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THE SCOTTISH CHURCHES AND THE ORGAN  
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by

JAMES INGLIS

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in the Faculty of Arts,  
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## SUMMARY

"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".

This was the opinion of the Presbytery of Glasgow when it condemned the use of an organ in St. Andrew's Church, Glasgow, in 1807, the first use of a musical instrument in public worship by any presbyterian congregation in Scotland.

So began the controversy in Scotland about what came to be known as "the organ question", a controversy which continued through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. A presbyterian congregation attempted to use an organ in 1829, but in 1850 church organs in Scotland were still confined to episcopal and Roman catholic places of worship and to a few chapels of small minority sects. By then organs were widely used among nonconformists in the north of England. During the fifties, some Scottish independent congregations and two English presbyterian congregations followed their example, and two Scottish presbyterian congregations attempted to do so but were prevented by their Church courts. From 1863 onwards, instruments began to appear in churches of the establishment. By 1866 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had made it clear that it saw no objection in principle to the use of organs, and the U.P. Church and the Free Church permitted their use in 1872 and 1883 respectively. Once introduced, instrumental music proved popular, and the Church of Scotland, in which there had been none before 1863, found in 1906 that instruments were used by about nine-tenths of its congregations. The "continuing" Free Church, a small minority, maintained its opposition, and ordered the removal of an organ in 1908.

The organ controversy in Scotland has been virtually ignored by church historians and organ historians alike. This thesis is therefore largely concerned with establishing the facts. It examines the arguments used in the debate and traces the history of the adoption of instru-

mental music in each of the major Scottish denominations. It relates instrumental music to other innovations which were transforming Scottish worship; it examines the initiation and implementation of organ projects by congregations, the nature of the instruments, how space was found for them in church buildings, how they were used in worship, and how organists were found to play them. Finally, it assesses briefly the various factors which contributed to the general desire for instrumental music in Scottish worship. Attention is drawn to an extensive pamphlet literature, most items of which have remained unnoticed since the era of their publication.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of organs into Scottish churches has received little attention from historians, and certainly no attention commensurate with the interest which it generated at the time. With a few exceptions, histories of the Scottish churches and their worship mention instrumental music only incidentally, if at all. The exceptions are C.G. McCrie's *The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1892), J.R. Fleming's *A History of the Church in Scotland, 1843-1874* (London, 1927), Drummond and Bulloch's *The Church in Victorian Scotland, 1843-1874* (Edinburgh, 1975), and J.M. Ross's *Four Centuries of Scottish Worship* (Edinburgh, 1972). Each of these gives two or three pages to the subject and mentions some isolated incidents and perhaps a few random pamphlets. Such limited attention is, of course, consistent with the more general aims of the books concerned, but it gives little idea of either the extent of the disputes or the acrimony engendered.

The use of organs was only one of many innovations which transformed presbyterian worship during the second half of the nineteenth century. These innovations generally have been the subject of several studies - notably A.K. Robertson's *The Revival of Church Worship in the Church of Scotland from Dr. Robert Lee to Dr. H.J. Wotherspoon* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1956) - but even Robertson had very little to say about organs.

Apart from an invention by one Scottish organ builder, Scotland contributed nothing significant to the development of the organ or its music. Even the standard work on organs in Britain, *The British Organ* by Clutton and Niland (London, 1963), says nothing about the history of the organ in Scotland. Among general historical treatments of the instrument, the maximum coverage given to Scotland in any book is a single paragraph in W.L. Sumner's 600-page *The Organ* (fourth edition, London, 1973), which simply reiterates material from the three paragraphs given to the subject in P.A. Scholes's *The*

*Puritans and Music* (London, 1943). Scholes in turn relies entirely on two sources and introduces his own inaccuracies. The organ question does not appear to have been studied in any journal papers, and the fullest treatment available is in pages 365 to 370 of H.G. Farmer's *History of Music in Scotland* (London, 1947). A recent nine-page summary of Scottish organ history (Colin Menzies, *The Organ Club Diamond Jubilee Book 1986*, pp.81-9) concentrates mainly on the organs.

