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REPLY TO "CHARLESTONIENSIS."

TO THE CHRISTIAN PUBLIC.

*My Christian Friends;*---Permit me to address to you a few letters on the subject of Psalmody. During the month of August, 1841, I preached a Discourse on this subject, which was subsequently published and sent to the world. A brother in the Presbyterian Church, who signs himself "Charlestoniensis," has taken up the discourse in particular, and the subject in general, and has attempted, with what degree of force and fairness remains to be seen, to overthrow the principle supported in the Discourse, and by other writers on the same side of the subject. The Editor of the *Observer* has kindly offered me a space in his valuable paper, to defend the discourse in particular, and the subject in general, against the labored, and lengthy, and learned attack of "Charlestoniensis;" and now, as Paul said to King Agrippa, "I beseech you to hear me patiently."

In this discussion I labor under several disadvantages, and among other things unfavorable to a fair hearing, I have the unpopular side of this controversy. No proof, however, that I am not on the *right* side. The world will wonder after my antagonist, and swallow his arguments with avidity, while, with many persons, mine will nauseate at sight---will stir up prejudice and passion, and awaken that mortal antipathy which is very generally cherished against the exclusive use of David's Psalms in the praise of God.

The subject of Psalmody seems to be exciting a good deal of attention

at the present time, in different sections of our country, and recently to some extent, in the Emerald Isle. God is about to have a controversy with the churches on this subject, and blessed will he be, who will be found on God's side. If, as some suppose, there is a time of distress and calamity coming on the Church, and on the world, of an unprecedented character, then there is a time coming when no Psalms and Hymns will suit the Church and people of God, but the Psalms of David. Away with all human hymns, human promises, and contrivances, while we draw nigh to God in the hour of adversity. In such an hour it is only the Word of God that can sustain the soul. And when the "battle of that great day of God Almighty" commences, which from the "signs of the times" appears to be approximating, God's people will fly to him for succour and for safety, and they will find nothing more consoling than the simple, energetic language of the "sweet Psalmist of Israel,"

"Yea in the shadow of thy wings,  
My refuge I will place,  
Until these sad calamities  
Do wholly overpass."

Many of these divine songs are admirably adapted to the state of the Church while in distress, and from the history of the Church we learn that her condition, as a general thing, has been one of suffering and sorrow, from some cause or other, ever since her subjection to the galling yoke of Egyptian bondage. We have still to pass through much tribulation in order to reach the heavenly kingdom; and where shall we find a collection of sacred songs prepared for, and adapted to the state of the Church in this "vale of tears?" Where? In the Psalms of David, and no where else. How sweet to the believer were these heavenly hymns, while they were pursued over the hills and dales of Scotland by the blood-thirsty Claverhouse? And when the Church, in the middle ages, fled into the wilderness from the face of the Dragon, and found a resting place in the vallies of Piedmont, how did the solemn sound of these songs of the Lord rise, and swell, and roll along the vale, cheering the hearts of the pious and persecuted Waldenses, and rising as sweet incense up to the throne of God!

They have ever been found adapted to the condition of holy martyrs in the dungeon and at the stake; and Christ himself, "the man of sorrows," while in this world, found the language of the Psalmist applicable to his distressed condition, and expired repeating a portion of the 31st Psalm---"into thy hands I commit my spirit." Shall we cast aside these sacred songs, so well adapted to God's people, not only in affliction, but also in prosperity? Have those Christian denominations acted properly who have entirely excluded these Divine songs from the praise of God?

And have those denominations acted wisely and properly who have so "marred and mutilated them to suit the times that an angel would not recognize them to be the same!" We say no; and in the following Letters we hope to establish the correctness of this position. As I am on the unpopular side of this controversy, it will be my object to be as brief as possible; but as "Charlestoniensis" has said a great deal, and much too that needs to be corrected, I must be indulged, if deemed necessary, in a little prolixity. These letters are addressed, not to "Charlestoniensis," who on the subject of Psalmody appears to be gone, beyond recovery---nor to the Presbyterian Church merely, which embraces only a part of those who are in error on the subject before us, but to all the Israel of God---for we maintain it to be the duty of all God's people to sing in His praise the Psalms of David, in acts of instituted worship, and sing them *exclusively*.

I am, in the bonds of Christian affection, Yours, &c.

Lindo, Abbeville, S. C. Dec. 21, 1842. W. R. HEMPHILL.

[From the *Charleston Observer*.]

LETTER I.

PSALMODY—THE QUESTION.

*My Christian Friends*,—My opponent, "Charlestoniensis," has taken to himself a very long, out-of-the-way name. As there will be occasion often to use this name, I will abridge it down simply to that of Mr. C., meaning, of course, no disrespect; it is done for the sake of convenience.

In Mr. C's No. 1. there is not much that demands *my* attention, though its contents may elicit some remarks from Mr. W. F., should the brother think them entitled to his consideration. From a remark at the commencement of this No. 1, Mr. F., it appears, had attempted to throw the burden of proof on the subject in dispute on Mr. C., which he, Mr. C. thinks was demanding quite too much. What! shall the representative of the "ninety-nine hundredths of the whole Christian world, in every age," be called upon to account to a *very small body of Christians* for the course which this great majority are said to have pursued in the case in question? The expression conveys the idea that *truth* and *right* must be with the majority; or, at least, that the majority are not to be called on to "define their position," or prove the correctness of their principles and practices *first*, it is enough for them to act on the defensive! It was not so in the days of Elijah. That distinguished Prophet demands of the majority to establish the correctness of their conduct and opinions *first*, and then he would advance proof in attestation that God, and truth, and right, were with him. They might have responded, What! shall 450 Prophets, with Ahab and Jezebel, and all Israel at their backs, account to *one man* for their opinions and practices?

Luther, at the commencement of the Reformation, was almost alone, and the truth was with him, and not with the "ninety-nine hundredths," who, in Psalmody, and in every thing else, had departed from the living God.

Mr. C. received two copies of my Discourse, one of which he supposes, was from the author, and was sent as a challenge to a reply. A mistake, however; I sent it not. My friend wishes to make the impression that he is the challenged party, and that I am the challenger and agitator of this subject; and hence, in his concluding note of December 10, he says, "I shall listen to the teachings of one who has thought it necessary to agitate this subject, and to challenge and invite discussion." No great crime if I had invited discussion, but I think the invitation comes from another quarter. If I am not mistaken, my friend called for the Discourse several months before its publication, in a communication published in the Observer more than a year ago. If this be so, then he it is "who has thought it necessary to agitate this subject, and to challenge and invite discussion." We have "listened to his teachings" for several months, and pronounce them *heterodox*. A second copy of my Discourse was sent to brother C., by some friend, accompanied with an earnest request that he would review it in the Observer. He can contain himself no longer ---he begins to "wax valiant in fight"---he breaks the long and ominous "silence"---ominous of the coming storm, he enters upon the task of proving, not that the Psalms of inspiration should be used *exclusively* in the praise of God, but that the Psalms---God's own Word---should be *excluded* from His worship, and that a very poor *imitation* of that Word, accompanied by *other human* hymns, should be introduced, or more properly, should be continued in use, instead of the inspired Psalter! "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

In his No. 2, my opponent proceeds to the discussion of the subject. He states the question negatively, in five particulars, showing what it is not; then affirmatively, in two particulars, showing what it is; and at the close of the number, he presents a proposition embodying the question at issue, which proposition he proceeds in the next, and all succeeding numbers to discuss.

