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LETTER V.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY.

My Christian Friends,---In Letter IV. I entered on the argument in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms, and presented several considerations, tending, as I think, to establish the point at issue.

In the *Observer* of January 14, received since my last Letter, the Editor suggests the propriety of adhering strictly to the Scriptural argument respecting the exclusive use of David's Psalms, in order to render the discussion as brief as possible, or to avoid "running into too great prolixity." The suggestion is a very good one, but it comes up a little too late. If it had been made three months ago, and attended to, it would have saved my worthy opponent the labor of writing something like the one third of his numbers. I shall attend to the suggestion, and endeavor to confine myself, as far as possible, to the Scriptural argument. But as the argument of Mr. C. is to be followed and reviewed, it may lead me occasionally into partial digression, or into greater prolixity than would otherwise be necessary. I have no idea of following my learned friend through his long array

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ity on this subject, cannot be ascertained from Church History, except so far as that history is recorded in the Scriptures. We propose, therefore, to give, as the Editor suggests, the "plain Scripture precept," and the "indubitable example" for the exclusive use of David's Psalms. But in doing so we will have to prove that the precept is plain, and the example indubitable, and this may require no little argument. A man may deny in one breath a truth or proposition which will require his antagonist a whole chapter to establish. For example, in my discourse I referred to the command of Hezekiah enjoining the use of "the words of David, and Asaph the Seer," as authority for the exclusive use of David's Psalms. This Mr. C. denies; and now it will require the half of this letter to prove that it is a "plain precept," not from Hezekiah, but from God, enjoining on the Old Testament Church the exclusive use of the inspired Psalter. And if it is made to appear that this command of Hezekiah is a "plain precept" on this subject, then the "indubitable example" will follow of course. For all we have to do is to ask, who were members of this Old Testament Church confined exclusively to the use of David's Psalms? Who? Thousands of the first converts to Christianity---Simeon, Anna, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the inspired Apostles, and Jesus Christ himself, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!"

I will endeavor to conduct the argument as briefly as possible. I hope, Christian Friends, you will not grow impatient; if the Seceders are right on this subject, the other denominations are certainly very wrong, and we may just as well consider the matter carefully on this side of the tomb; it cannot be settled *among ourselves* on the other side.

Having in my last letter adduced three arguments in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the old dispensation, I now offer as a 4th argument, the command of Hezekiah and his Princes, 1 Chron. xxix. 30. The command runs thus: "Moreover, Hezekiah the King and the Princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer." I view this injunction to use, in praise, "the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," as equivalent to a command to sing "David's Psalms." By David's Psalms we mean the whole collection as it now stands, and by "the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," Hezekiah and his Princes meant David's Psalms, as the collection stood in their day. They did not intend that the Levites should not use any thing in the collection but what was composed by David and Asaph; and when we contend for the exclusive use of "David's Psalms," we do

not intend, as Mr. C. represents us, (No. 3,) that the Church is to be confined only to those attributed to David. "Even then," he says, "the Psalms of Asaph were to be sung as well as those of David." No one pleads for the exclusive use of the seventy-three ascribed to David. Nor did Hezekiah intend that the Levites should confine themselves entirely to "the words of David and Asaph," but that they should employ that whole collection of Hymns of which those two Poets were the chief composers.

I consider the command of King Hezekiah and his Princes, as cited above, as a command of God, enjoining the use---the exclusive use of this inspired collection of sacred songs. Mr. C., and those who coincide with him in opinion, contend that the injunction contained in the above cited passage, was a mere recommendation or command of Hezekiah and his Princes, Mr. C. asks, „Does this prove God's Divine appointment, under the old economy of the Psalms of David?" And he replies, "by no means." Dr. Latta and others view it in the same light, not as God's, but as man's appointment. Let us examine this matter for a moment. It has been usual, I believe on our part, merely to present this command as a "plain precept" in favor of our position, and on the other hand it has been customary to deny it without much discussion, but now let us argue the case. Hezekiah, it is said, had no authority from God to enjoin the use of "the words of David and Asaph the Seer," that is, David's Psalms---it was a mere matter of taste with him and his Princes---a mere "civil" regulation, as Dr. Latta intimates, page 96. Now what is the first thing that is said in this 29th chapter, respecting this pious and worthy king of Judah? It is said, verse 2d, that "he did that which was *right* in the sight of the Lord." This commendation has particular reference to the course which he pursued in regulating the worship of God, and restoring it to its former purity. Ahaz, his father, was a very bad man, and did that which was utterly wrong in God's sight, and among other evil deeds, he cut in pieces the vessels of God's house, and shut up the doors thereof. (2 Chron. xxviii. 24.) But Hezekiah did that which was right in God's sight---he opened the doors of the Lord's house, and restored the Divine ordinances---and among other *right* things that he did, he enjoined the use of David's Psalms, or restored them, as well as other things, to their former place in Divine worship. But it would have been just as *right*, it will be said, if he had commanded the Levites to use the Song of Solomon, or portions of Job, Isaiah, or some other inspired poetry. I deny the correctness of this opinion. The