The principal sources used in the preparation of this thesis are national and local newspapers of the period, contemporary periodicals and pamphlets, and published histories of individual congregations. Hundreds of books of this last class have been consulted, but relatively few of them appear in the bibliography; the others, however, have played an important part in building up the general picture.

Until the eighteen-eighties, writers were usually careful, when referring to individual instruments, to distinguish organs, harmoniums, and American organs; when writing more generally they sometimes used the word "organ" generically to refer to any keyboard wind instrument. The same convention has been adopted here, and the meaning of "organ" should always be clear from the context in which the word occurs. There should likewise be no confusion about the different senses in which the word "catholic" is used.

When the thesis is discussing a denomination, the title of that denomination is usually omitted from the names of particular churches and church courts. In more general contexts, the names of churches and courts, other than those of the Church of Scotland, include the titles of their denominations.

## 2. THE SCOTTISH DENOMINATIONS AND THEIR MUSIC

A concise and informative summary of Scottish church history can be found in Donaldson [1960], and a fuller treatment of the period from 1688 in the three books by Drummond and Bulloch. The story of the presbyterians during this period is a complex one of schism and reunion; the most easily assimilated summary is the chart from Burleigh [1960] which appears as figure 2.1 at the end of this chapter.

This thesis deals with events in the nineteenth century. In the second half of the century, when the organ movement was at its height, the three main presbyterian denominations accounted for the great majority of Scottish church members. Roughly half of these presbyterians were in the Established Church, roughly one-third in the Free Church, and roughly one-sixth in the United Presbyterian (U.P.) Church. At mid-century there were about 146,000 Roman Catholics in Scotland, but by the end of the century there were about half a million, a growth attributable in no small measure to immigration from Ireland. Membership of the Scottish Episcopal Church at mid-century was around fifty thousand, and at the end of the century it was estimated at 116,000. Independent churches formed the Congregational Union; the Evangelical Union (E.U.), which had its origin in a breakaway group from the United Secession Church, merged with the congregationalists in 1896. Taken together, these two groups had roughly the same number of congregations as the episcopalians. Baptists, methodists and other denominations remained small.

The musical history of the Scottish reformed church is given by Patrick [1949]. Interesting detail can also be found in Farmer [1947] and Johnson [1972]. At the beginning of the nineteenth century most presbyterian congregations had a repertoire of only a few metrical psalm tunes. Singing was led by a precentor; often he was barely literate and had no knowledge of musical notation. In some places, "lining-out" had not been abandoned; in

these places and others, the tunes were ornamented on an individual basis by the precentor and members of the congregation. Though this state of affairs might constitute a "folk" tradition in church music (Johnson 1972), contemporary writers were unanimous in disliking it and desiring improvement - they wanted to hear congregations singing the "correct" notes at a "proper" speed. The first steps had been taken with the establishment of church choirs and music classes in Aberdeenshire in the middle of the eighteenth century. This was quickly followed by similar measures in Edinburgh and Glasgow and by the publication of books of harmonised tunes. By the start of the nineteenth century, interest in choral singing had increased, and societies devoted to the improvement of church music were formed in the cities. In 1823, following his outstanding choir work in Paisley, R.A. Smith moved to St. George's, Edinburgh, where he enjoyed a fruitful partnership with the musical minister, Andrew M. Thomson.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, despite all the interest in psalmody, and despite the large number of published collections, good and bad, of church music from diverse sources, most parishes still continued in the old ways. And, where choirs existed, the music used for the psalms was in general of modest quality. The repertoire of a church with a competent choir included a few of the old tunes (often heavily ornamented), but consisted mainly of two new types of tune, both influenced by English nonconformist hymnody.<sup>1</sup> First there were simple tunes in the old metres (mainly common metre), very often in triple time, composed during the eighteenth century or the early nineteenth century, and straightforwardly harmonised. Within a few generations, some of these tunes came to be regarded as ancient music of the Scottish Church. While such tunes could justly be seen as a continuation of the reformation tradition, the other new tunes, akin to methodist "chorus" tunes of the period, could not. They were longer and usually more elaborate, without attaining any great musical interest as a result. They achieved their length by repetition of words

(and hence were known as "repeaters") and their elaboration by melodic decoration, by alternation of female and male voices and sometimes by imitative entries. Two tunes of this kind, "Invocation" and "St. George's, Edinburgh", by the above-mentioned Smith and Thomson respectively, are still in use.