This closing proposition is the best thing in No. 2, yet it is not strictly correct---not sufficiently full and fair. In his statement of the subject negatively, I deny the correctness of each and every one of his particulars. But before proceeding to notice these particulars, permit me to say, that the brother has not given a clear, and fair, and full statement of the main point in dispute. The matter before us is to be viewed according to the *practice* of the Church in this country. And what is that practice? Why it is, that while two or

three *very small* denominations of Christians use the Psalms of David exclusively, the remaining "ninety-nine hundredths" of the Christian Church exclude these divine songs from divine worship, and adopt in their stead mere human compositions. The question then is, shall we use, in the instituted worship of God, the Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual songs of the Holy Ghost, usually called the Psalms of David, or shall we use human compositions? Or, in other words, shall we sing in the praise of God *his* songs, or *ours*? This is the *main* question or point; and what is the spontaneous response to this question from every Christian heart? Certainly it is, that we should sing the Lord's songs. Why then does not Mr. C. state the question fully and fairly, and come up fearlessly and at once to its discussion? Why fill up some seven or eight numbers, in a good degree, attempting to prove that we have a right to sing other *divine* songs as well as those called David's, and then, in No. 8, attempt to slide gradually and imperceptibly into the defence of *human* compositions---stating (the monstrous doctrine) that what was proper for the primitive Christians to do under the *extraordinary* gifts of the Spirit, may now be done by Christians under his *ordinary* influences; and that it is "quite as modest and Christian to sing our own hymns, as to offer our own prayers, or preach our own discourses!" Mr. C. knows that the *principal point* in dispute is not whether we ought to sing other *divine* songs in God's worship besides David's Psalms, but whether we should sing these Psalms or human songs? In stating the subject then, it was his duty to have brought this prominent point clearly into view, and in its discussion to have kept it constantly before the mind. This idea should have been embodied in the proposition which heads his numbers, and not kept on the back-ground, as though he were afraid to give it too great a prominence.

But let us notice the negative positions of our brother. In his first negative particular he says, "the question is not whether the Church is at liberty to sing any thing and every thing, or the compositions of any body and every body, without regard to the orthodoxy of the doctrine, the correctness of the sentiments, &c. Again he remarks, "we do not believe that the Psalmody of our Churches is a matter which ought to be left to their individual selection, or to the random choice of mere private opinion and judgment. We think the Church ought to take order, and exercise her most vigilant oversight in this matter."

Now I do maintain that what Mr. C. here denies to be the question, *is* the question, in part at least. It is, whether the Church shall sing "any thing and every thing, from rigid Calvinism

down to blank Arminianism," or be confined to the Psalms of David. This is the *practical* question; and experience has shewn that when we depart from this divine standard—the Psalms of David—there is no limit to the hymn-making business; and among the multitude of hymns that are in use there is Arminianism of the blankest kind, as well as other errors, set off too in all the charms of poetry, and rendered bewitching and ensnaring by being offered up in Christian assemblies as *praise to God*. Although the Presbyterian Church may have *taken order* to prevent such erroneous hymns from being introduced into her collection, yet she has never, as far as my knowledge extends, adopted any measures to prevent her members from singing such hymns in other Christian assemblies. No, on the contrary, we often read glowing accounts of great revivals in which the different hymn-singing denominations have participated, and without a doubt the hymn books of the different sects are employed on such occasions—books containing a variety of sentiments—and at such times, (the conclusion is inevitable,) the mingled throng of anxious, animated worshippers, join in sweet concord, singing now "rigid Calvinism," and again pouring forth the "blank Arminianism," and all ascending as praise to God.

The Church should "take order" in the selection of her Psalmody, says our brother; and who, or what does he mean by "the Church?" Why, forsooth, he means the *Old School Presbyterian Church*—rather a presumptuous claim—sufficiently arrogant for a Pope or a Prelate to advance. The Confession of Faith says, (ch xxv. 2,) "the visible Church, which is also Catholic, or universal under the Gospel, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children," &c. For this Catholic Church there ought to be a *standard of praise*. But if every denomination of professing Christians, (in all of which there are some true members of the visible Catholic Church,) is allowed to "take order," and provide its own songs of praise, the consequence will be, as it is this day, that God's people will be constrained to sing "any thing and every thing," &c.

Throughout this discussion our Charleston friend has been very prompt in giving his *authority* for opinions advanced, but what authority does he give for the notion that "the Church" should "take order" in preparing a system of Psalmody for her use? None, save his own *ipse dixit*. The assumption is altogether gratuitous.

We deny that the Church as a whole, or in its parts, has any

right to take order in selecting what she pleases as the matter of praise to God. God himself has attended to this matter, and has given the whole Church a Psalter of his own selection and dictation, and consequently in this business no mere mortal has any right to intermeddle. Although my friend says the Church ought to "take order" in selecting a Psalmody for her use, yet when he enters on the discussion of the subject he finds a great many people, both under the old and new dispensation, making their own hymns—every man for himself, and every woman too. The idea seems never to have entered into the heads of those whom he represents as making hymns in olden times, that they ought to wait until the Church would "take order" before they would pour forth their effusions—and the dear brother, in No. 8, forgetting what he had laid down in the premises, advances the opinion that it is "quite as modest and Christian to sing our own hymns, as to offer our own prayers." If this be so, then why should the Church interfere with private right and privilege? If *one* man has as much right to make his own hymns as his own prayers, so has *every* man, and in improving this right or privilege, every man will make such as will correspond with his own views of truth, and the consequence will be, some will sing truth and others falsehood—that is, "any thing and every thing," &c.

In his first negative particular then, our opponent has not stated the question correctly. The term "the Church" must not be confined to the Presbyterian Church. It is a term usually applied to those denominations who, in the judgment of charity, are entitled to the name Christian. And when we take a survey of "the Church" in this extended sense of the term, we find one division singing this doctrine, and another that or the opposite doctrine; and (as it often happens) when the members of the different hymn-singing communities meet together, they join in the song, no matter in what, or in whose hymn book it may be found. We say then the question is, shall "the Church" be *confined* to David's Psalms, in praising God, or ought she to set aside this inspired Psalter, as the "ninety-nine hundredths" have done, and "sing any thing and every thing," as the great majority of Christians, in this country, are now doing?

