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PRAISE IN THE SANCTUARY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BY APPOINTMENT, BEFORE

THE SYNOD OF NEW-YORK AND NEW-JERSEY,

AT

HONESDALE, PA., OCTOBER 18th, 1864.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS S. HASTINGS,

PASTOR OF THE WEST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NEW-YORK.

PUBLISHED BY DIRECTION OF THE SYNOD.

New-York :

JOHN A. GRAY & GREEN, PRINTERS, STEREOTYPERS, AND BINDERS,

FIRE-PROOF BUILDINGS,

CORNER OF JACOB AND FRANKFORT STREE.S.

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PRAISE IN THE SANCTUARY.

“LET the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”—COL. 3: 16.

THE text should be so punctuated as to read thus: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another; in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” So the verse is divided in the edition of Hahn’s Greek Testament, edited by my revered and beloved teacher, the late Dr. Edward Robinson. This change in punctuation should not be made merely for the accommodation of those who hold that only such hymns are appropriate for use in the sanctuary, as are strictly hymns of praise; for some of the psalms are didactic, and the rigid enforcement of such a principle would rob our hymnology of some of its choicest treasures, and would divest it of much of its practical efficiency. We accept the criticism upon the punctuation of the text; but in the full conviction that both didactic and admonitory hymns have a right to that position in our psalmody, which the experience of the Church has assigned them.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly:” when the word so possesses the heart and brain of the Church as to press for utterance, then the Church will sing, “making melody in her heart to the Lord.” This has always been the case, as we shall presently have occasion to show.

The distinction which is made in the text between the different vehicles of praise must be noticed in passing. By “Psalms” we are to understand the Hebrew book of that name, which was in common use in the synagogues: the

“Hymns” were independent compositions, such as are now in use: the “Spiritual songs” (ὠδαὶς πνευματικαῖς) were probably such religious songs as were more appropriate for personal than for congregational uses.

“Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord,”—this determines the spirituality of the service. It must not be merely formal and artistic: it must be such as the Searcher of hearts will receive: it must be heartfelt and sincere. Such are the teachings of the text in relation to the theme which the Synod have assigned me—“*Praise in the Sanctuary.*”

The proper limits of discourse compel me to pass by many things which it would be interesting to consider. I shall treat the subject *historically, theoretically, and practically.*

I. The history of Psalmody is full of instruction. We have time for only a brief and cursory survey. I shall presume on your familiarity with very much that belongs to this part of our discussion, and shall notice only those salient points which will aid us most directly in reaching and resting in practical conclusions.

In the days of Solomon, of the thirty-eight thousand Levites, four thousand were set apart to praise the Lord with the instruments of music which David had made.* Two hundred and eighty-eight chosen cunning men were “instructed in the songs of the Lord.”† So in the tabernacle and in the temple, both the instrumental and vocal performers were selected from among the Levites; and they were not merely selected, but they were specifically trained for the service of praise in the solemn assembly. You will notice here these facts: That this interest was not expected to regulate itself without special provision and culture; that it was not committed to strangers to the commonwealth of Israel; but only to those who stood nearest to the altar; and that the music was both instrumental and vocal. These are all the points that we need to emphasize in the Old Testament history of this branch of worship.

We pass on to New Testament times. It was natural that Christianity, finding art so thoroughly paganized, and so essentially involved with the old idolatries, should be slow in

* 1 Chron. 23 : 5.

† 1 Chron. 25 : 7.

rescuing and culturing even the one art which was most necessary to her, and should, for a time at least, discard all the other arts. Music she must have, but architecture, and sculpture, and painting she would not have. After a time she received them, and used them with marked effects; but when piety declined, then the Church began to cherish the arts for their own sakes, and not for what they could do in serving spiritual ends, and this proved disastrous. Art and religion both suffered by the mistake; for, when the Reformation dawned, art was robbed of its highest dignity and privilege, namely, to serve religion; and so, compelled to abandon religious subjects, it turned to those which were unworthy and trivial, and was thereby degraded. In not a few churches in the Low Countries the portraits of generals and of statesmen were suspended, when a religious picture would not have been tolerated, but would have been denounced as a desecration. Whenever art has usurped the higher place, and attempted to patronize instead of promoting and serving religion, it has sooner or later been compelled to vacate not only its *usurped* but even its *rightful* throne, and to suffer a long humiliation as the just penalty of its presumption. Such is the significant and important testimony of history. But we are advancing too rapidly, and must retrace our steps for a moment.