Choirs were introduced to help the precentor lead the congregational singing. But in some places the result was that congregations fell silent and became audiences; Smith's successor at Paisley lamented the fact that the congregation there had all but stopped singing.<sup>2</sup> In other places, a precentor's hard work with his choir might go for nothing as the "unmusical" singing of the congregation made the choir inaudible.<sup>3</sup> As the century progressed, some of the great precentors, notably Thomas L. Hatley in Edinburgh and William Carnie in Aberdeen, turned their attention from choir training to congregational training. These precentors travelled the country, teaching large classes. Many people learned to sing from solfa notation and, with a few exceptions, the repeating tunes gradually fell into disuse.

A long-standing wish within the Church of Scotland for a collection of "spiritual songs" resulted in the publication in 1781 of the Paraphrases. In 1794, the Relief synod went further and approved a book of hymns. Unlike psalms and paraphrases, which came from scripture, hymns were "uninspired", and their introduction gave rise to much debate throughout the nineteenth century. The opponents rightly saw that to a large extent hymns would supplant the psalms and paraphrases. In their view, "the Spirit of Truth" was "repudiated for the songs of erring men".<sup>4</sup>

The United Secession Church was on the eve of publishing a collection of hymns and paraphrases when it united in 1847 with the hymn-singing Relief Church; the newly-formed United Presbyterian Church published a hymnal in 1851. The Established Church approved small hymn collections in the eighteen-sixties, but hymn singing in that Church did not become widespread until the seven-

ties, following the issue of the *Scottish Hymnal*. Opposition was strongest in the Free Church which, nevertheless, approved a small collection in 1872. The American-based revival movement made Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos* very popular; this acted as a stimulus to the Churches to produce their own hymn collections. New hymn-books were issued by the United Presbyterians in 1876, the Free Church in 1882, and the Established Church in 1884. All three main Churches combined with the Irish presbyterians to produce the first edition of the *Church Hymnary* in 1898. Many highland churches still sang only the psalms, and the exclusive use of psalms became a point of principle in the continuing Free Church. Following the practice of English nonconformists, a small minority of Scottish presbyterians sang short additional items of praise variously named doxologies, anthems, or congregational anthems. Sung by choir and congregation, or by choir alone, these simple pieces seem to have been introduced in the eighteenth century; by the end of the nineteenth, more ambitious anthems, sung by choir alone, were in use.

Campaigners against the use of organs in protestant churches made much of an alleged association between organs and popery, and nowhere was this more apparent than in the case of St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in 1807-8. Yet nobody seems to have pointed out that, had a Scottish presbyterian of that time attended a service in his nearest Roman Catholic chapel, he would have heard no music at all. Catholic worship in Scotland at that time consisted of low mass preceded by a sermon. Bishop Hay, consecrated in 1769, set his face against the introduction of music. A few priests who had brought singing into their chapels towards the end of the eighteenth century were ordered to discontinue the practice. Even after the Relief Act of 1793 Bishop Hay maintained his attitude, which was unpopular with priests and their congregations.<sup>5</sup> A high mass was celebrated in Aberdeen in 1805 and on two subsequent occasions, but singing by congregations, as opposed to priests, was not introduced into Scottish chapels until 1810, and then permission had to

be sought for the use of music in a chapel.<sup>6</sup> Choirs and organs were rapidly introduced, but the pioneers experienced difficulty and expense in acquiring printed copies of music.<sup>7</sup> The situation was eased by the publication in 1830 of George Gordon's collection, *Sacred Music*, which contained ten masses and more than 150 hymns and anthems as well as psalm and litany chants. By 1850, city churches had introduced masses by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, accompanied by such instruments as were available. Congregations, despite encouragement, appear to have been reluctant to sing, and even in 1937 Anson could say with regret that "Scottish Catholics, even in towns, seem to believe that worship should be a silent act, and not vocal".<sup>8</sup>

The episcopalians had no objection to choral or instrumental music. In the eighteenth century the music of many episcopal services, especially those of non-juring congregations, had differed little from that used by presbyterians. It consisted of metrical psalms led, and sometimes lined-out, by a precentor. In many places the similarity continued into the nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup> But, where resources permitted, some chapels had choirs and even organs. When an Englishman visited St. Paul's Chapel, Aberdeen, in about 1726, he found an organ in use and the service "chaunted as in our cathedrals".<sup>10</sup> (St. Paul's was a qualified chapel, using the English prayer book). In the nineteenth century, with the union of the two branches of episcopalianism and, later, obligatory use of the English prayer book, English church music was appropriate for use throughout the Scottish Episcopal Church. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, episcopal organists, many of them not native Scots, were heavily involved as performers and composers in the general musical life of Scotland.