But while we are on the subject of taking order, it would be gratifying as well as mortifying to know how often the Presbyterian Church has taken order on Psalmody since she left the good old way. She has been at this business for something like 50 years, or more. I have before me a book

of Psalms and Hymns, authorized by this Church, and entered in the Clerk's office in 1834; and yet scarcely was it adopted until a Committee was appointed to "take order" in getting up a better one, for Mr. C. says, No. 2. § 1. that "a Committee has been laboring for years to form a more perfect and complete book." And is this Committee likely to succeed? By no means. The Biblical Repertory for July, says, with reference to this new book, "We are free to confess that there are many things in it which we consider unsuitable for the worship of God. Some of them are mere sentimental effusions, some exhortatory addresses to sinners; some objectionable from the lightness of their measure; and others from their want of all positive excellence." Alas! Alas! when will this business of taking order come to an end?—Committees may labor in this work until dooms-day comes, and then they will not have a book of praises to please the members of the Church, to say nothing of pleasing God. The Church had better give it up as a bad job—face about, and turn again to the use of David's Psalms; and, in military phrase, command her members to stand "as you were." By adopting such a course, she may expect to obtain repose touching the subject of Psalmody, and not before.—"Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the way and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

The consideration of Mr. C's remaining negative particulars is deferred until next week, when I hope to state the true question at issue: and in Letter 3, to proceed to the main argument—the Divine authority for the exclusive use of David's Psalms in Divine worship. Yours, &c. W. R. H.

[From the Charleston Observer.]

LETTER II.

PSALMODY—THE QUESTION.

*My Christian Friends,*—In my first Letter I considered the first negative particular of "Charlestoniensis," and it is hoped it was made sufficiently obvious that what my brother says in that particular is not the question, is the question, in part at least, especially in a practical point of view. Let us now attend to his second negative particular, which is very much like the first, containing the same general idea, only it is a little more exclusive and uncharitable, and when about to close this particular, he appears to have missed his ink-stand, and dipped his pen into a vinegar cruet. I infer as much from the fact that he speaks of his opponents as "very uncandid and dishonest," because they do not confine the dispute on Psalmody to the Presbyterian Church exclusively; but oppose themselves to all who are opposed to the use of David's Psalms. But let us not detain to find fault with the above delicate epithets. With some people, in such discussions, they come in as a matter of course, and often, as in the present case, are entirely uncalled for.

In the particular now under review, Mr. C. seems especially anxious to confine the question as to what is right for Presbyterians to do in the matter of Psalmody. He says, "the question is not, is it right for Arians, Socinians, Universalists, &c., to sing hymns adapted to express their unscriptural and erroneous opinions, but whether it is right for Presbyterians to sing those Psalms and Hymns which the Church has authorized as orthodox, devotional, and proper." Now, be it known to Mr. C., that we have no contest with "Arians, Socinians, and Universalists," on the subject of Psalmody. Our dispute is with those denominations who, in the judgment of charity, are entitled to the name *christian*—even with those whom Mr. C.

"feels a delicacy in designating by name, but includes under the very indefinite term of "&c."

What denominations are included under his *and so forth*? Why, certainly, all those Christian denominations (his own excepted) that adopt the hymn system. This phrase will include the Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Dutch Reformed, Congregationalists, New School and Cumberland Presbyterians. We are opposed to the course pursued by all these denominations on the subject of Psalmody; but our contest for the truth on this subject has been carried on principally with the Presbyterians, for several reasons--1. Because, instead of the Psalms themselves they have adopted Dr. Watts' imitation of them, a thing more offensive to us than the use of his hymns;--2, because Presbyterians and Seceders, entertaining the same views on Church Government, and the doctrines of religion, ought to be united, but the difference in their opinions and practices on Psalmody keeps up the schism, and hence it is the bone of contention between the two bodies. But while we would rejoice to see this middle wall of partition between us and our Presbyterian brethren broken down and destroyed, we are, at the same time, extremely anxious that the whole Christian world should adopt the inspired Psalter as the matter of their praise; and we feel assured that the Church--the whole Church--must come to this at last: for we look forward with joyous anticipations to that happy day when there will be a union, not only of Presbyterians and Seceders, but of the Church universal--of Jew and Gentile--a union not only of sentiment, but also of song, for the prediction is, (Isaiah lii. 8.) "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; *with the voice together shall they sing*: for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

And if "when the Lord shall bring again Zion," there is to be a union of voice in the praise of God, that praise must be taken from David's Psalms. The Church can never settle down upon any other book or books as the standard of praise. The Seceders, and those who coincide with them in opinion, will maintain their ground: and presently the Jews will be restored once more to Divine favor, and will come in to back the advocates of David's Psalms, or to lead the way in defence of truth on this as well as on other subjects, with an invincible and never-dying energy--the people of God will crowd around them from every side--ten men, out of all languages of the nations, shall take hold of the skirt of the Jew, because God is with him, and God himself will lead on his band of invincibles to a glorious and everlasting triumph.

But to return to our Charleston friend. He is not disposed to take such enlarged views on the subject of Psalmody. If he can secure a hymn-book to suit himself, and his own Church, it is enough for him; others may manage the matter as best they can.--Those *and so forth* denominations alluded to above--those "heretical bodies," as he calls them, must be allowed to pursue their own course;--for he observes, we can no more hinder them from singing heresy, than from praying and preaching, and publishing, heresy. Very charitable indeed! Our friend finds certain Christian denominations guilty of offering up heretical prayers, and preaching heretical sermons, and therefore he would abandon them to "add iniquity to iniquity," and sing heretical songs of praise--for, as we cannot control them in the former, so neither can we in the latter, and all we can do in the matter is to sit down and say, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." How would the Temperance Reformation advance if the Reformers in that good work would say to the guilty inebriate--You "heretic," you are guilty of profanity and vulgarity, of idleness and other crimes, but we cannot compel you to abandon these bad habits, and therefore you must even go on and become intoxicated as much as you please--we leave you to "wax worse and worse."

Experience, however, has shewn that the best way to deal with such characters, is to prevail on them to become *sober* men, and then they are found to forsake, to some extent, their other evil habits. So, if these "heretical bodies" could be influenced to lay aside their human compositions, and adopt God's authorized book of praises, the probability is strong that they would come right in other things. Why then not admit them as parties in this discussion, and as deeply interested in its ultimate decision? But why this anxiety on the part of our opponent to confine the question as to what Presbyterians ought to sing in the praise of God? Because he knows full well that if all denominations are taken into the account, then the question will be, whether the Church should be confined to David's Psalms, or be left to "sing any thing and every thing," which these different bodies of antipodal principles do at this day employ in the praise of God? Strong as Mr. C. is in the advocacy of human compositions, instead of God's Word, he does not feel prepared, as yet, to stand up in defence of that grand assortment of hymns now in use, in which both poetry and sentiment can be found adapted to the taste and faith of the heterogeneous mass that employs them.

The question then is not, what shall the Presbyterian Church sing? No such thing; but the great question is, what ought the Catholic or

Universal Church to sing? Or, as it is the duty of *all men* to praise God—"all lands"—"from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same," and that too in every age, and under every dispensation of grace—the question is, what ought the standard of praise for this mighty mass of immortal minds, in each and every revolving generation be? Shall it be David's Psalms, composed by the Divine Spirit—made, designed, adapted, and appointed by him to advance his praise: or shall every petty sect and fragment of the Church, in every passing generation, presume, without Divine permission, to make or select from human compositions, their own hymns, adapted to the diversified faith of the ever-changing multitude?

This, Christian friends, is the question; and permit me now to present it in a distinct proposition—a proposition which should have headed the numbers of "Charlestoniensis," instead of the one devised:

THE QUESTION.