Of the Christians of apostolic times we read that "they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God;" and that "they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." Our Saviour himself, by his own example, consecrated forever the service of sacred song. I have not time to quote the testimony of Augustine, and Hilary, and Chrysostom, and of others, as to the customs of the Church in the early centuries. The primitive Christians were marked in history by the fact that they sung hymns to the praise of Christ. Music as an art was yet in its infancy; harmony was unknown; and melody was only rudimentally understood. The singing of the Old Testament and of apostolic times was a mere melodic utterance of the sacred words. In the fourth century choirs were introduced. As the art advanced, and was better understood, the effort was made

more and more to deprive the people of their share in this part of worship, by introducing music which they could not sing. Ere long the clergy entirely monopolized the service, by singing only in Latin. From the seventh century to the Reformation, the people had no psalm nor hymn, but were silent in the sanctuary. There were indeed exceptional cases, but this was the rule.* At the dawn of the Reformation, all this was changed. In France, at the suggestion of Beza, Marot, the poet of the Court, prepared and published a version of a few of the Psalms in French rhymes. They were received with immense favor. Calvin adopted them, and published them in Geneva, with a preface from his own pen. So popular did they become in France, that the Sorbonne, though at first favoring them, felt itself compelled at length to condemn and oppose their use. Luther, as you know, was not idle. He spent much time in looking for some one who could write psalms and hymns for the people; and then published a small book in which the music and the hymns were mostly of his own composition. The people received this new treasure with the utmost avidity. Psalms and hymns became the popular ballads. At Augsburg, in 1551, three or four thousand people were often heard singing together. Burney says that at the hour of morning and evening domestic worship, whole villages were resonant with the praises of God. In the schools, founded under the supervision of Luther and Melancthon, nearly one fourth of the time was devoted to musical instruction. The epithet, "*psalm-singer*," became as common and as opprobrious as *heretic*. This "infectious frenzy of sacred song," as it was styled, soon invaded England. The new want there was met and satisfied with the rude metrical version of the Psalms prepared by Sternhold and Hopkins—"men," as Fuller expressed it, "whose piety was better than their poetry, and who had drank more of Jordan than of Helicon." Their work has been much ridiculed, but, as I think, profanely; for it served a high and holy purpose, and was equal to the demands and capacities of its age. Tate and Brady followed with their

* Caesarius, Bishop of Arles, about 500 B.C. See Neander's "Light in Dark Place," p. 76, sq.

popular versifications; and others not so conspicuous added more or less to the hymnology. But soon a new epoch dawned.

A Christian mother, training her children with patient care, sought to develop in them that love of poetry which was her own characteristic. After school hours she sometimes induced them to compose a few lines, by offering them the reward of a farthing. On one occasion the older son produced this couplet:

"I write not for a farthing; but to try
How I your farthing writers can outvie."

It was Isaac Watts. With him began the new epoch of psalmody. I need not and cannot stop to pronounce the accustomed and deserved eulogy upon his name. Among the least of his honors is the fact that room has been made for him in Westminster Abbey. His name is inscribed upon the heart of the Church forever. He was not satisfied to give us the Psalms of David, as he expressed it in his title-page, "imitated in the language of the New Testament, and adapted to the Christian state of worship;" he contended for a larger liberty and wider range. He professed to be unable to understand why "we under the Gospel should sing nothing else but the joys, fears, and hopes of Asaph and David." He imagined that "David would have thought it very hard to be confined to the words of Moses, and to have sung nothing else in all his rejoicing days, but the drowning of Pharaoh in the fifteenth of Exodus." Amid much and bitter opposition, he thus contended for hymns as the proper supplement of psalms, and he made his hymns not only pious, but also poetical; for, as the *North British Review* said, "God gave him as his vocation to join together those whom men had put asunder—*mental culture and vital piety*;" and so he fairly earned the designation and distinction which Montgomery gave him in pronouncing him "almost the inventor of hymns in our language." There are many names which are hallowed in our hymnology. Mrs. Steele, and Doddridge, and Cowper, and Newton, and Heber, and Montgomery, and Kirke White, and Lyte, and many others, will be held in perpetual remem-