Song of Solomon, the poetical parts of Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. were never designed to be used in the praise of God; but of this again. But admitting that it would have been right for Hezekiah and his Princes to have commanded the Levites to use other Divine songs instead of, or in addition to those of David, would it have been equally as acceptable to God for the King in the exercise of his taste or judgment, or "civil authority," to have commanded the use of *human* compositions instead of, or in addition to "the words of David and Asaph?" Let it be remembered, Christian friends, this is the great point in dispute. If some great Doctor had lived previous to the reign of Hezekiah, and had dreadfully mutilated the Psalms of David to suit his own caprice, and, in addition to his mutilation of these Divine songs, had composed some two or three books of poetic pieces entirely his own, would it have been as right for the King and his Princes to have commanded the use of these *human* compositions, as the *Divine* songs of David and of Asaph? What says brother C? He certainly replies in the negative. I defy any good man in Christendom, who understands the subject, to give any thing else than an emphatic no, to the above interrogatory. But why would it have been wrong for the King and his Courtiers, in regulating and reinstating the pure worship of God in His Temple, to have commanded the use of human compositions instead of David's Psalms? No good reason can be given but this. It was God's will---it was the Divine appointment---and not the taste or prejudice of the King and his Court, that the Psalms of David should be sung in Divine worship; and, therefore, the King and his Princes acting under the Divine direction, enjoined the use of this inspired collection, and of no other songs, either Divine or human.

If it was right for Hezekiah and his princes to exercise their judgment, their "civil authority," independent of all Divine authority, in selecting Psalms and Hymns for the worship of God, it was proper for other Kings and their Courts to follow the inclinations of their hearts in the same matter. Ahaz the father, and Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, were both very bad men and wicked rulers. According to the reasoning of our opponents, they and their Princes had a right to command the Levites to sing just such Psalms and Hymns as they might think proper to appoint; for if Hezekiah and his Court had a right to make their own selection of Hymns for Divine worship, so had other Kings and their Courts. But suppose, (and it is a very supposable case,) that Ahaz or Manasseh had, in exercising this supposed right, laid aside the Psalms of David, and commanded the use of

a collection of human songs, (for this is the point at issue,) would their conduct have been as acceptable in the sight of God, as the conduct of Hezekiah and his Princes? Our opponents say no; they are compelled to say no, though the admission may come from some of them with reluctance. But why was the course pursued by Hezekiah and his Princes more acceptable, by far, than the conduct of Ahaz and Manasseh would have been in the case supposed? Because Hezekiah and his Court acted according to Divine appointment in the matter. They knew that the whole pattern of God's house had been given to David *by the Spirit*---that the services of the Levites were divinely arranged, both as to the *manner* and the *matter* of praise. They knew that God had set apart King David to the office of Psalmist for the express purpose of furnishing the Church with a collection of inspired Hymns, and that Asaph and others had been inspired to furnish a certain number---that this collection had always been used in the Church since the days of David with Divine approbation. In restoring Divine worship to its former purity, they adopted no *new measures*, but commanded the use of those instruments and of those services and songs which God had previously authorized; and the fact, they *expressly* enjoined the Levites to sing the words of David and Asaph---that is, David's Psalms, confining them to this collection---is a strong proof that it was Divinely authorized to be used *exclusively* in the worship of God under the Old Testament dispensation.

Suffer me to make an additional remark or two touching this command of Hezekiah. Our opponents would have the world believe that when the King and his Princes opened the Temple and restored the pure worship of God, they did every thing according to Divine appointment, except making a selection of Hymns in which the works, and wonders, and perfections of Jehovah might be suitably extolled. In this matter, which was certainly not one of minor importance, or devoid of difficulty, they were left to the exercise of "private judgment." We read in 2 Chron. xxiv. 15. that the Levites, in cleansing the house of the Lord, acted according to Divine appointment and that the King, in setting the Levites to attend to instrumental music, acted by the same authority. (verse 25.) And in the next chapter we are informed that the King, his Princes, and all the congregation took counsel---*deliberated* about keeping the Passover the second month. (verse 2.) But although they consulted about the matter, the ordinance itself was no new contrivance of "the King and his Princes"---they introduced nothing on the score of expedi-

ency, or to suit their own whim or caprice. The people obeyed "the commandment of the King and of the Princes," yet it was all done according to Divine appointment, or as it is expressed in verse 12, *by the word of the Lord*.

From what has been said above, we discover that God was very particular about every part of Divine worship, and every thing that pertained to the services of the Tabernacle or Temple. The *cleansing* of the Temple, the use of instrumental music, the time and manner of keeping the Passover; and in fact every thing about the Tabernacle---every knop, and flower, and fringe---every bowl, and branch, and board---every skin, and curtain, and coupling-loop, had its place in the Tabernacle *by Divine appointment*. (Exodus xxv. xxvi. &c.) And the whole pattern of the temple, including the service thereof, was given to David *by the Spirit*. And yet, notwithstanding all this *particularity* about the very *smallest* matters---about *pins*, and *loops*, and *flowers*---there was one thing, argues Mr. C., and that too a matter of *great* importance, which God left of old entirely to the management of Kings and Princes, and we might add, in our day, to "Committees," that is, the selection and collection of songs of praise adapted to magnify the mercy and justice, the power and glory of Almighty God!! Who can believe it! No one. And if the thing is incredible---if it is inconceivable that God should leave the selection of Hymns of praise to Kings and Courts, whether pious or impious, for if it was a matter committed to one of Judah's Sovereigns, it was to every one---then it follows that the command of Hezekiah and his Princes to the Levites to "sing in the words of David and of Asaph," that is, David's Psalms, was the command of God, and consequently we have in this injunction a "plain precept" for the *exclusive* use of David's Psalms under the Old Testament dispensation. With reference to other songs, it may be said, "he commanded them not."