Has God appointed the Psalms of David to be sung exclusively in Divine worship, in every age, and among every kindred, and people and nation, and tongue, in the best version of them that can be obtained in the different languages of the nations—or, *has God appointed* an imitation of David's Psalms to be sung under the Gospel dispensation, in every age and country—and, in addition to this imitation, *has God authorized* the use of any one, or all the various Hymn Books, that have been, or are now in use throughout the world?

This is the *broad* question—very unlike that *narrow point* to which Mr. C. would confine us in the premises, but very soon himself forgets and departs from in the discussion. One would think that, after he had been so particular in defining the point in dispute, and contracting it so miserably, he would adhere to his position; but no such thing, he abandons it immediately. In the very first sentence of No. 3, he says, "having, in our preceding article, settled our preliminaries and distinctly laid down the question in debate between our Seceding brethren and all other portions of the Christian Church; we will now proceed to notice the arguments." It is evident then, from Mr. C's own words, that the question in debate is not one between us and Presbyterians merely, but between Seceders, and *all other portions of the Christian Church*; and if so, and if, as our brother admits, there ought to be some *standard of praise* what shall it be? The Book of God for which we contend, or all, or any one of those Hymn Books, with their contradictory sentiments, which are adopted and employed by the hymn-singing portions of the Christian Church? After all, why should Mr. C. charge us with being "very uncandid

and dishonest," because we state or discuss the question on its broad principles, as one affecting the Church universally, when he does the very same thing himself! "O consistency! thou art a jewel!"

The consideration of the *third* and *fourth* negative particulars of our Charleston friend I must defer for the present. In them he professes great love and esteem for the Psalms of David, and says, *the question is not* whether we shall reject the Psalms of David—and that "our Book of Psalmody includes a version of the Psalms of David. Our Congregations are accustomed to sing them." My friend must have presumed greatly on the ignorance, the prejudice, and the credulity of his hearers when he could have the hardihood to say, "Our Book of Psalmody includes a *version* of the Psalms of David." But I will not enter on the discussion of these particulars at present; they will come under review when the attempt is made to shew that the imitation of Dr. Watts is *no version*—that it has no claim to the title of "David's Psalms"—and that the question is, *shall we reject the Psalms of David?*

In my friend's fifth and last negative particular he observes, "the question at issue does not involve any point which is essential to salvation. It does not involve the Church standing or character of either party. It does not implicate the orthodoxy of either party." To this attempt of Mr. C. to make out himself and his friends as good as their neighbors, I must not object; it is natural for men to "compare themselves among themselves," though Paul plainly intimates that it is not very *wise*. It is not for me to say how far a man may be in error, and yet be saved, or how corrupt and heterodox a church may be and yet many of its members be admitted into the Paradise of God. While, therefore, it is very difficult, if not, impossible, for man to determine with precision what is *essential to salvation*—how much duty a Christian may omit, how much error he may embrace, and yet be saved—it is not so difficult to determine, with the Bible in our hands, the amount of error necessary to "involve the Church standing, or implicate the orthodoxy" of any denomination. If it is just as orthodox and proper to sing our own songs in Divine worship as to sing the songs of the Lord, then certainly it is very foolish, not to say sinful, in us to keep ourselves aloof and separated from our Presbyterian brethren for a mere *bagatelle*. It is very painful to our hearts, on Communion occasions, not to invite our Old School Presbyterian brethren, (from whom we are not separated as we are from the New School, Methodists, and others,) to commemorate with us, the death of Christ; and the principal reason why we keep up this sep-

aration is, because we consider our brethren heterodox, grievously heterodox, on the subject of Psalmody. In my Discourse, it was observed, that the use of David's Psalms was not essential to salvation, but *essential to praise*. After attempting to prove that these Psalms are to be used exclusively in Divine worship, I exhorted, or argued, that our brethren should abandon the use of human compositions, inasmuch as such worship cannot be offered in faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. From this Mr. C. infers that, in the premises, I admit that the use of David's Psalms is *not* essential to salvation, and in the conclusion contend that it is. But surely the inference is not fair; if it is fair, then on what ground does he congratulate himself and friends that "the question at issue does not involve the Church standing, or implicate the orthodoxy of either party?"

No favorable inference can be drawn from the writings of one who is represented as denying on one page an opinion or principle for which he had "sought credit" on a former. Mr. C's "&c." denominations are, as he intimates, heretical in praying, in preaching, and in praise, yet he might charitably hope that many of them will be saved. And if he could hope for the salvation of those who are guilty of *three* heresies, we surely may be permitted, without the charge of contradiction, to cherish the hope that those who are chargeable with but *one* of those errors, if they are correct in other things will be admitted into the blissful Paradise.

All that it is thought necessary to say at present touching the negative particulars of our Charleston friend has been advanced, and enough has been said to shew on what a wretched foundation he has been building for several months. He charges me with building on a *rotten foundation*, (No. 5,) but what sort of a quaggy, quicksand foundation, have we here? Bad as it is, however he has ventured to erect on it, for himself and his friends, *one story* of a showy edifice. We hope to see it sink, or topple down, by and by.

The affirmative particulars of my friend will be noticed in due time. The substance of what he says in these particulars is condensed and embodied in the proposition which heads his numbers. The first part of this proposition, viz. "Has God, by Divine appointment, confined his Church to the exclusive use of the Psalms of David in his worship," he has labored hard to disprove. In this attempt he has certainly made a signal failure, exposing at the same time the weakness of his own cause, and adding validity to that which he opposes. It is a pity my friend happens to be on the wrong side of this controversy. With the talent and learning he possesses, what could he not do, by

sound, and solid, and Scriptural arguments, in defending the cause of truth? But now, he is vainly attempting, by sophistry and assertion, and the "tradition of the Elders," or Fathers, to prop up a sinking cause---a cause which never should have had an origin of an advocate. A bad business truly. But, Christian friends, wishing you a cheerful Christmas, and a happy New Year, I remain,

Yours, &c.

W. R. H.

Lindo, Abbeville, S. C. Dec. 29, 1842.

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[From the Charleston Observer.]

LETTER III.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY.

*My Christian Friends,*---It was intended, in this Letter, to enter directly on the main point in dispute on the question of Psalmody, viz: *the Divine authority* for the exclusive use of David's Psalms, which involves another point not to be overlooked in the discussion, viz: *the Divine authority* for the use of human compositions in the praise of God. But before adducing any arguments, in favor of the exclusive use of the inspired Psalter, it may be proper to offer some considerations, showing the importance and necessity of having Divine authority for all our acts of worship. It is believed that this matter is too much overlooked. It has been the prevailing disposition of men, ever since the fatal transaction of our first parents in Eden, to set aside the Divine Commandment, and adopt some course of their own; or, at least, to blend their own inventions with the appointed ordinances of Heaven. This was, perhaps, the leading sin of the antediluvians; it was the crying, besetting sin of the Israelites; it has been the crime of the heathen world from time immemorial: "for when they knew God, they worshipped him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations," &c. This of adding to and amending God's ordinances, has been the Mammoth sin in the Christian Church---a sin which began to work in the days of Paul, and has worked like leaven, to the entire corruption of the Roman Church---the "Mother of Harlots"---and it is to be feared that there is not a single Protestant community which has entirely escaped the contaminating influence of this evil principle---this meddling with Divine things. The notion that it matters not what a man believes, provided he is *sincere*---or what he sings in Divine worship, provided it is, as Mr. C. says, "orthodox, devotional, and proper"---is altogether too prevalent. The acceptableness of a man's worship is made to depend on the state of his feelings, or on the character of his service. While it is very necessary that the feelings should be enlisted in our devotional exercises, it is *most* necessary that the act of worship should be *authorized*. To illustrate this, permit me to call to your recollection a number of cases recorded in the Scriptures, in which the necessity of adhering rigidly to the Divine appointment in all that we do pertaining to God, is presented clearly and convincingly, and often under the most appalling circumstances.