brance. Next to Watts, however, his great cotemporary, Charles Wesley, born six years after Watts entered the ministry, is most deserving of the eulogy of the Church. The great revival, in which he was the prominent instrumentality, gave a new and a grand impulse to psalmody. That impulse was felt in our own country. For, as Cotton Mather said: "It is remarkable that when the kingdom of God has been making any new appearance, a mighty zeal for the singing of psalms has attended it, and assisted it." During "*the great awakening*," in this country, the people so abounded in the singing of praises to God, that Edwards felt there was need of guarding and restraining influences. He wrote some cautions concerning this subject, and discussed the propriety of "companies singing in the streets going to or coming from the place of public worship."* There was at this time but little general musical cultivation, either in England or in our own country. Popular secular airs, without regard to their associations or quality, were appropriated to the use of the Church. The earliest musical works in this country were republications of English books. The harmonies were crude and ungrammatical. But about the time of the Revolution, the idea of independence of the mother country, so prevalent in other relations, began to be felt with reference to the music of the churches. Billings, Read, Morgan, Benham, Jenks, and others, flooded the country with light and frivolous imitations of the poorest productions of the English press. This state of things could not last. The "*Lock Hospital Collection*" and "*The Harmonia Sacra*" introduced a new era. The ministry united in earnest and effective endeavors to promote improvement in the art. The result was a great advance in musical culture. Our press began to send forth new tune-books, with increasing rapidity. After a time every year witnessed the advent of at least one fresh claimant for popular favor. That period has virtually passed; and now the interest in hymns has been awakened to an extraordinary degree. Volume after volume has appeared, until the resources for additions to our hymnology have become

* Edwards's Works, Vol. III. 401.

accessible and affluent to an unexampled degree. The natural result has begun to follow. Hymns and tunes are being brought together. The general diffusion of musical knowledge has demanded that the tunes as well as the hymns should be placed before the people in the manuals to be used in the sanctuary. A great number of "hymn-tune books" have appeared, and are now making their way among the people, and a still larger number are probably yet to come. The congregations *can* and therefore *will* sing; and will have the music with the words.

Must I apologize for having thus protracted this historical review? I think not; for in it we shall find such guidance and assistance for what remains to be considered as will make it possible for us to reach more speedily the desired conclusions.

II. In the light of this history let us seek and, if possible, find the true theory of Psalmody.

First of all, we are impressed with the imperative claims which come from the sacredness and the power of those psalms and hymns in which the heart of the Church has uttered itself in all the centuries. The importance of the Hymn-Book should be emphasized. We would do well to ponder Isaac Taylor's words. He says:* "In any system of public worship, the *constant* element—that is to say, the liturgical—will always exercise a great influence over the variable part—the *extemporaneous*—in giving it tone and direction, and in preserving a doctrinal consistency in the pulpit teaching. It will be so at least wherever this liturgical ingredient warmly engages the feelings of the people, and where it is performed with untiring animation. In communities that have laid aside liturgies in every other sense, the Hymn-Book which they use, especially if psalmody be a favored part of public worship, rules, as well the preacher as the people, to a greater extent than is often thought, or than would perhaps be acknowledged. The Hymn-Book, to such bodies, comes in the stead of Creed, Articles, Canons, and presiding power." These are strong, but, like all that comes to us from the same

* Wesley and Methodism, p. 94, sq.

source, they are well-weighed words, worthy of our consideration. This branch of Christian literature cannot be too highly regarded or too carefully watched. From the beginning, the Gospel has sung its way into thousands of hearts that could not have been otherwise reached.* We must magnify the meaning and power of our hymnology. It gives wings to the theology, and the thought, and the life of the Church. I cannot do better than to quote the eloquent words of Basil of Cæsarea, which are still fresh, though fifteen centuries old. "Psalmody," he wrote, "is the calm of the soul, the repose of the spirit, the arbiter of peace. It is the Church's voice. Oh! the sapient design of our Instructor, appointing that at once we should be recreated by song, and informed by wisdom. Thus the precepts of instruction are more deeply engraven on our hearts; for the lessons which we receive unwillingly have a transient continuance; but those which charm and captivate in the hearing, are permanently impressed upon our souls. From hence may not every thing be acquired? Here the nature of penitence is unfolded; patience is here exemplified. Is there a blessing to be named which here resides not? The splendors of theology beam effulgent; Jesus is predicted; the resurrection is announced; judgment is proclaimed; the sword of vengeance is unsheathed; crowns of glory glitter; speechless mysteries astonish."