From the foregoing train of argument I feel persuaded that every honest man, and even those who are not disposed to reason fairly, must admit that this command of Hezekiah and his Princes, was the command and appointment of God; and where and when, I ask, has this appointment been annulled? When or where has God said that this collection of sacred songs, dictated by His Spirit, and appointed by His authority to be sung in His praise, might or ought to be laid aside, and an imitation of them, very badly executed, with a host of other songs of man's composing, good, bad, and indifferent, should be introduced in their stead? Where? Let the chapter and verse, or

any thing in the neighborhood of *Divine* authority be produced for laying aside these heavenly songs of the "sweet Psalmist," and for substituting in their stead human compositions, and I will drop my pen and abandon the contest, or strike my colors and call for quarters---but I'll "never give up the ship," with the blessing of God, until such authority is produced.

6. We argue, in the fifth place, that the Psalms of David were used exclusively by Divine appointment, under the Old Testament dispensation, from the fact that we often find them employed in the worship of God during that dispensation. Many of them are addressed to the "chief musician," or to "the sons of Korah," to those very Levites whom David, *by the Spirit*, had set apart to the "service of song in the house of the Lord." Of course all such were designed for permanent use in the worship of God. There are a number of instances recorded in which these Psalms were used in the regular instituted worship of God, and we have no evidence that those Scripture songs, which are not in this collection, were ever sung more than once, and then not in the regular service of the sanctuary.

Some time after the death of David, at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, a Psalm of David was sung, 2 Chron. 5, 13. About one hundred years after the dedication of the Temple, when Jehoshaphat went forth to battle it with Moab and Ammon, a Psalm of David was sung, 2 Chron. 20: 21. About one hundred and seventy or eighty years after Jehoshaphat's war with Moab, Hezekiah and his friends restored the pure worship of God, and commanded, with Divine approbation, the Psalms of David to be sung. Here let me remove a cavil. Mr. C. and others say, that the occasion on which Hezekiah gave this command was *particular*. Very true, but the peculiarity favors our views, and not those of our friends. Previous to the time of Hezekiah, the worship of God had been grievously corrupted, and, in fact, entirely interrupted; scarce a vestige of it remained. His wicked father Ahaz, had "cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord; and he made them altars in every corner of Jerusalem." Now what did Hezekiah do, under these "particular" circumstances, when he came to the throne? Why he restored Divine worship *to what it had formerly been*. He added nothing new, but commanded that every thing should be resumed and conducted as God had ordained; and among other things, he enjoined a return to the use of David's Psalms ---the only collection, certainly, that had formerly been used in worship. But, to proceed; about one hundred and seventy-five years

after Hezekiah restored the worship of God, and after the people of Israel had returned from Babylon, they sung a Psalm of David, at the laying of the foundation of the second Temple. Ezra 3; 12. And it is evident, from Nehemiah 12, that the Psalms of David were sung at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, about ninety years after the foundation of the Temple was laid. But where, it will be asked, is the evidence that the Psalms of David were sung on these occasions? The people or Levites are said to have praised God on most of these occasions---"for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever,"---and with these words, it is known, some of David's Psalms (Ps. 106, 107, 136,) are introduced, and no other Psalms but those of David's collection, were ever given into the hands of the Levites, beginning with such language; therefore, on these occasions, the Psalms of David were sung exclusively.

Thus, for more than five hundred years, from the time of David to that of Ezra, we find the Psalms of David, or his collection, used time after time in the worship of God, and during the whole of that period we have not one particle of evidence that any other songs, either divine or human, were employed in divine instituted worship. Does all this prove nothing respecting the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the old dispensation? For my part, I view it as indubitable evidence of the fact. If it is not "plain precept," or "positive proof," it is at least *circumstantial* evidence, accumulating and corroborating until it reaches demonstration.

Let me now call your attention for a moment to some of these songs, which brother C. says were sung in the Old Testament Church; and if it will appear that they are not songs at all, or were not used in Divine worship, it will, of course, strengthen my argument. I have already said enough in a former letter, respecting the songs of Moses, Deborah, and Hannah. My object, at present, in noticing some of the songs he enumerates, is to show how hard run he was to find certain songs which would authorize him or excuse him in saying that David's Psalms were not to be used, exclusively, under the Old Testament dispensation. After specifying a number of songs, part of which we now notice, he comes to this strong conclusion: "Nothing, therefore, can be more unfounded than the declaration that the Church of God, under the Old Testament economy, was exclusively confined to the Book of Psalms." Let us see. There is what he calls (No. 8) "the Song of Samuel." 1 Saml. 12: 6, 36. Part of this "song" is a narrative of what God had done for Israel, and part a reproof of the people from Samuel for desiring a

King, closing with comfortable words from the Seer. Look at it, my friends, and if you can discover any poetry about it, your discernment must be keen. It is more like a sermon than a song. Again, there is "the Song of David." 2 Saml. 1: 19--27. This is David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan. Whoever supposed that David's sympathy for, and praise of a disobedient King and his worthy son, was ever sung by David himself, or by any one else, as *praise to God*. For the Psalmist to have sung praise to God over the *disaster* of Saul, his Father-in-law and Sovereign, and over Jonathan, his covenant friend, would be somewhat after the fashion of those who praise God for falling from grace." This lamentation of David is highly poetical, but we must remember that *all poetry is not song*, nor is every song to be sung in Divine worship. I suppose that these pathetic strains of David over Saul and Jonathan were *uttered* and not *sung*, just as many other poetical parts of the Scriptures were.