The music used in the worship of the remaining denominations was largely restricted to the singing of metrical psalms, paraphrases and hymns. Many Scottish churches of the congregational order were conservative in their attitude and were still using only metrical psalms after the middle of the nineteenth century; some of the others

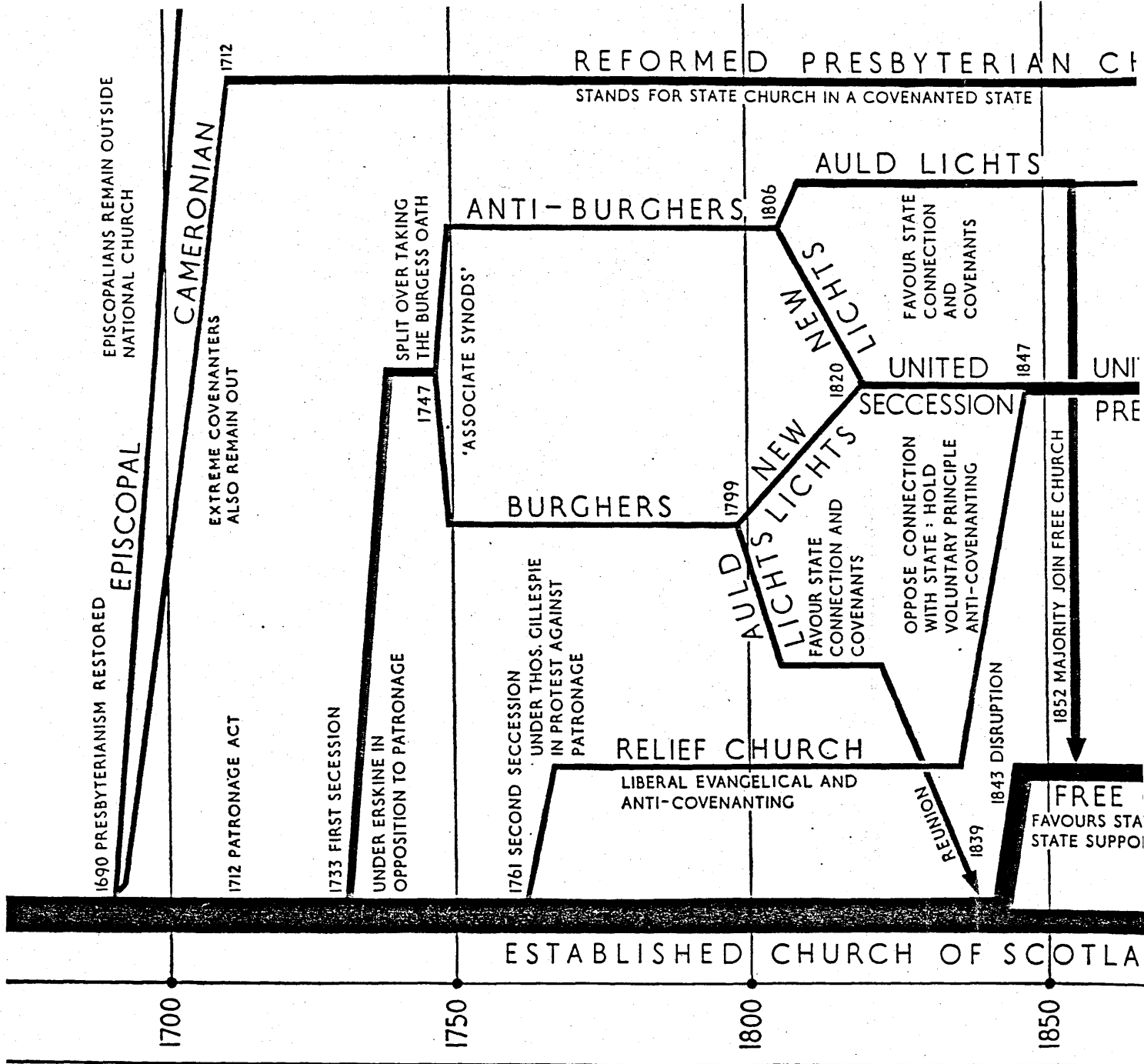
had long been using various hymnals, and in the second half of the century most congregations adopted one or other of the hymnals issued by the Congregational Union of England and Wales.<sup>11</sup>