If Basil could say this, what should be said now, after there have been added to what he so eulogized, all the best products of fifteen centuries of Christian thought and aspiration? Our psalmody is full fifteen centuries richer and better than it was when Basil wrote.

Rhetoric might exhaust its affluence, and yet fail to do justice to the amplitude and sacredness and power of the language of song, with which the Church has enriched and enlivened, stimulated and sustained her pilgrim march through all the centuries. This sacred language, in which the thoughts and feelings of the devout of every age have found grateful utterance, must not be concealed, but only effectively conveyed

* It is noticeable that singing is becoming more and more a power in the foreign missionary work. The Gospel is being sung in the streets of oriental cities, even more than it is preached, and it can be sung where it cannot yet be preached.

by Art to the very soul of the living present. Music is sufficiently honored by the dignity of such service. The melody is for the psalm, and not the psalm for the melody. It cannot be denied that music in itself, without the aid of words, has a peculiar power, which may be and should be consecrated to religious uses. Else why was there so much instrumental music in the worship of the Tabernacle and of the Temple? Why did harp, and psaltery, and all inarticulate instruments speak for the soul, and to the soul of the Sweet Singer of Israel? But when sacred words are committed to song, it is not that they may serve the music, but that the music may serve them. If they are concealed with the redundancies of art, then they are desecrated; art is dishonored, and religion is profaned. This point is vital to the true theory of psalmody. Music is welcomed to the sanctuary, not to gratify artistic tastes, not to relieve the monotony of the services, but to honor God, by aiding the souls of the worshippers in rendering unto him the choicest expressions of their love and homage. The music should be worthy of such exalted service. It should be faultless in conception, and in tune and time and style. Only the lamb without spot or blemish should be brought to the altar of our God. "The lame and the halt" will not do for the sacrifice. But the soul of the people must breathe life and power into the music, and the music must be calculated to react upon and elevate their soul. There are but two methods of addressing the throne of infinite grace—prayer and praise. Both are sacred in their nature and imperative in their obligations. Can we claim the full privilege of prayer, if we neglect the duty of praise? Is our piety scriptural, if it does not sing as well as pray? Is our spirit evangelical, if we have on our lips only a plaint, and not also a psalm? If the word of Christ dwell in us richly, if we are "filled with the Spirit," will we not need psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, that we may pour forth the fulness of our souls and make melody unto the Lord? Can we delegate to others, above all to "aliens and strangers," to the thoughtless and the godless, our personal privilege of praising our God? Will the histrionic and artistic semblance of praise answer the claims of Him who searches every heart, and waits upon each for the offering which is due

unto his name? This surely is preëminently a spiritual service, and a service *for the people*. It is not to be classed, without profanity, among the secularities of the Church, to be regulated by merely artistic ideas, or on commercial principles.

It is preëminently the right and the privilege and the duty of the people to take part in this service, and to so educate themselves and their children, that they can worthily sing the praises of Him who has said: "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me." * "The intent of singing," said Fuller, "is by a musical pronunciation of affecting truth, to render it still more affecting." "Great caution is necessary," said Calvin, "that the ears be not more attentive to the modulation of the notes, than the mind to the spiritual import of the words. Whatever music is composed only to delight the ear, is unbecoming the majesty of the Church, and cannot but be highly displeasing to God." † There must be cultivation and refinement: there must be instruction. But the process of culture must be carried on under Christian influences, and with a Christian purpose; and the end must be, that "every thing that hath breath," that "*all* the people" may unite in truly praising God. It will not do to plead, as an excuse for silence in the sanctuary, the lack of native talent. The power of speech and of song go together. Whoever can speak can be taught to sing. This has been sufficiently demonstrated. Therefore the responsibility rests upon all. All cannot become artists; but all may, and therefore should, learn to share, in some humble measure, in the exalted privilege of praising God.