Again, Mr. C. cites us to "the Song of Solomon," 1 Kings 5: 1--66, (a mistake I suppose, for 1 Kings 8: 1--66, as the latter chapter is the only one in Kings containing 66 verses.) The chapter records the transactions that took place at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. Let it be examined, and I will venture to say that neither Mr. C. nor any one else will maintain that there is a word of song in the whole chapter. Part of it is a narrative respecting the removal of the Ark into the Temple---part of it Solomon's dedicatory prayer, & part an account of the offerings presented, and the royal feast prepared. Was all this, or any part of it *sung* at the dedication, or at any other time in the Temple service? Never, never. But enough of this. Did ever *such songs* take the place of the book of Psalms? Here let it be understood, we see the necessity of adhering rigidly to Mr. C's own principle, viz: that the matter of Psalmody should not be left to "random choice, or to mere private opinion and judgment;" for if a man of so much talent and learning as my worthy friend, did deliberately make such a poor selection as the above "songs," what a miserable choice would many a poor ignorant Jew have made, had they been permitted to select for themselves, and not confined, as we contend, *exclusively* to the use of David's Psalms.

We have now closed our argument in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms, under the Old Testament dispensation---We naturally conclude that it is conclusive, and we trust that it will prove convincing. Read it again Christian friends.

Yours truly,

W. R. H.

From the Charleston Observer.

LETTER VI.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF DAVID'S PSALMS IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD UNDER THE NEW TESTAMENT DISPENSATION.

My Christian Friends.---In my last letter I closed the argument for the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the Old Testament dispensation, and proved upon Mr C's own principles, as well as by various other arguments, that the Psalms of David were used exclusively in Divine worship, under the old dispensation. We expect to en-

ter, on this letter, on the argument for the exclusive use of these Psalms under the Gospel dispensation. Before proceeding, however, with the discussion, it may be proper to take a note of what my brother has said touching the use of instrumental music under the old economy.

He remarks, (No. 3.) "This Divine appointment (2 Chron. 29: 25,) has never been abrogated," and he asks how can we cast stones at our less guilty brethren, if we live in open violation of this Divine appointment? As this matter is not necessarily connected with the point in dispute, I will not discuss it at present, but will give two or three quotations from the "Organ Cause," to show that the "appointment" relative to the use of instrumental music has been abrogated, and that consequently, in refusing to employ musical instruments in worship, we are not more "guilty" than those who refuse to use David's Psalms, the appointment respecting which, we hope to shew, has not been annulled. The Glasgow Presbytery of Scotland, in which the subject of Instrumental Music in Divine worship was fully investigated in 1808, concludes that "circumcision, sacrifice, instrumental music, and the Temple---the whole of these institutions must stand or fall together." Organ Cause, page 92. Again, "it seems to be acknowledged by all descriptions of Christians, that among the Hebrews, instrumental music, in the public worship of God, was essentially connected with sacrifice." page 93. Again, "instrumental music belonged to the Temple service, and was never employed in the Synagogue." page 98. If the above opinions are correct, (and Mr C. may prove them false if he can, at his leisure,)---if instrumental music was essentially connected with sacrifice, then it follows that when the law of sacrifice was annulled at the death of Christ, the Divine appointment respecting musical instruments in worship was likewise abrogated. Our Christian friends then who reject entirely the use of David's Psalms, or those who use only a portion of them badly imitated, are not "less guilty" in this matter, than we are, touching the use of musical instruments in worship. I may therefore proceed to "cast stones"---a thankless office, but not without its benefits.

Let me here observe that my friend has fallen into the habit of saying that such and such a thing is so, "as we have seen," leaving the careless and inattentive reader to suppose that he had previously and indubitably established the position to which he refers with so much confidence, when such is not the case. For example, near the commencement of No. 5, he says that the Psalms of David were used by

the Apostles in their attendance upon the Synagogue service; and very soon after, in the same number; he observes, "we cannot imagine how an occasional attendance upon the Synagogue service, in which the Psalms of David were used, but not exclusively, as has been seen, could prove," &c. Now where had it been seen or shewn that the Psalms of David were not used exclusively in the Synagogue service? Certainly not in any thing that Mr C. had previously advanced, and I query if it would not puzzle him to see it or shew it any where else. In Robinson's Calmet, Prid. Connections, Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, and in the Comprehensive Commentary, vol. 6 page 146 in all of which there is a particular account given of the services of the Synagogue, singing Psalms of any kind is not given as a part of these services, much less is it said that David's Psalms were not used exclusively. I do not say that singing praise was no part of the Synagogue service, but sure I am that Mr C. has neither seen nor shewn in this discussion that David's Collection was not used exclusively in that service.