In nineteenth-century Scotland, then, the Episcopal Church was able to make use of chants, settings, anthems and hymns from England; the Roman Church also, as it grew, was able to adopt choral and congregational music from elsewhere. In these contexts, the use of instrumental accompaniment, when it could be afforded, was taken for granted. It was in the presbyterian churches and those of other denominations (which together had the allegiance of the great majority of the people) that the organ battle was fought. In these last denominations the music was simple and almost entirely congregational. The main role of an organ, as of a choir, was seen as an extension of the precentor's function - to help the congregation to sing.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Hutchings 1967, pp.134-7.
2. Patrick 1949, p.194.
3. In his preface to R.A. Smith's *Edinburgh Sacred Harmony* (1829), Andrew Thomson advises the congregation to join the singing "in a subdued voice".
4. "Uninspired Psalmody", a sermon preached by Henry Bazeley, a Scottish minister in London in 1878. See Hicks 1886, pp.254-286.
5. Johnson 1983, pp.161-3.
6. Johnson 1983, pp.164-5; Davidson nd., pp.48-50.
7. See e.g. Davidson nd., pp.51-3.
8. Anson 1937, p.77.
9. Lochhead 1966, p.136.
10. Burt 1822, i, p.212.
11. Escott 1960, pp.152-161.





### 3. THE CASES FOR AND AGAINST INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP

Opposition to the use of instrumental music in worship has not been confined to Scotland or to the nineteenth century, nor has it been exclusively Calvinist. Many of the Church Fathers opposed the use of instrumental music,<sup>1</sup> and isolated objections to it were made between the patristic era and the Reformation.<sup>2</sup> Some of the reformed churches, initially at least, rejected the use of instrumental music,<sup>3</sup> and it only narrowly survived in the reformed Church of England.<sup>4</sup> During the puritan ascendancy in the seventeenth century, organs were removed from such English churches as had them.<sup>5</sup> After the Restoration, organs returned only slowly to the Church of England; by 1821 they were still to be found almost exclusively in town churches,<sup>6</sup> though the west gallery choirs in country churches were then commonly supported by small groups of string and wind instruments. Even in the eighteen-forties there were still those who disliked the use of organs in the Church of England.<sup>7</sup> The Wesleyans legislated against organs in 1805 and 1808,<sup>8</sup> and organs were long opposed by some English independents, particularly in the south.<sup>9</sup> Presbyterian churches in the U.S.A. and Canada started to permit their use around the middle of the nineteenth century;<sup>10</sup> the English presbyterians permitted their general use only from 1870;<sup>11</sup> and the battle for instrumental music in the Irish Presbyterian Church outlasted that in Scotland.<sup>12</sup> An American evangelist was inveighing against organs in 1925,<sup>13</sup> and as recently as 1982 a twenty-eight-page pamphlet,<sup>14</sup> presenting the time-honoured arguments, was published in defence of the continuing ban on organs by the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

Wherever the organ question was debated, the same arguments were used. Most of the points made in the Scottish debate had been made elsewhere and at other times. Some of the Scottish arguments, however, were based on Scottish presbyterian tradition and on the legal position of the established Church of Scotland and its office-bearers. As well as presenting the arguments, this

chapter relates them to the nineteenth-century Scottish environment.