1. The first case to which I cite you, is that relating to Nadab and Abihu, recorded, Lev. 10. These men offered *strange fire* unto the

Lord, instead of fire from off God's altar; and for this transgression "there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them." By a sudden and awful judgment, they were cut off from the congregation of Israel. Why? Because they had taken upon themselves to do, not an act which God had positively forbidden, but one "which he commanded them not." This shows the importance of conforming strictly to the Divine appointment in all our approaches to him, or in all our acts of worship. If God has "not commanded" a particular service or act of worship, it is sufficient to condemn it.

Let us apply this principle to the matter in hand, for I always like to come to the point, or as near as possible. Let it be admitted that God has not positively forbidden the use of human compositions in his praise, yet if he has "not commanded" their use, either by precept or example, or in any sense whatever, the want of such a command is sufficient to seal forever their condemnation. It is the same as if they had been positively forbidden. Had God commanded his people to burn incense and offer burnt-offerings upon his altar without providing any fire for such services, then they might have procured fire wherever it could be procured most conveniently, just as did Noah, Abraham, and others. But when it was God's will that the fire of the altar should be employed in His worship, it was highly improper to use common fire, though the use of such had not been positively prohibited. It was "not commanded." So God has provided His Church with a Book of Psalms, and commanded their use, and human compositions are not to be introduced into His worship instead of His own songs, for He has "commanded them not." But the cases are not parallel; for while it was proper to use common fire in the worship of God before the standing or Tabernacle altar was consecrated, it was not proper to use uninspired songs in the praise of God before the Book of Psalms was compiled, much less is it proper to use them after the compilation has been made. The *strange fire* which Nadab and Abihu took, would have answered the purpose of burning the incense or consuming the sacrifice, just as well as the fire from off the altar; but it was "not commanded," and that was sufficient---it should not by any means have been offered. But can the same be said of those *strange Hymns* which are substituted in the place of the Divine songs? Do they, like the strange fire, answer the purpose just as well as those furnished by the Holy Spirit? Is the Divine appointment all that is wanting to render them an acceptable offering?

2, In the judgment inflicted on Uzza, (1 Chron. xiii. 10.) we have

another impressive evidence of God's jealous concern over His own ordinances, and of his determination that no human contrivances or measures shall be introduced, with impunity, into his worship. Why was a breach made upon Uzza because he put forth his hand to stay the Ark? Because David and the Levites did not conduct the proceedings on that occasion "after the due order." 1 Chron. xv. 13. The Ark was to be carried, not on a cart, as they were doing, but on the shoulders of the Priests. And after the Sanctuary was covered, and prepared to be removed, the Priests were not to *touch* any holy thing about it under the pain of death, Numbers vii. 9. and iv. 15. No doubt Uzza was *sincere*, and supposed that his conduct in thus staying the Ark, was altogether "orthodox, devotional, and proper." But in the calamity that befel him we are taught, to use the words of the Westminster Divines under the Second Commandment, that neither "custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever," will excuse a man, or a company of men for improving upon Divine ordinances. Perhaps it was thought an improvement to carry the Ark on a "new cart," instead of "after the due order," but the death of Uzza showed the folly and crime of the *new measure*.

And now to apply this to the matter in hand. If to carry the Ark on a new cart, instead of on the shoulders of the priests; and if to touch it, to prevent its fall or injury, was so criminal in the sight of heaven, what is it to exclude entirely from the worship of God his Divine songs, and substitute our own in their stead? Has God authorized such a course? Where? When? In what part of Scripture has God condemned his own Psalter, and declared it unfit for the Gospel Church as it stands, with all its figures and flowers, its prayers and promises, its curses and its consolations? No proof can be adduced from the Bible that we have authority to remodel the Psalms, and gospelize them, and substitute our own improvement of them, and our own songs in their stead. And is the lack of such authority a matter of no moment? Is God less jealous now, respecting His worship and authority, than he was in the days of Nadab and Uzza? Certainly not; he is the same unchangeable Jehovah, yesterday, to-day, and forever; and in the coming downfall of Babylon---in the dreadful catastrophe that is to overwhelm the "Man of Sin" for changing times and laws, and seating himself in the Temple of God, the Church will be taught most emphatically that God is to be sought now, as formerly, "after the due order."

3. But of all the chastisements recorded in the Bible, as inflicted on the children of men for want of conformity to the commandment

of God, there is no case, to my mind, more touching and subduing than that of Moses and Aaron, particularly the case of Moses, recorded in Deut. iii. 23--27, and iv. 21--22. This distinguished servant of God was sent from the "burning-bush" to lead the tribes of Israel from Egypt to the Land of Promise. God, by his hand, performed the most stupendous miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea. For twice forty days, or for nearly three months, he was on Sinai's awful top communing with the great God---for many a weary day did he lead the children of Israel through the great and terrible wilderness, and bore with patience their perverseness. At length they arrived at Kadesh, and when the people chode with Moses on account of the scarcity of water, God commanded him, and his brother Aaron, to take the rod and gather the assembly together, and said God, "speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water." But instead of *speaking* to the rock as they were commanded, they *struck* it twice with the rod---instead of speaking to the *rock*, they spake to the *people*, in tones of harshness, which God "commanded them not." For this sin---this (some might think slight) deviation from the Divine commandment, they were excluded from the promised land---a land toward which they had journeyed so long, and amid so many difficulties---a land toward which they had looked with such joyous anticipations, and such ardent aspirations. How imploringly did Moses pray to be permitted to enter the promised inheritance! "I pray thee let me go over and see the good land, that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon." But God, who had often heard his prayers in behalf of Israel, would not grant this petition. "Let it suffice thee, said he, speak no more unto me of this matter." What a lamentable case! But while we are called to shed the tear of pity over the misconduct and misfortunes of "Moses, the man of God," we are also led to contemplate the inflexible purpose of God to have any thing that he requires at our hand, especially of a public nature, done, precisely, according to Divine appointment. God's judgment upon Moses was recorded for our sakes; for "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." If God dealt thus with Moses, with whom he was accustomed to speak "face to face," because he failed to sanctify him at Meribah, it surely behoves us to inquire with the utmost anxiety, whether in all our religious services, and especially in our songs of praise, the point in debate, we are acting according to Divine appointment.