Again, with reference to the hymn Christ sang on the Mount, or previous to his departure for the Mount of Olives, Mr C. (No. 5.) after a process of very inconclusive reasoning, comes to this strong conclusion---"beyond all doubt, therefore, as we think, Christ bid his disciples to sing some hymn---some new song---appropriate to this first beginning of the Gospel economy." And he informs us that "such a hymn has been preserved among the Apocryphal writings and attributed to this occasion." Well, it may be so, but is his "as we think," and his "Apocryphal hymn," proof that Christ did not sing one of David's Psalms, while he is said to have "sung an hymn?"---To be sure they are; for a little farther on in the same number, (No. 5) he says, "the Church of God, as we have seen, never was confined exclusively to the Psalms of David in the praise of God;" and of the same connection, and under the same "as we have seen," he informs us that it was repeatedly foretold that the New Testament Church should employ new songs in God's worship---and that "Christ, in the very opening of this new dispensation, gave to his disciples an illustration of the fulfilment of these prophecies." It is such proof and such reasoning that helps him to the conclusion that what I had said respecting this "hymn," sung by Christ and his disciples, "is beyond controversy wrong!"

He demands of us "positive proof," and "proof as strong as holy writ," for the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the New dispensation; and when we had furnished an "indubitable example" of

the fact, he gives us "we think," and "we have seen," and his "Apocryphal hymn," and what Grotius thought, as his proof against the example. Mr C. must excuse his readers if they cannot "see" his proofs as clearly as he appears to have seen them; for

"His optics must be good I ween,
To see a thing that can't be seen."

Permit me here to present two or three admissions which my friend makes respecting the use of David's Psalms as we may find it convenient to call them up occasionally in our progress. He makes some important admissions in his third and fourth negative particulars respecting these Psalms, (No. 2) which we pass at present. In No. 3 he says, "that these Psalms, (David's,) were inspired for the use of the Church in all ages, we certainly do believe." Of course he does not mean exclusive use. A little farther on in the same number he observes, "doubtless from David's time the Psalms came into general use, but they were not compiled into this collection by inspired authority until the time mentioned;" that is, until Ezra's time. While my brother makes these and other important admissions respecting the use of David's Psalms, I make not a particle of admission relative to the use of human hymns in the worship of God, but repudiate the whole system of human Psalmody--in this we claim some vantage-ground.

Let us now proceed to the argument in favor of the exclusive use of the Psalms of David under the New Testament dispensation.

1. In the first place, I remark that these Psalms are to be used exclusively in Divine worship in the New Testament Church, from the fact that they were so used in the Old Testament Church, and no change has been ordered, or can be shown to have taken place, by Divine authority, at the commencement of the New economy.

The Old Testament Church was confined exclusively, "as we have seen," and as we have demonstrated too, to the use of David's Psalms in the regular instituted worship of God. We do not deny that other inspired Psalms or songs were sometimes sung by individuals, or by a collection of individuals on particular occasions, such as the songs of Moses, Deborah, and Hannah, already alluded to, but we do deny that such songs were ever sung in God's instituted worship after the Psalms of David were composed and compiled into a "Book," whether that was in David's, Hezekiah's, or Ezra's time.

Nor would we object at all to individuals or congregations at this day singing newly composed hymns, provided they were inspired, but

even then we would protest against their introducing such inspired songs of praise into the Psalter, or as a part of the standing praise of the Church, unless they had Divine authority, as Ezra had, for so doing; and much more do we protest against the introduction of human compositions as the Church's standing praise, without such Divine permission. For example, should God inspire any one now living, say Dr. Miller of Princeton, to compose a hymn on some special occasion, it would surely be his duty to sing it, but after it was sung by him and those interested in the occasion, it would then require Divine permission for him, or the Presbyterian Church, of which he is one of the most distinguished members, to introduce his inspired hymn as a part of the standing praise of the Church; for if one man was allowed to introduce his inspired hymns as a part of God's praise without Divine permission, how many would claim the right of obtruding their uninspired effusions? Or if they did not claim the right themselves, others would claim it for them. How many? We know not but the Presbyterian Hymn-book now before us is made up of psalms and hymns from more than fifty individuals, some from Wesley, and some from Toplady! and some from almost every quarter, except Rouse!

Psalms and hymns then, should not only be composed by inspiration, but also admitted by the same authority into the Psalmody of the Church. God required this under the Old dispensation--He also requires the same now; and as there is no book of praises in existence which has been composed by the Spirit, and collected by "inspired authority," but the Psalms of David, the consequence is that the New Testament Church is to be confined exclusively to this authorized collection, as the Old Testament Church was. Admitting, for the sake of illustration, that the Apostles and others at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, composed new hymns under the Spirit's inspiration, yet as these hymns have not been incorporated, by Divine authority, with the Psalms of David, which Mr. C. admits "were inspired for the use of the Church in all ages"--as they have not been collected into a separate book, and authorized to be sung--and as, in fact, no such hymns, either collected or scattered, are to be found, the conclusion is inevitable that the matter of Psalmody stands now just as it did at the close of the Old dispensation. As the people of God were to be confined then to the use of David's Psalms in Divine worship, so are they now; and we now demand from our friends the same that they have asked at our hands, viz "plain precept," "positive proof--plainly, clearly, and undeniably expressed,"

for the change they have thought fit to make in the matter of Psalmody. It may be said, however, that this argument rests upon the supposition that the former argument on which it is based is conclusive. Admitted. We have proved, "as we think," not by the Apocrypha, nor by the opinion of Grotius, or any learned author, but by the Bible, and by fair and logical reasoning from the Bible, and also upon the principles of our opponent, that the Psalms of David were divinely authorized to be used exclusively in Divine worship under the Old dispensation, and the matter stands proved until it can be disproved; and if it cannot be disproved, then the argument now advanced is good and conclusive in favor of the exclusive system.