### 3.1. Scripture

Of the millions of words of print which the organ question generated in the nineteenth century, more are devoted to the issue of scriptural authority than to any other aspect. On the face of it, the pro-organ people should have had the best of it here. In the Old Testament there are many references to the use of musical instruments in the praise of God, and the Book of Psalms positively enjoins such use. Psalm 150, in fact, contains a catalogue of instruments to be used in God's praise. And, if we accompany psalm-singing by instruments, we do no more than David himself did. Pro-organ pamphlets almost routinely begin with these observations. Many an organ enthusiast delighted in imagining a church service in which an anti-organ sermon was followed by the singing of Psalm 150 or the early verses of Psalm 33.

In earlier centuries, ingenious attempts had been made to explain these references as metaphorical, but such explanations were unacceptable in the nineteenth century. Instead, organ opponents then pointed out that the Psalms contain other references peculiar to the ways of the old dispensation - nobody would suggest, for instance, that Victorian Christians should present burnt offerings. And didn't Psalm 150 say "Praise Him in the cymbals and dances"? To be logical, the organ-fanciers should dance in their worship. Not so, replied the organ party. Some claimed that "dances" was a mistranslation for "pipes", and some that dancing was associated with processions rather than worship. But most pointed out that modes of worship must vary from place to place and from age to age; negroes might acceptably dance in contemporary worship. And the Church had long been selective in relation even to apostolic practices - Christians no longer washed each other's feet or kissed each other at religious assemblies.

The scriptural arguments for and against organs rest

on the fact that, in contrast to the Old, the New Testament has nothing to say about the use of instrumental music and, with a rather special exception, records no instances of it. Two opposing views were taken.

### 3.1.1. The anti-organ position, and counter-arguments.

Instrumental music, appointed by God under the old dispensation, was one of those typical, symbolic and carnal ordinances which were removed by the purer Gospel dispensation; it is neither appointed in the New Testament nor approved by the example of Christ or the apostles.

In reply, some pro-organ writers state that music had no part at all in the temple worship established by Moses. Vocal praise and musical instruments were introduced later, and were expressly said to have divine approbation. Other regulations and institutions introduced after the time of Moses had never been regarded as part of the ceremonial or typical system. It was clear from the epistle to the Hebrews that the only things which were typical and belonged properly to the Levitical dispensation (and which therefore were abrogated by Christ's coming) were those ordained and established by Moses.

Other pro-organ writers show that instrumental music had been used in praise *before* the time of Moses. Its use could not therefore be exclusively connected with temple worship. The anti-organ writers reply that the same argument, if just, applies also to sacrifices.

A similar pro-organ reply is that the use of music in worship is common to nearly all religions - "vocal and instrumental music no more belong to any stage of religion in particular than do eating and drinking, laughing and crying, to any special section of history".<sup>15</sup> It was never necessary to have a divine injunction, though in David's time the usage was regulated by divine authority.

And, if instrumental music was "typical", of what was it typical? (Other typical observances of the temple had

"anti-types" which they foreshadowed). Anti-organ writers have two distinct answers. Some say that such music was allowed to the more primitive Old Testament people as part of the pomp and ceremonial which were swept away by Christ's coming; it was typical of the purer, more spiritual, and exclusively vocal praise of Gospel times. Quite apart from the fact that this assertion lacks scriptural authority, the pro-organ people question whether singing becomes more spiritual when unaccompanied. Other anti-organ writers claim that instrumental music was typical of the inner praise of the soul, thus inviting the answer that such an argument must apply also to vocal music; both voices and instruments, therefore, must be swept away, and the only tenable conclusion is that of the Quakers.

To this last point anti-organ writers reply that the New Testament contains several examples of, and exhortations to, vocal music. After the Lord's Supper, Christ and the disciples sang a hymn; St. Paul advocates singing with the spirit and the understanding, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs "with grace in your hearts" and "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord". Three distinct pro-organ answers are given. Firstly, in none of these cases is it clear that the words apply to public worship as we understand it. Secondly, the Greek word translated "singing" in fact derives from a word which implies the use of instrumental accompaniment. (This minor matter is debated repeatedly, despite the obviousness of the point that words often assume meanings far from those of their etymological roots). Thirdly, the circumstances in which Christ and the apostles lived were very different from those of the nineteenth century, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to have used instrumental accompaniment.