Such undoubtedly is the true theory concerning this subject, and very few thinking Christian men attempt to deny this theory; but there are many who do believe it impracticable. This objection must be answered in what remains to be said.

III. We have glanced at the historical and the theoretical aspects of our theme, and it only remains to consider it practically. There have been so many difficulties with choirs and with music committees in our churches, that this subject of praise in the sanctuary has come to be generally regarded as one of the most delicate and difficult and embarrassing ones

* Psalm 50 : 23.

† "Institutes," 2 : 118.

with which the Church has to do. The blame is generally laid upon the singers: we are told that they are headstrong, jealous, quarrelsome, and unreasonably sensitive. There is doubtless too much ground for such charges. But the fault is not chiefly with the choirs. The Church does not sufficiently feel her responsibility in this grave and important matter; and what she suffers is not so much the arbitrary infliction of troublesome choirs, as it is the natural and deserved penalty of her own shameful neglect of duty. Singing in the sanctuary is a part of the worship,—that is the only defensible theory. Then surely it should be regulated on the same general principles, and with at least as much care as any other part of the worship. It should not be left to the direction of the Trustees, to be farmed out for the purpose of securing such talent in the choir as will furnish *regular Sabbath concerts* in the church, to supplement the insufficient attractions of the pulpit, and so to aid in renting the pews. The praise of the sanctuary should be under the immediate direction of the Session, to whom is committed the charge of the spiritual interests of the Church. And they should seek to dignify and exalt the service. The Pastor, during the singing, should not be turning the leaves of his manuscript, or be consulting with the Sexton or with an Elder; he should show, by his attentive and reverential manner, and, if possible, by actual participation in the service, that he is truly seeking to praise God. He should be an example to the flock in this regard. Every minister of Christ should learn to sing as well as to pray. If he has not been instructed, he is wanting in one most important qualification for his work. There should be a choir. A precentor will prove a failure. Because some of our large assemblies are successfully led by a single voice, there are those who suppose that a precentor will be sufficient for the leading of the praises of the sanctuary. But it should be remembered that our anniversary gatherings, and our great convocations, are made up of the *select ones* from many different quarters; and in them are grouped together such an array of voices as cannot be found in any ordinary congregation. I say there should be a choir. But its leader should by all means be a devout man, knowing what it means to praise God. And the choir should not be made

up without reference to the spiritual dignity and importance of the service in which they are to lead. The young people who gather in the choir will need to be supported and balanced by those of calmer and maturer age. The Asaphs, the Hemans, and the Jeduthuns must make some sacrifice, if necessary, that they may not vacate their places in the choir before those places can be judiciously and safely filled. The Pastor and the Elders should often attend upon the rehearsals of the choir, not only to show their interest in the subject, but to maintain their proper supervision, and to continually remind the singers of the sacredness and spirituality of the service which it is at once their honor and their privilege to lead. At these rehearsals, the blessing of God should always be invoked, and at least one hymn should be sung, not critically, but devotionally, with such comments as the leader, the Pastor, or an Elder present, may add to enforce the spiritual significance of the words. The organist should be a Christian; for how can a man who is destitute of true religious emotions make that noble instrument express, in harmony and melody, genuine Christian feeling? how can he make it speak *to* or *for* the hearts of the worshippers? And, as already intimated, the people should not be denied their rightful privilege of joining in the service. Rather, by all possible means, they should be invited and stimulated to the discharge of this sacred duty. The music should be put before them with the hymns. A "hymn-tune book" is an invaluable help to secure the proper habits in the congregation. Its very presence in the pew is a direct invitation to the occupants to join in the worship. When such a book has been introduced, it will be both pleasant and profitable for the congregation occasionally to be invited to remain after the weekly lecture or prayer-meeting, or after some other public service, to rehearse together, both for their improvement in singing, and for devotional enjoyment. I think when we get to heaven, and join the unnumbered choir, we shall wonder, not that we had so many meetings for prayer, but that we had so few meetings for praise. The hymn-tune book will secure many important ends. It will secure the proper adaptation of the tune to the hymn; it will prevent the choir from singing that in which the congregation