The Old Testament Church was confined exclusively to the use of David's Psalms in her worship---Christ and his disciples, who were members of that Church, and who conformed to her ritual, made no change, as we shall see, on the subject of Psalmody; and from this we maintain that the Gospel Church is to be confined exclusively to the inspired Psalter. And here let me ask, *by what authority* have the Churches of Christ set aside these Divine songs *entirely*, as some have done, or for an imitation of them, as others, or for mere scraps of them in metre, as we find to be the case in the Episcopal book of common Prayer? Is not God saying to the Churches by the present general agitation of this subject, "Who hath required this (change) at your hands?" Who? Echo answers "who?"---for all else are silent.

My health, which has not been good for several months, is now too delicate to allow me to pursue the subject further in this letter.---Should Providence grant health and help I will attempt to continue the discussion next week; but if not allowed to resume it, enough has already been said to show that the advocates for the exclusive use of David's Psalms in Divine worship, are right---that they have Divine authority, and "indubitable example," for the exclusive use of these Psalms---while the advocates of *human hymns* can find neither plain nor doubtful precept nor example, *from the Bible*, for the use of such hymns in the worship of God. Yours truly,

Lindo, Abbeville, S. C., Feb. 3, 1843.

W. R. H.

PSALMODY-- DIVINE AUTHORITY.

My Christian Friends---With health somewhat restored, through the goodness of God, I return to advocate the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the Gospel dispensation. Since my last letter was despatched, a new antagonist has appeared in the field under the signature of "G." To his communication the Editor directs my attention, and 'G.' himself invites a candid examination of his positions, "One at a time, gentlemen." I entered on this discussion to defend my Discourse, and the point which it advocates, against the learned and labored attack of "Charlestoniensis." He is considered, in the up-country at least, if I mistake not, the very Goliath of the cause which he advocates; and if, by the blessing of God, I shall be enabled to overthrow his arguments by Scripture, and by the application of his own principles, the consequence will be that the whole army of common opposers, with 'G.' in the van, must beat a retreat, or come to an honorable surrender.

I cannot stay at present to notice in detail the positions of friend 'G.' it may be convenient to bring them up as we proceed.

The Editor speaks of the "intrinsic merit of his communication." but there are one or two things in it, which I notice at present, that certainly detract very much from the merit of the production. At the close of the article 'G.' assures us that he looks upon the question of Psalmody as *in itself a very little matter!* In his estimation it is only important from the difference it has produced in the Church. If the Church can be united in her Psalmody, no matter to him whose songs are sung---whether inspired or uninspired---whether from God, who knows perfectly his own perfections, and the whole extended plan of his operations in nature and grace, and what praise is due to him;---or from man, who by searching cannot find out God,---who does not even know himself---who is compassed about with so many infirmities that he is unable to express in prayer his own wants to God without the help of the Spirit, and who is, consequently, much less capable of expressing the high praises, in poetic strains, of that God whose presence fills immensity---"who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." 1 Tim. vi. 16. To 'G.' it matters not whether we praise

this incomprehensible Jehovah-Jesus---this King eternal, immortal, and invisible, in the imperfect effusions which men, (who see thro' a glass darkly,) pour out respecting Him, or whether we sing the dictates of his own Divine Spirit.

What are we to think of 'G's' indifference on the subject of Psalmody, when we consider the attention that God has given to this matter?

If he considers it a matter of so little importance, he surely cannot think it much of a sacrifice to abandon the use of uninspired songs,---especially when by so doing he might promote the peace, the purity, and the prosperity of Zion. Let him say, as Paul said about the meat offered to idols;---"if singing uninspired hymns causes my *weak-brethren* to offend, I'll sing no more such while the world stands."

There is another sentiment contained in the communication of 'G' still more obnoxious than that above quoted---a sentiment which strikes at the very foundation of Divine truth, and places the Word of God on a level with that of man. He says, under his second proposition---"if a hymn, *no matter by whom composed*, contains the truths revealed in the New Testament, or any portion of Scripture, *it is no less sacred than are the Psalms of David.*" What a sentiment, Christian friends!--yet a sentiment, we have reason to fear, but too prevalent, and its inculcation is one of the evils resulting from the use of human compositions in the praise of God.

What Satan could not accomplish by Popery, Infidelity, and other means, Christians have gradually and imperceptibly effected by substituting their own in place of Divine songs in Divine worship.

They have brought down God's Word to a level with that of man---one is as sacred as the other! If a hymn composed according to the Scriptures is just as sacred as the Psalms of David, so by a parity of reasoning is a letter, *by whomsoever composed*, if it is according to Scripture, just as sacred as one of Paul's Epistles;---so is a sermon, by whomsoever preached, if orthodox, just as sacred as Christ's sermon on the Mount!

The Editor says, in the Observer of August 13th, "it is freely admitted that no human composition which is employed in the praise of God, is entirely exempt from the universal charge," that is, of *defectiveness*. This is true, but 'G' has the assurance to tell us that such defective productions "are no less sacred than are the Psalms of David." Not to dwell on this matter, let me quote for the benefit of 'G,' and others of a kindred spirit, one expression from the Rev. Mr.

Kirk's Introduction to "Theopneusty:"---"All we oppose, is, the confounding one twig, one leaf, one fibre of this wonderful production of Divine goodness, (the Bible, of which the Psalms are a part,) with any thing man has made and marred."

