

## "THE CHOIR"

### AN OLD ISSUE REAPPEARING IN A NEW GENERATION !

Isaac Errett and Alexander Campbell said the following in an article on "Church Music": *"That the genius of this reformation movement, like that of previous reformations, is not favorable to choir singing and instrumental music. Its sympathies are with the bewildered and sin-oppressed masses and it wants "music for the millions". Its original powers will be largely lost when the stirring melodies of its early days shall have been supplanted by stately artistic performances..."* (Millennial Harbinger, 1861).

Tolbert Fanning had this to say in 1856: *"The disciples are commanded to "teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in the heart to the Lord". We are to "sing in the spirit" and with a proper understanding of what we sing. It is scarcely necessary for us to say to our readers that we regard the organ and violin worship, and even the fashionable choir singing of our country, as mockery of all that is sacred..."* (Gospel Advocate, 1856, page 199.)

Brethren, those who follow the New Testament pattern of worship have always opposed instrumental music and choir singing in the worship of God's people because neither are authorized by the New Testament. Only a digressive people use such innovations in worship. When one innovation comes in, others will follow closely behind.

In the digression of the last century (resulting in the Christian church) there was first the introduction of the missionary society, then in time came instrumental music and the "choir" along with many other departures. In the twentieth century human organizations and the "sponsoring church" arrangement were first introduced into the work of the church for churches to contribute to and to work through; now choruses (or choirs) are beginning to be used. It is not unusual to read about a certain chorus from some school that will be singing at some congregation in the area. Brethren, what is the difference in inviting a "choir" in to sing, and the church having its own "choir"? The Darby Drive church bulletin of October 26, 1972 states that they have a "youth chorus". The heading of the article says, "Youth Chorus Has Begun"; then these statements, "The second meeting of the Youth Chorus will occur Sunday, October 29, at 4:40. At the first gathering, approximately 25 persons were present." The Horizons (a singing group) sang at Northwood Hills church of Christ on Sunday evening, March 4, 1973 at 5:30 P.M .

Brethren, don't be shocked if you hear of instrumental music being introduced into the worship of some of the liberal churches because they have already given up too much Bible on many other things to oppose it if some of the younger generation begin to clammer for it. Human organizations to do the work of the church, and choirs and instrumental music in worship go with digression and denominationalism! When "the mystery of lawlessness" (II Thess. 2:7) is at work among a people, it bears all the fruits of denominationalism before it is through! Look at the Christian church !!

I take no joy in saying these things and it makes me sad to think about such a day coming, but past history of God's people in digression leaves me with no other conclusion!

~Donald Townsley

(Taken from "The Voice" bulletin of Underwood Heights, August 1973)