cannot join ; it will speak continually to the people concerning their responsibility to aid in the praises of God ; and its tendency will be to make the music of the home the same with that of the church. It will not deprive the choir of the privilege of singing something by themselves, thus exerting an elevating influence upon the congregation. They can sing an introductory anthem at every service ; and by the style and spirit of this performance, they can make the people feel the refining and stimulating power of a worthy example. The Pastor can do much good by occasionally preaching to his people upon this subject, and by showing, by his example, that he feels its importance. It will be necessary, especially in the country, that the church be at some pains and expense to promote musical instruction. They may, to great advantage, occasionally secure the temporary services of a teacher from abroad. It may be excellent economy for them to select a suitable Christian young man from their own number, and, at their own expense, send him where he can receive thorough culture ; for he will come back to them to make his influence felt through all the congregation for many years. This will cost something ; but it cost David something to provide four thousand instruments of music for the Levites, and to educate and maintain the choir of two hundred and eighty-eight chosen singers ; and can we, any more than he, expect to offer unto God, in acceptable sacrifice, that which has cost us nothing ?

If these practical principles are adopted, in dependence upon God's blessing, I know—(it is not a theory with me)—I know that there will be the best results ; and we shall cease to hear complaints of choirs, or to be afflicted in the sanctuary with the jargon of discordant voices ; or to be insulted there with the artistic flippancy and pretension of music and musicians, that are borrowed from the devil, devoted to his service during the week, but lent, or hired out, to the service of God on the Sabbath.

There are many other things which press for consideration, but I must relieve your patience.

My brethren, we have a work to do with reference to this subject, which we have already neglected too long. God is not so honored in our churches as he should be. The glory of

his great name is dear to our hearts. Let us then, I pray you, see to it that praise, true, Christian praise, waits for him ever in our sanctuaries. There is power with God not only in prayer, but also in praise. Praise consummates prayer. God often waits to bestow his blessing till he hears the voice of Christian song. When Judah was threatened by "the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir,"* then Jehoshaphat did not only pray, but he appointed "Singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army." And it was when they began to sing and to praise, that the Lord interfered for their deliverance, and smote their enemies. And, at the dedication of the Temple, it was when the singers "lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever,"—it was then, and not during the sacrifice or the prayer, that the Temple was filled with a cloud, "so that the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."† It was when Paul and Silas *sang praises*, as well as prayed, that their bands were loosed and the prison-doors were thrown open. So has it always been, and so will it always be, for our God is jealous of his honor, and waits to be gracious till we give unto him the glory due unto his name. Praise is the fitting language for the soul's deepest thought and highest aspiration. God our Maker giveth "songs in the night." The Christian, when his anguish is too deep for ordinary expression, breaks forth into song, and so finds relief. I saw a believer whose sorrow I knew was superlative, stand by the open grave, which was to receive all that was dearest to her heart, and sing, when those who were not bereaved could only weep. The mother of the Wesleys, when dying, said to her weeping children gathered around her: "*Children, when I am gone, sing a psalm of praise!*" What relief, alleviation, and comfort, can the soul find that can lift itself toward God in song. The pilgrim quickens his footsteps with the hymn of hope and heaven; the bravest soldier is he who can sing as he marches to

* 2 Chron. 20 : 22.

† 2 Chron. 5 : 13.

the battle. When the sailor can sing at the windlass, then the anchor is light! Song quickens the pulses of Christian living, lightens its burdens, alleviates its sufferings, soothes its sorrows, allays its fears, and stimulates its hopes. Brethren, the Church of Jesus Christ, while militant, should ever be vocal, and eloquent with her psalm and hymn of praise. With such a God and such a Gospel every one should sing. Oh! that we and our people might be filled with the Spirit, that the Word of Christ might dwell richly in us and in them! Then would all our sanctuaries be resonant with those true heart-melodies, which are sweeter to the ear of the Father than the songs of angels, because they connect with that sacramental hymn which Jesus sang just before he went to the Mount of Olives.