Friend 'G' may consider these remarks foreign to the discussion. If they are, it is not my fault. My attention has been called to his communication, and I could not but condemn the above cited sentiments. We are likely to hear of him again.

In my last letter I entered on the argument in favor of the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the New Testament dispensation. I was able to present but one argument, which was that these Psalms are to be used exclusively under the Gospel dispensation, from the fact that they were so used under the old economy, and no change took place in the matter of Psalmody when the dispensation of grace was changed.

Let us now proceed with the discussion. I suppose that the book of Psalms was completed in a good degree in David's time, but Mr. C. argues, (No. 3,) that the Old Testament church for the space of *three thousand five hundred years*, was "not only not confined to the exclusive use of this book---he (God) did not give them this book at all," until the time of Ezra. If this be so---if this Psalter was neither collected nor compiled until the time of Ezra---until near the close of the old dispensation---then, in the *second place*, I contend from this very fact that it was principally and especially designed for the New Testament Church, to be employed as her book, her only book of praises. God never does any thing without design: what design had he in view in directing Ezra, the Scribe, to collect and compile the book of Psalms, so near the close of the Old dispensation? For what is a Psalm book intended? To be used in praise of course. If so, then what was the object in collecting "David's Psalms?" Was it that the Old Testament Church, about to close, might *at length, after thirty-five hundred years*, have some *standard* of praise---that the people might not be left any longer to "random choice," to blunder on "Samuel's sermon," or "Solomon's prayer," or on other poetical parts of Scripture, even less adapted to the praise of God? Or was it that the New Testament Church, soon to be established, *and to arise out of the old one*, might from the first have a "complete book" of sacred hymns, in which God's dealings with His Church, from first to last, are set forth in strains as sweet as angels use---"in thoughts that breathe, and words that burn?"

If the book of Psalms was neither collected nor compiled until Ez-

ra's time, say about 450 years before Christ, and if, as Mr. C. plainly intimates, it is *Jewish*, and devoid of *christian instruction*, (No. 2. §4, and No. 7 §6,) and consequently not adapted to the Christian dispensation, then we have the Divine Being acting the part of imperfect short-sighted man. He leaves the Church thirty-five hundred years without a book of praises; at length impressed with the importance of having some standard of praise, He has a book of inimitable songs collected, but, unfortunately, they are of such a character that they do not suit the Church for more than four or five centuries of the most obscure period of her existence.

Thus we have the All-wise God leaving the matter of Psalmody from the beginning, until Ezra's time, to the management of Kings and Princes, and others, then He provides a collection himself, but it soon becomes obsolete, and the Church is left again, from the commencement of the Christian era to the end of the world, to manage this important matter! Would Infinite Wisdom act such a part? By no means. If not, and if the book of Psalms was not given by "inspired authority" to the Church until Ezra's time, (and we have Mr. C's word for it,) then we maintain that it was given with a special view to be used under the new dispensation, and consequently it will require the strongest kind of proof to show that it is not adapted to that dispensation, that it requires any remodelling from man, and that any thing else of man's composition or selection is to be used in addition to this Divine collection.

(To be continued).

From the Charleston Observer.

LETTER VII.--Concluded.

PSALMODY--DIVINE AUTHORITY.

3. We argue that the Psalms of David are to be used exclusively during the Gospel dispensation, from the fact that they were so used by Christ and his Apostles who introduced that dispensation, and whose example is indubitable authority. I am anxious to introduce here the whole of the argument respecting the example of Christ and his Apostles, as contained in my discourse, but it would occupy too much room; let those who are in possession of the discourse read the argument again. It is unanswered and *unanswerable*. I consider it the strong point in the discourse, and now made still stronger after having established the exclusive use of the Psalter, under the old dispensation. Mr. C has not met the argument. He has given us his "as we think," and his "Apocryphal hymn," to show that Christ sung something else than David's Psalms, when he sung "an hymn," and he has told us that David's Psalms were not used *exclusively* in the Synagogue service: but his remarks on these points, "as we have seen," in our last letter, are no proof, instead of being "proof as strong as Holy Writ." He has left my main position, the "indubitable example," unanswered. And as for "G." he seems to have come to a sudden pause when he reached the argument respecting the example of Christ and his Apostles. On the points on which I laid no great stress, he is at least "caustic," if not convincing; but when he comes to one of the main positions, he flies off at a tangent, and then assures us that arguments, some of which he felt himself unable to answer, "will never settle the controversy." He states the argument, and then says, "I would add, nor did they make a collection of prayers and sermons for the use of the Church." If that is all that friend 'G.' has to advance against one of my main positions, I can assure him that "*such arguments* will never settle the controversy." If adding remarks will accomplish anything, I would also add, that God never furnished the Church *at any time* with a collection of prayers and sermons, while He has given her a *Book of Psalms*. They preached and prayed under the old dispensation, and if 'G.' will tell us *why* God gave a collection of sacred songs to the Old Testament Church, and did not give her a book, or books of prayers and sermons, then he will have a key to his difficulty,--he will be able to discover how it was that Christ and his Apostles used the Psalter exclusively, which, says Mr. C., "was inspired for the use of the Church in all ages," while they never thought of giving a col-

lection of prayers and sermons. As 'G.' is disposed to deal in syllogism, let us deal a little in the same. God gave to His Church a book of Psalms, which was used by Christ and his Apostles;---but Christ and his Apostles never gave the Church a book of prayers and sermons---therefore their example in using the Book of Psalms goes for nothing—it is cancelled;—or rather, the fact that Christ and his Apostles did not furnish the Church with a book of prayers and sermons, has authorized the Churches to set aside the book of Psalms which they used, and provide an assortment for themselves! As 'G.' says, "look at the logic."