The only New Testament mentions of instrumental music occur in the Book of Revelation, where the blessed are depicted as playing harps. The pro-organ people naturally make much of this solitary example, which is dismissed by their adversaries as symbolic, and not to be taken any more literally than the "sea of glass". Even if we grant

that it is symbolic, say the pro-organ people, is it likely that the Holy Spirit would inspire the use, as a symbol, of something which was proscribed? Yes, answer their opponents; the Book of Revelation contains many symbols from the Jewish temple.

### 3.1.2. The pro-organ position, and counter-arguments.

Both Testaments are authoritative. Since the use of instrumental music was appointed by God in Old Testament times and was neither forbidden nor disapproved of in the New Testament, it is at the very least acceptable. The precept or example of Christ or the apostles is unnecessary to justify a practice which is consistent with gospel worship and not forbidden by scripture. Other practices of those who oppose organs are not enjoined or exemplified in the New Testament. Examples are the building of churches, the inclusion of sermons in the believers' act of worship (particularly when sermonising becomes the predominant activity in worship), infant baptism, and the holding of Sabbath Schools. In relation to music, what justification is there for metrical psalms, psalm-tunes, music-books, tuning-forks, precentors and choirs?

This latter argument is never satisfactorily answered, though the musical part of it is often contested on the ground that there is a fundamental difference between, on the one hand, individuals or bodies of singers who lead the praise by use of the human voice and, on the other, an organist who uses "a mere machine".

The organ opponents observe, in answer to the general argument, that many of the objectionable practices of the Roman Church are likewise not explicitly forbidden by the New Testament. If organs are to be admitted on this ground, then so also may statues, pictures, "winking virgins", holy water, signs of the cross, and other papist features. But, say the organ apologists, organs are different - in the very nature of things, vocal music often implies the use, as an aid, of instrumental accompaniment.

### 3.1.3. Observations.

The most compelling argument against the anti-organ position was the inconsistency of those who took it. Robert Lee expressed it thus:<sup>16</sup>

"When the question is respecting the Christian Sabbath, the baptism of infants, a Church establishment, or any of those things which they advocate, but of which the New Testament says nothing, or even appears by silence to discredit them, they eagerly fly to the Old Testament . . . . But when, with much plainer reason, we quote the Old Testament to justify our employing musical instruments in our Church service, we are told that the Old Testament is a heap of ceremonies and symbols, and, in short, that it can prove nothing in these matters. It is not decent thus to bring in the Law and the Prophets when we need them against our adversaries, and to throw them out the moment our adversaries may employ them against ourselves".

Arguments on the basis of scripture appear quite pointless to the modern reader, who sees only too clearly what Lee indicates - that "searching the scripture" can mean nothing more than a selective use of scripture to justify one's own preconceived ideas. As the nineteenth century progressed, the unsatisfactory nature of the scriptural objection to organs was more and more widely acknowledged. In the Established Church's innovations debate of 1865, Norman Macleod said:<sup>17</sup>

"In regard to this affair of the organs, I believe there is no person in this General Assembly who thinks it is unscriptural - that it is a sin to worship with an organ; because if there is, I think he should say so. It would be very interesting to some of our young people who are here present to be able to say in the next sixty years, 'Do you know, I once saw a man who actually stood up in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and said it was a sin to worship God with an organ!' I hardly think it is possible that anyone will take up the position".

Nobody responded to his challenge and, during the following decade or so, the few in the courts of the Established Church who voiced scriptural objections to organs were treated with laughter and impatience. But had such a challenge been made in the Free Church Assembly at that time, it would certainly have been taken up.

After 1829 no Scottish Church used scripture as a basis for prohibiting organs. Though there were often

those who tried to have scriptural justification included in court rulings, these people became a very small minority and they found little support. Many of them, however, wrote pamphlets, and anyone who studied the organ question mainly from the pamphlet literature would gain a quite misleading impression.

