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For the Evangelical Guardian.

ECCLESIASTICA. No II.

On the importance of observing the "little things" of our constitution.

What a fund of wisdom is contained in these words of our Savior, "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." He is indeed the Searcher of hearts, and knows what is in man.

Large and *small*, are merely relative terms; and we cannot employ them unless we previously fix upon some standard by which we measure things. If we make a world our standard of comparison we then speak of a house as a very small thing, which it is, beside it. On the other hand, if we compare things to a bee-hive, the *same* house is very large. As it is in the natural, so also is it in the moral and spiritual, world: great and little, important and insignificant, depend altogether upon the standard which we use for the time.

Our whole conduct towards every thing and every being around us, is regulated according to a set of standards which we ourselves have adopted. Thus, to us the whole world is divided into two vast classes of objects---those of superior, and those of inferior, importance; and to *this* division our whole deportment is scrupulously adjusted. And since the choice of these standards depends in a great measure upon ourselves, how important that such a choice should be of the right kind!

Among the children of this world, he who makes a penny the standard of his care *cannot fail* to be tenfold careful of a *pound*.

VOL. II—SIG. 13.

And make us meet for the inheritance
 Of saints in light---the light of endless day.
 Thy will be done, O God. The work was thine
 It was thy stroke that laid him in the dust.
 But thou art just: thy judgments all are right.
 In tender mercy thou inflictest grief.
 Lord sanctify the stroke; and may it yield
 The peaceful fruits of righteousness: may those
 Whose lives are spared, admonished thus, with speed
 Seek life eternal in the grace of Christ
 And while they live on earth, may their lives show
 That he is blest who lives by faith in Christ,
 And daily holds communion with his God.

J. K.

[*From the Charleston Observer.*]

LETTER IV.

PSALMODY---DIVINE AUTHORITY.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours, &c.

W. R. H.

MIAMI UNIVERSITY.

The Presbyterian of the West of September 5th contains a communication signed ALUMNUS, the writer of which evinces a better acquaintance with the character of a recent movement in relation to this institution, than many who were induced to take some part in it.

It is the almost unanimous voice of all Dr. Junkin's students with whom we have conversed, that the "good students," that is, the students who apply themselves faithfully to their studies, are pleased with him, and that a better instructor they would not desire. Persons who have no connection with the Institution and who are not the Doctor's particular friends, have stated to us that such also is their information. It might be well if a certain class of men, who are perhaps more influenced by private feelings and interests than they are aware, would give themselves less uneasiness on the subject, and leave the matter more with the students, the old men of the country who have sons to educate, and the legal Guardians of the Institution. Too many Doctors will kill any patient. This much we have thought proper to say at present, before introducing an extract from the article alluded to.

The apparent adverse condition of this Institution occupied the earnest attention of its Alumni during this occasion. It is unnecessary to attempt to disguise the fact, that this school, though the best endowed, and located, in the West, is in a state of decline. It is also unnecessary to conceal the fact, that an extensive coalition has been formed in the parts of our community most interested in the prosperity of the University, against its faculty as at present organized. All who are conversant with the affairs of a school of this character, know that the action of its Alumni, together with that of prominent literary characters with which they act, governs the interest and makes the character of that school. Not even the action of its