Other examples might be brought from the Old Testament, afford-

ing evidence of God's jealous regard for his ordinances, and confirming what has been said above. The same spirit likewise pervades the New Testament. Hear the dreadful denunciations which Christ uttered against the Pharisees, who had perverted the worship of God in many things, and were "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." See him scourging the guilty traders for polluting and perverting his Father's house---the Temple. Read the language of Paul and others respecting the false teachers who were, in their day, perverting the Word and worship of God: Read the letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, and other parts of the Revelation, and the necessity of conforming to the Divine commandment under the New as well as under the Old dispensation will be very apparent.

If, then, it is so very important that we should have a "thus saith the Lord," or a Divine appointment for all our acts of worship, and conform strictly to it, the question now comes up, who has, and who conforms to this appointment, so far as the praise of God is concerned?

Are the "ninety-nine hundredths" of the Christian Church who sing "any thing and every thing," acting by Divine appointment in the matter, or has God appointed the Psalms of David to be used exclusively in His praise? I contend for the latter, and attempted to prove the point in the Discourse I am now called upon to defend, but did not by any means succeed to the satisfaction of my friend Mr. C.; and what is somewhat discouraging he is well persuaded that we never can succeed in establishing our position. He will give us from Genesis to Malachi to produce "one single declaration *implying*" that the Book of Psalms constituted the exclusive, or even the *principal Psalmody of the Jews.*" It is certainly very generous in him to allow us so wide a field to search for evidence in favor of our position, or rather in favor of the half of that for which we contend: for he is willing to give us the whole of the Old Testament to produce one single declaration *implying* that the Psalms of David were to constitute the *principal Psalmody even of the Jews.* But we will not be out-done in generosity. I suppose if it is necessary for us to produce divine authority for the exclusive use of the inspired Psalter---God's own songs of praise---much more is it incumbent on Mr. C. to produce Divine authority for the *exclusion* of these songs from the worship of

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to produce one solitary text of Scripture which plainly and positively enjoins the use of human compositions in the praise of God. And farther, we will give him the whole Bible to furnish one text of Scripture from which it may be fairly and legitimately *inferred* that we ought to set aside the inspired Psalter for songs of man's composing. And farther still, we will give Mr. C. the whole of Church History, and all the Fathers, from Ignatius down to Father Ralston of Western Pennsylvania, to prove that any section of the Christian Church, until the time of Dr. Watts, was ever exactly on *his side* of this controversy. He sets out with the broad assertion that the "ninety-nine hundredths of the whole Christian Church in every age" have been against us---the Seceders---and with him and his brethren;---and as he advances in the debate he finds that a great many persons and sections of the Church, and even the Seceders themselves, with Dr. Brown and Ralph Erskine at their head, have been against us, and on the side of our opponents.

Now we ask, when, or where, has any portion of the Christian Church existed, previous to the time of Dr. Watts, which substituted a mutilated imitation of David's Psalms for the Psalms themselves?

Where then has Mr. C. or his portion of the Church *authority* for the Psalmody they use in Divine worship? We have seen that it is of the utmost importance to have Divine authority for our acts of worship, and if he cannot show either direct or inferential authority from the Bible for the course which his Church has adopted---and if he cannot prove that *one* portion of the Church in *any* age, except the present, instead of the "ninety-nine hundredths in every age," have sanctioned the course which he and his Church have pursued on the subject of Psalmody---if he cannot, as we are sure he has not, produce either Divine or human authority, either precept or example justifying the Church in the rejection of David's Psalms, and substituting in their place the imitation now in use, then in what a predicament are they placed as far as *authority* is concerned in this matter? And in what a condition, on the score of authority, are those Churches placed from which the Psalms of David are entirely excluded, and the compositions of "any body and every body" are employed? They are, one and all, utterly destitute of authority, and to use the words of my friend, their condemnation is "sealed." We have said that our friend was generous in affording us such ample scope to prove our point; but he is careful to display his generosity when he thinks there is nothing to be lost by his liberality. He is sometimes disposed to be *unfair* in his demands. For example, he demands from us (No. 3.)

“plain and positive proof” for the exclusive use of David’s Psalms. It is, he says, “a positive institution. It must, therefore, depend on positive determination, which, from the very nature of the case, must be plainly, surely, and undeniably expressed.” Indeed! does he always reason in this strain? Are there not some positive institutions or ordinances which he advocates, but for which he can find no “positive proof, plainly, surely, and undeniably expressed?” Where does he find a “thus saith the Lord,” for infant baptism---for observing the first instead of the seventh day of the week, as the Christian Sabbath---and for the Presbyterian form of Church Government? He will establish and defend these institutions by fair and necessary inference from Scripture, and is it not just that we should do the same in defending David’s Psalms, especially since we cannot by implication prove that these Psalms constituted the *principal* Psalmody even of the Jews?

There are, at least, three rules by which any ordinance or institution of the Church may be established. 1. There must be a “thus saith the Lord”---a plain and positive precept---or, 2. there must be the example of those whose example is authority, such as that of Christ and his Apostles,---or 3, in support of an ordinance there must be fair and legitimate, or necessary inference *from Scripture*.

For any institution that can be sustained under any one or all of these rules, there is *Divine authority*, and on those that cannot, “Te-*kel*” must be inscribed. Under one or all of these rules we hope, in succeeding letters, to establish incontrovertibly the exclusive use of David’s Psalms in the praise of God, and by so doing “seal” forever the condemnation of the opposite *excluding* system.

Yours truly,

W. R. H.

Lindo, Abbeville, S. C. Jan. 6, 1843

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[From the Charleston Observer.]

LETTER IV.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY.

*My Christian Friends:*---In my last Letter I endeavored, by some examples, to illustrate the importance and necessity of having *Divine authority* for all our acts of worship, and of adhering rigidly to that authority. Suffer me now briefly to present another striking example, enforcing and confirming the same important principle. Immediately after God had uttered the Decalogue, in accents of thunder from the flaming summits of Sinai, he directed Moses to provide an *altar of earth* on which to present their offerings. “And if,” said God, “thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.” To human view a splendid, polished stone altar, would have been better adapted to the worship of the Great God than one of rough stone. But the Divine command was that it should be made of earth, or of rough stone, and that was sufficient; human tools and polish would not have improved, but “polluted it.” And if it would have been pollution for Moses, or an Israelite, without Divine permission, to lift up his tool upon God’s altar to polish or improve it, what is it to “lift up a tool” upon God’s Psalter, and essay to improve and polish it by omissions, additions, and variations, and that too without one iota of Divine authority or permission for so doing? And what is it to

exclude the book of praise entirely, as some have done, from Divine worship, in order to make room for something of man's composing? Think of these things, Christian friends, they are worthy of more than a passing thought.

In the Observer of December 31st, the Editor remarks, that some of his readers have been "long anxious for the termination" of this discussion. I am sorry to hear it. I hope, gentle reader, you will not grow impatient, but lend us a little longer your impartial attention. My friend, Mr. C., has much to say yet, and so have I. It is no common topic on which we debate. It is no less than "What shall we sing in the praise of God?" On this subject, in which the honor of God and the purity of his worship are involved, we should earnestly desire to be right; and I know of no other way, among Protestants, to arrive at a knowledge of truth and duty on disputed points, except by honest and friendly discussion.

