, as it is an action to be performed by man, cannot be done without the assignment of time and place and sundry other things, if order and conveniency be attended to. These are circumstances that attend all actions of that nature to be performed by a community, whether they relate to the worship of

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\* See Cunningham’s admirable remarks on human inventions in worship, in his discussions on Church Principles, pp. 249-256.

† *Divine Right of Church Government*. Part II., chap. iv.

‡ The London Ministers prepared their work on the Divine Right in 1646, during the meetings of the Westminster Assembly. The statement concerning “circumstances,” as now found in our Form of Government, occurs nearly word for word in the “First Paper of Proposals” offered by the Presbyterians to Charles II., in 1660, preparatory to the Savoy Conference.



God or no. These may men, according as they see good, regulate and change as there is occasion; I mean, they may do so who are acknowledged to have power in such things.” But he proceeds: “There are also some things which some men call circumstances also, that no way belong, of themselves, to the actions whereof they are said to be the circumstances, but are imposed on them, or annexed unto them, by the arbitrary authority of those who take upon them to give order and rule in such cases. \* \* \* \* “These are not circumstances attending the nature of thing itself, but are arbitrarily superadded to the things that they are appointed to accompany.”\*

Now, our Confession, of course, speaks only of the former of these two classes of circumstances—of circumstances belonging to God’s worship, as it is an action by a society, just such as attend all actions of all societies; circumstances which are so essential that without them the actions cannot be done. All such circumstances are really commanded in the commanding of the action; for if men are commanded to come together to pray, they are commanded to agree upon a time and place of coming together.

Certainly it cannot be maintained that the organ is a circumstance, in this sense. Clearly, it is something *annexed* to the worship. Under the law, such things were a necessary part of the divine worship, as Owen says.<sup>†</sup> Who will pretend that they came in then as mere circumstances, or by human authority, and not by special divine authority given to inspired David? But if, confessedly, they came not in then as mere circumstances nor by decree of man, no more may they now find entrance in this way.

As to the tuning fork, if it be a necessary circumstance of rightly pitching the voice, without which God’s ordinance of singing cannot be properly carried into execution, then it must be held to be one of the things commanded; and so the question of its use must be left to Christian liberty and prudence.

This plea of the organ’s being a mere circumstance of wor-

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\* Owen’s Discourse concerning Liturgies. Works, Vol. XIX., p. 437.

† Ibidem, p. 439.

ship, whilst it may be offered by others, is not and could not be employed by Dr. Smyth. With characteristic frankness he boldly defends the organ as a competent part of the worship of God under the New Testament. This is the only manly and fair position its advocates can take. But whenever they do take it, they have to encounter the condemnation which awaits those who presume to add to God's commands respecting his worship.

The other reply which we anticipate to our argument affirms this principle, that whatever was appointed of old, and was acceptable to God under a former dispensation, and has not been specifically abolished by name, may now be employed by us in the public worship of God, provided it seem good and proper to ourselves; because the Church has liberty. Sacrifices and all other typical things having been fulfilled in Christ, have, it is said, passed away, of course; but the instruments of music had no typical meaning, and so they may stand firm in the New Testament worship, provided we think proper. It is further urged in this reply, that instrumental music having been acceptable to God formerly, it may be presumed that it cannot now be unacceptable to him, since he has not specifically forbidden it.

Now, 1. Has the Church any liberty beyond the mere circumstances which belong necessarily to God's appointments? So does not our Confusion teach. So did not our forefathers in England and Scotland teach. So do not the Scriptures teach. The Church has not liberty to appoint rites. Worship of her will is not acceptable. In vain do we worship after the commandments of men. It is for God only to determine how he is to be approached.

2. Are we authorised to say that the instruments used in public worship of old had no typical meaning? Fairbairn tells us that the tabernacle or temple, "*as a whole*, is affirmed in the Epistles to the Hebrews and the Colossians to have been of a typical nature."\* Nor can this statement be disputed. But if the whole be represented in Scripture as typical, which of us

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\* Fairbairn's Typology, Vol I., p. 29.

shall venture to say of any part that it is not typical? Fairbairn goes on to say, (p. 60,) that “while New Testament Scripture speaks thus of the whole, it deals very sparingly in particular examples; \* \* \* it no where tells us what was either immediately symbolized or prophetically shadowed forth by the holy place in the tabernacle, or the shewbread, or the golden candlestick, or the ark of the covenant, or indeed by any thing connected with the tabernacle, excepting its more prominent offices and ministrations.” Even the Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, “which is most express in ascribing a typical value to all that belonged to the tabernacle, can yet scarcely be said to give any detailed explanation of its furniture and services beyond the rite of expiatory sacrifice. \* \* So that those who insist on explicit warrant and direction from Scripture in regard to each particular type, will find their principle conducts them but a short way, even through that department which they are obliged to admit possesses throughout a typical character.” It would seem to be enough for us to know that worship by instruments was a part of the public worship of the temple,\* to satisfy us that it was abolished with the whole of that temporary and peculiar institute of God. Clearly, this was one of the “carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation,” (Heb. ix. 10,) to pass away with the other “elements or rudiments of the world,” to which the Church in her juvenile estate was “in bondage” and under pupilage “as to a schoolmaster.” Fairbairn dwells (p. 59) on this idea of the Church being prepared for higher, simpler, more spiritual methods of instruction and worship by the use of these merely animal, fleshly, sensuous, material, temporal things; and describes her passing with intel-

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\* We are by no means prepared to admit that the use of instruments in the temple belonged to the stated or ordinary worship there. Upon some extraordinary occasions, it did undoubtedly make a part of the temple worship, however, and that by divine command. It is amusing to see how delighted Dr. Smyth is when he can quote one of the references to “a commandment of the Lord” to this effect, (see p. 541,) as appears from the capital letters he employs. That is all which the use of organs in the New Testament Church lacks—the command of the Lord by the apostles, either perceptively or by example; either expressly or constructively by good and necessary consequence.

igence and delight “from rudimental tutelage under the shadows of good things into the free use and enjoyment of the things themselves.” It must accordingly be worse than childishness in her now to go back to a delight in using any part of this anti-quoted and therefore abolished system. We follow in the track of Paul when we reason that what is decayed and waxen old should vanish from use in the New Testament Church. (Heb. viii. 13.)

3. Is it to be taken for granted always that a mode of worship once acceptable to God is always acceptable? It is not. God claims the sovereign right to alter and to abolish his own institutes. It is indeed “a fallacy that whatever is appointed by God can never become obsolete.”\* Circumcision is obsolete. Once imperatively necessary to secure God’s friendship, now, “if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” and you shall be lost. Before Moses, it was right and acceptable to offer sacrifices to God on high places. Afterwards they were abominable if offered any where but at the tabernacle. Still later, the tabernacle gives way to the temple. Shiloh and Gibeon are profane, and “in Jerusalem is the place where we ought to worship;” but now it would be wicked to insist on any such rule. Once, incense in clouds arose acceptably before God. Now, we may not dare to borrow any such thing from an abolished ritual. The Church could not plead that this was once acceptable to God; has not been specifically abolished; would be a very seemly and beautiful appendage to public prayer; and must therefore, of course, be lawful to us and pleasing to God. No! the Christian Church had inspired apostles to set up her doctrine, government, and worship. This was one especial part of their apostolic work. They were not capable of forgetting any thing required of us by the Lord, for they had the Spirit to guide them. And now we may not impute imperfection to their work, by essaying any improvements upon it whatsoever.

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\* Killen’s *Ancient Church*, p. 78.