

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

United Presbyterian Church of North America

CONVENTION

OF

UNITED PRESBYTERIANS

"

OPPOSED TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD,

HELD IN THE

FOURTH U. P. CHURCH, ALLEGHENY, PA.

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

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INTRODUCTORY.

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

INSTRUMENTS AUTHORIZED.

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

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

#### INSTRUMENTS EXCLUDED.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## INSTRUMENTS AGAIN INTRODUCED.

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

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

#### INSTRUMENTS AGAIN EXCLUDED.

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

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

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

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

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

#### INSTRUMENTS RE-INTRODUCED.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

authorization of the church before it could be legitimately introduced.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CONCLUSION.

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

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

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

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

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

*Referred to the Committee on Resolutions.*