In the heat of debate some things a little caustic or improper may be said on both sides, for the best men have sometimes spoken "unadvisedly;" but if any thing rough or severe should be found in my argument, I hope to smooth it off in the sequel, and come over your spirits soft and soothing as the balmy zephyrs---cool and refreshing as the dews of heaven.

Let me have your attention, then, while I proceed, in my humble way, to establish the Divine authority for the exclusive use of David's Psalms in Divine worship. In my discourse it was taken for granted, in a measure, that these Divine songs were authorized to be used exclusively under the Old Testament dispensation. But my opponent is unwilling to concede the point; he says, in No. 3, that "the contrary is most clear and undeniable," and that we have "Divine appointment against the supposed exclusive use of the Psalms of David." It behooves us, therefore, to prove that which we supposed would be admitted; and let it be observed that if we can prove that the Psalms of David were to be used exclusively under the Old Testament dispensation, it will go far to establish their exclusive use under the New economy.

1. In the first place, I take advantage of a principle laid down by my friend, in which he says that the Church should "take order, and exercise her most vigilant oversight in this matter"---that is, of Psalmody.

If this is the duty of the Church now---if the preparation and selection of her songs of praise have been committed to her care and vig-

ilance under the New dispensation, no good reason can be assigned why the same duty should not have been confided to her under the Mosaic economy. It surely will not be pretended that the Church in our day, rent and distracted as she is, and to some extent corrupted, at least in some of her divisions, is better qualified to prepare songs of praise for the Gospel, than she was in old times for the Legal dispensation. Were Watts and Wesley, Newton and Erskine, better Poets than Moses, David, Asaph, and Isaiah? Were the former better qualified to provide songs and sonnets for the Gospel Church, than the latter were to prepare Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs for the Jewish? Certainly not. If, then, God did not, and would not commit the matter of Psalmody to the "vigilant oversight" of such men as we have named, nor to the Jewish Sanhedrim, but exercised a peculiar vigilance over the matter himself, and required that every song sung in His praise should be dictated by His Spirit, it is an evidence that the whole matter was above the ability and vigilance of the best men that have ever lived in any age, unless inspired. Under the Old dispensation the selection of Hymns was neither to be left to the "random choice of mere private opinion and judgment," nor to the united wisdom and vigilance of the whole Jewish nation. God required that the whole work of making and selecting should come under his own special supervision. This, then, takes it out of the hands of man, and confides it to the all-wise God, who alone was and is equal to the work of preparing his own praise.

And now what order, what oversight did God exercise on the subject of Psalmody under the Old Testament dispensation? He inspired David and others to prepare a large collection of Hymns. He inspired Ezra, it is admitted, long after David's day, to collect and arrange the whole into one book, as it now stands. Why? What is the object in preparing a Psalm or Hymn Book? To be employed in praise, of course. Psalms are made to be sung rather than to be read. But although the Psalms of David were prepared by the Spirit to be used in praise, was the Book, especially when completed, to be used exclusively? Certainly.

In the Presbyterian Church, "a Committee has been laboring for years to form a more perfect and complete Book" of Hymns; and after it is furnished, is this "complete book" to be used exclusively in that Church? Undoubtedly; for in the paragraph from which the above is quoted, (No. 2,) my friend says, "there ought to be some standard of praise;" and that the Psalmody of our Churches is not a matter which ought to be left to their (the Churches) individual se-

lection, nor to the random choice of mere private opinion and judgment." This "complete book" then, when provided, is to be used *exclusively* in the Presbyterian Church, not only by private individuals, but also by "the Churches," or congregations; for if any one, or all of them, are allowed to select for themselves, who knows what unhappy selections some might make? Even in this day of liberality on the subject of Psalmody, there must be some *exclusiveness*---some limit to the use of Hymns---some book or books in the different denominations to which the people are to be confined *exclusively*, otherwise the Church cannot "exercise a vigilant oversight in the matter," and the people, if left to "random choices" will be likely to sing "any thing and every thing." There must, then, be *exclusiveness* in this matter. Apply this principle to the point in debate; and my friend will surely not object to this legitimate application of his own principles. God furnished his Old Testament Church with a "complete Book" of Hymns---complete, at least, after the time of Ezra. Were his people, or were they not, confined to the use of this book? What says brother C? He says nay. What then? Why it follows, contrary to his principles, that they were left to "random choice"---each one to make his own selection, and who knows now what unhappy selections they sometimes made!---What "blank Arminianism" they sometimes sung? But perhaps, it will be said, while the Old Testament saints were not confined to the use of David's Psalms, they were not to "travel out of the record" for Psalms, they were to select such Hymns, and such only, as were to be found in the sacred writings. Where is the proof? If they were not confined to the Book prepared expressly for the purpose of praise there is certainly no "positive proof" that they were restricted to the use of the inspired writings at all, but were left, as in our day, to sing "any thing and every thing."

Then upon the principle which brother C. has laid down for himself, the conclusion is inevitable that the Old Testament Church was confined to the use of David's Psalms, and consequently, by his own weapons, he is overthrown.

2. We argue, in the second place, that the Church under the Old Testament dispensation was confined to the use of David's Psalms, especially after these Psalms were compiled into a Book, *from the fact that the compilation was made.*

Had the Psalms been scattered throughout the books of the Old Testament, instead of being collected into one Book, then it might have been fairly inferred that the people of God were left to sing all

the songs contained in the sacred writings---the songs of Moses, Deborah, Hannah, &c., as well as those composed by David, Asaph, and others, and now found in the Psalter. But infinite Wisdom in preparing a Psalm Book for His Church, thought proper to leave out the song of Moses at the Red Sea, of Deborah, of Hannah, and other songs, and who will say that it was a fault, and that God ought to have incorporated these songs with the "Seph'er Tehillim," or Book of Praises? How can Mr. C. say, as he often does in substance, that the Church is as much bound to sing those Divine songs which have been left out of the Psalter, as those contained in it? If so, why were they left out? Their omission was surely not an oversight in the Deity. It was His will that they should be omitted, and no man can say with propriety that they should not, and that the Church was, and is still bound to employ them in Divine worship, notwithstanding their exclusion from that *standard of praise* which God himself has provided. It may be the songs of Moses, Deborah, and others, not found in the Book of Psalms, were sung in the *stated* worship of God previous to the compilation of that Book, but after the compilation was made, and they were omitted, it was no longer proper to employ them in the regular instituted service of the Temple---else where was the propriety of God's "taking order" in selecting a system of Psalmody, if, after the selection was made, every one had a right to add to it whatever he thought proper, and even those very songs which Infinite Wisdom thought wise to omit!

In the Patriarchal age it was proper for heads of families to offer up their sacrifices themselves, and at any convenient place; but after the Priesthood was established, and God had chosen Jerusalem as the place in which to place His name, and establish His worship, it was not right then for any one to offer sacrifices but the Priests, and that only in Jerusalem. So, previous to the time of David, or before the Book of Psalms was compiled, it was proper, it may be, for God's people to use, in the regular service of the Sanctuary, those Divine songs not now found in that book, though there is no evidence that such was the fact. But after the selection was made, it became proper to employ those, and those only, which are contained in the collection.