In my fourth and fifth letters I advanced various arguments, which when taken together, establish conclusively, "as we think," *the exclusive use of David's Psalms under the old dispensation.*

Let it here be observed that the Old and New Testament Church are not distinct Churches, having no connection with each other. They are one and the same Church, or community of believers, under different dispensations of grace; they are inseparably connected---the New rises out of the Old: Now we want to know, Christian brethren, whether Christ and his Apostles, in introducing the new economy, made any change in the *matter* of Psalmody, and if any, what? They were connected with both dispensations, and if any change was demanded, *it should have been made from the first*, and it was *their* province to make it, and not that of the Church in our day. Christ was a member of the Old Testament Church for at least thirty years of his life, and while a member, conformed to all her divine regulations;---in fact the old dispensation was not abolished until he exclaimed on the cross, "it is finished." Did he, during the whole of his eventful life, ever intimate that the Psalms of David, which had been dictated by His Spirit, and collected by his authority, were "Jewish," (a term used, as 'G.' would say, *ad captandum vulgus*)—did He ever insinuate that for Him and his followers to sing them, as they stood on record, was to "pervert them to a use for which they were never intended?" (No 2, § 4.) Did he gospelize any one or all of them, or command it to be done? Did He lay the Psalter aside and adopt hymns of man's composing, as preferable to his own, as has been done by His followers in these degenerate times? And after he rose from the dead, and sent forth his disciples to establish the New Testament Church, did he caution them against the use of the Psalm book, and assure them that it was no longer adapted to the circumstances of the Church—that its whole character must be changed before it would be fit for use—and that they must make, and encourage

others to make their own songs—that those Psalms (Ps 96, 98, &c.) which they had but yesterday sung as "new songs," were now *old* and out of date, the dispensation being changed;---in a word, is there a single intimation in the whole of the New Testament that Christ either used any thing else himself in praise, or authorised his disciples and followers to employ any thing else than the book of Psalms, which we have shewn, was used exclusively in Divine worship, when he made his humble advent. Surely there is not. What then follows? Why, in the conduct of Christ, the King and Head of the Church, we have, what has been called for, "indubitable example" that the Psalms of David are to be used *exclusively* under the gospel dispensation. Did the blessed Savior sing these Psalms from childhood to his agony,---did he die with them upon his lips, and shall his example avail nothing with his followers---shall it be said that they do not contain *christian* instruction—and shall a thousand other "hard speeches" be uttered respecting these Divine songs, with the repetition of which I will not wound your christian sensibilities?

But farther; not only was Christ himself a member of the Old Testament Church, the Apostles likewise were members, and thousands too of the Jews that were converted on the day of Pentecost, and after that day, and they had all been accustomed from childhood to the exclusive use of David's Psalms in Divine worship---it was the only Psalm book among them, and as it had been compiled by *inspired authority* they did not dare to add any thing to it while they were members of the Old Testament Church. And now when they became members of the New Testament Church, could a system of Psalmody in any degree similar to that which now exists in the church have been adopted or commended without producing some excitement among a people, wedded not only to their "lively oracles," but even to their "beggarly elements?" It is abundantly evident from the Acts of the Apostles, from Romans, Galatians, and also from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, that there was among the Jews a very strong opposition to the entire relinquishment of their carnal ordinances, their "meats, and drinks, and divers washings" But what would have been the commotion among them had they been told that they must not only abandon their legal ceremonies, but likewise lay aside a part of their lively oracles---a part too, so dear to their hearts, that, at the very mention of it, all the sympathies of their ancestors were awakened, as they sat weeping by the Rivers of Babylon, and they were carried back to Zion with agonizing emotions, exclaiming, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, (where I have heard these songs so often

sung,) let my right hand forget her cunning--let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

Had the Apostles told the people that their Psalm book was no longer adapted to the worship of God---that it had lost all its sacredness, so that a hymn, *by whomsoever composed*, whether the religion had religion or not, provided it was "orthodox, devotional, and proper," was just as sacred as one of their beloved, heaven-inspired songs---had the Apostles used such language as this, or any thing akin to it what a tremendous tumult would have been raised among the people, and surely some account of the commotion would have reached this distant generation. But there is not a word said in the New Testament that there was any excitement among the people on the subject of Psalmody;---they had no fear about losing their Psalm book, or about having it mutilated and marred, or of having the "defective" effusions of men obtruded upon them.

Any change in the character of their Psalmody, or any excitement on the subject among the first Christians, is never once alluded to, while there was excitement on almost every other subject. From this the fair, and necessary, and scriptural inference is, that a change in the Psalmody of the Church was neither contemplated nor commanded---that the *practice* of the Church on this subject *after* the death of Christ, was just what it was *before* it; that is, the Psalms of David were used *exclusively*. Here, then, is the "indubitable example. And if Christ and his Apostles, and the first converts to Christianity, all confined themselves, in praise, to the Psalms of David, shall their example, brethren, have no authoritative influence upon our own hearts? In my next I expect to give the "plain précept."

Very affectionately yours, &c. W. R. H.