Mr. C. must admit one of two things, either that the Book of Psalms was the *standard of praise* for the Old Testament Church, and that the people of God were confined to it, after its compilation, or else that they had no standard, and were left to "random choice," to sing any thing and every thing." He is in a dilemma, and may choose

either horn of it, at his option. Strange to tell, he has seized on both, as it suited his purpose. In No. 2, he lays it down as a settled principle that there must be "some standard of praise;" and in No. 3, so eager is he to prove that David's Psalms was not the standard for the Old Testament Church, that he has the people singing, not only other *Divine* songs than those of David, but also *human* compositions, such as the 1005 songs of Solomon, long since lost. If those songs had been *inspired* for the use of the Church, they would still be in use, for "the Word of the Lord endureth forever." They were *human*, and have perished. So then in No 2, our brother contends for a standard, and in No. 3, and generally throughout the discussion, against one. We stand up for a standard---a *Divine* standard---and maintain that David's Psalms was the Psalm Book---the exclusive Psalm Book of the Old Testament Church. It was for this purpose, as one object at least, that it was compiled.

3. We plead for the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the Old Testament dispensation from the fact that David was "the sweet Psalmist of Israel---set apart to the particular work of preparing and collecting a book of sacred songs for the Church. It is evident from Psalm 137, which was composed during or after the Babylonish captivity, that some additions were made to the Book of Psalms by Ezra, or some one else long after the time of David. Still the collection is entitled "David's Psalms," and the authorship is ascribed to the Royal Bard, and not to Ezra or Asaph. The book was compiled in a good degree in the time of David, and under his supervision, as the inspired "Psalmist."

If we consider the station which David sustained as the "sweet Psalmist of Israel," and the arrangements which he made in Divine worship, and the authority by which he made them, we will be led to the *scriptural* conclusion that nothing was used in the worship of God but his collection, after it assumed the character of *the Psalter*, which we believe was in David's time. The compilation was made by "the Psalmist," and very little was left for Ezra to add. It was doubtless known as the "book of Psalms" from the days of David. And the fact that after "fourteen generations" and more had passed away, and Ezra; by "inspired authority," made a few additions to the collections, and still left out the songs of Moses, Deborah, Hannah, &c., affords indubitable evidence that they were not to be employed in the service of the Sanctuary.

In my discourse I observed that David was appointed to the office of Psalmist, as Paul was to that of the Apostleship, and that it devolv-

ed on him to arrange the order and manner of giving thanks. This position Mr. C. rejects, and affirms that it is without "any warrant whatever," because other persons were Psalmists, as well as David. I am happy to state, however, that since the delivery of my discourse Dr. Claybaugh of Ohio, takes the same view of this matter, and says that David was the "sweet Psalmist of Israel, as Moses was the Law-giver," &c. I am, therefore not alone in the opinion expressed. But pray, who is Dr. Claybaugh? Why, to be brief, he is a Professor of Theology at Oxford, Ohio, and one whose opinions on Psalmody are more to be depended on, than the opinions of one-half of the learned authorities adduced by Mr. C., because he is better acquainted with the subject.

It does not follow, because Asaph and others composed some of the Psalms, that David, under God, had not a particular "oversight" of the whole matter. To David, as we shall see, was committed the regulation of the entire service of the Sanctuary, and a part of that service consisted in singing praises, over which David, as the "Psalmist," had a particular *inspired* oversight. Paul was the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and although there were many preachers and laborers in the field with him, yet on him devolved "the care of all the Churches." So David was "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," and although Asaph and others composed some of the sacred songs used in Divine worship, yet doubtless all such passed through the hands of David as "the Psalmist," and were by him introduced into the Psalter which was then preparing, and ordered to be sung as a part of divinely instituted worship. This is at least a very reasonable and plausible supposition; for if God had not appointed some one to "take order" in this matter---if there had been no regulator---if it had been left to every one to prepare his own song, or make his own selections, then many individuals would have been ambitious to have had their poetical productions introduced into Divine worship, and they would have felt aggrieved if the "Chief Musician" had excluded their pieces, and admitted those of Heman, Ethan and Asaph. But when every thing of this kind had to pass through the hands of him who was appointed to the office of "Psalmist"---and who was inspired and directed in the duties of his office by the Holy Spirit---every song that was not dictated by the Spirit, and had obtained his sanction, would very soon, and with infallible certainty, be detected; so that it was impossible, under this Divine arrangement, that the "Chief Musician" could be imposed on, or that human and unauthorized compositions could be introduced into Divine worship.

That David arranged the whole service of the temple, according to Divine direction, is very evident from 1 Chron. xxviii. It is said in verse 11, that he gave to Solomon, his son, the pattern of the House of the Lord; and, in verse 12, that this pattern was furnished him by *the Spirit*; and, in verse 13, he gave to Solomon, by the same Divine authority, the pattern or plan, "for the courses of the Priests, and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord." "All this," said David, (v. 19,) "the Lord made me understand, in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." What now was "the work of the *service* of the house of the Lord," which a part of the Levites had to perform? They were by David "set over the *service* of song in the house of the Lord." 1 Chron. vi. 31. They were set apart to praise God with harps, psalteries, and cymbals, 1 Chron. xxv. 1, and elsewhere.

And when the children of Israel returned from captivity in Babylon, the same class of persons, the sons of Asaph, were set apart with cymbals to praise the Lord, *after the ordinance of David, the King of Israel*. Ezra iii. 10--11, Neh. xii. 46. Let it be distinctly observed that this setting apart a portion of the Levites to conduct the song of the Lord, and to praise him with cymbals and harps, though called an "ordinance of David," was not a contrivance of his own, but the whole pattern of the house of the Lord, the service of the Levites, Musicians, and all, was given to him "by the Spirit"---"The Lord made him to understand it in writing," &c. Now I ask, is it at all reasonable to suppose that God would direct David, the Psalmist as he was, to arrange the order and *manner* of giving thanks, without directing and inspiring him to "exercise a vigilant oversight" over the whole *matter* of praise? If this is a duty *now*, it was *then*, and if "the sweet Psalmist" was not intrusted with this duty, who was? Would God be more concerned about the instruments with which He was to be praised, than about the matter of praise? Would the Holy Spirit, in furnishing David with a pattern of His house, define with exactness the weight of gold and silver to be used in the construction of the different instruments and vessels of His house. (1 Chron. xxviii. 14--19.) and yet leave it altogether indefinite as to the character of the songs which should be sung in His praise---indifferent as to whether they were human or Divine, and if Divine, leaving it to every one to make his own selections, from any of the poetical portions of the Bible? By no means. God was careful about the matter of praise, as well as about other things. He did not leave it to every one to make or select Hymns. David was "the Psalmist;"

the title was not due, nor given to any one else. It was his duty to provide a book of Psalms for the Church---a duty which God never imposed on any one else. His Psalm book is the only one ever authorized to be used in Divine worship, and from these considerations we conclude that it was and is to be used exclusively in the Church.

We hope to strengthen the argument and finish on the point now before us, in our next letter, and then proceed to establish the exclusive use of David's Psalms in the New Testament Church.

Yours, &c.

W. R. H.