### 3.2. Early authorities

#### 3.2.1. The practice of the primitive Church.

The anti-organ argument on this ground was that instrumental music did not enter Christian worship until the dark ages, when other corruptions also entered the Church. There were many digressions regarding the date and place of its introduction, and whether the word "organ" in mediaeval times encompassed other musical instruments. Organ sympathisers sometimes argued that the absence of explicit references to instrumental accompaniment in the early Church was not conclusive proof that it was not used; but, even assuming that it was not, that was no argument against its use in the nineteenth century - the early Christians had no settled church buildings, they were often persecuted, met where they could, did not want to draw the attention of persecutors to their services, and were generally in a very different situation from settled congregations in a modern Christian land. But none of these considerations, answered the anti-organ party, would have prevented the use of small portable instruments; yet no such use is recorded.

#### 3.2.2. The views of pre-Reformation authorities.

With the exceptions of a frequently quoted passage from Aquinas and a general condemnation of complex church music from Erasmus, the pre-Reformation sources quoted in anti-organ literature are virtually all from the patristic era.

It has been said<sup>18</sup> that an "abundance" of texts indicate that the Church Fathers opposed the use of instruments; many anti-organ pamphlets give the same impression. Yet the pamphleteers do not seem to have found



many appropriate passages in patristic writings. In examining anti-organ material from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth, we repeatedly meet the same quotations. There are not a dozen in all; and most of them were beside the point, for, as the organ apologists were not slow to point out, some did not specifically object to musical instruments and most were attacking "carnal" elements in worship generally. The only clear condemnations of instruments were by Justin Martyr, Basil, Chrysostom, and possibly Clement of Alexandria. Organ apologists pointed out the consequences of regarding patristic writings as authoritative - Basil recommended antiphonal singing and seemed to prohibit the use of instruments even outside worship; Augustine spoke more strongly against vocal music than against instrumental, and appeared to countenance only chanting; Jerome contrasted vocal music with the music of the heart.

### 3.2.3. The views of the Reformers.

In this context, the greatest difficulty the anti-organ people faced was that the reformers never included a word on instrumental music in the confessions they framed. What the reformers opposed in music was its elaboration and the exclusion of the people. Some believed that the evil could be remedied only by a total prohibition of choirs or of organs; others did not. Organs were thus excluded from some Reformation Churches including, most relevantly to Scotland, the Calvinist. In Zurich, Zwingli prohibited even congregational singing. Luther's much-quoted description of organs as "ensigns of Baal" comes only at second hand and is at variance with his love of church music and the continued use of organs in the Lutheran Church. In Holland, organs continued to be used despite the opposition of many of the clergy, and in England in 1562 organs survived only as a result of a casting vote.

Reformation practice therefore was diverse, and it is not surprising that anti-organ passages (though remarkably few of them) could be found in the writings of some reformers. Calvin, notably, ranked organs with incense

and candlesticks. But the later organ opponents overstepped themselves (as they did in their quotation of pre-Reformation authorities) by quoting many passages which were really condemnations of musical complexity and vicarious praise. Even the most frequently cited, from the Church of England's Homily "Of the Place and Time of Prayer" condemns together as abuses "piping, singing, chaunting, and playing upon the organs". In Scotland, organs were destroyed, or fell into disuse, at the Reformation, but nobody in later times succeeded in finding any stronger condemnation from John Knox than his description of an organ as a "kistfu' of whistles".

#### 3.2.4. Observation.

By mid-century the pro-organ people were not inclined to be drawn into argument about the views of all these "authorities". The potent combination of protestantism and Victorian confidence is best exemplified by A.K.H. Boyd:<sup>19</sup>

"These eminent men had no other grounds for forming their opinion than are patent to us, and it seems manifest to common sense that neither in reason nor Scripture are there any grounds to support the opinions they express. We appeal to the common sense of mankind, even from the judgment of Chrysostom, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin".

Appeals to the views of the reformers were dismissed by Norman Macleod in these words:<sup>20</sup>

"I must say it is exceedingly amusing to refer to men who changed everything and turned the world upside down, who altered everything that had remained instituted without any great revolution for one thousand years - it is amusing that they should be invariably dragged up as grand examples for our doing nothing"

and Robert Lee was not alone in pointing out that the Scots reformers, according to the 1560 Confession of Faith, did<sup>21</sup>

"not think that any policy or order of ceremonies can be appointed for all ages, times and places; for as ceremonies, such as men have appointed, are but temporal, so may and ought they to be changed, when they rather foster superstition than edify the church using the same".

### 3.3. Standards, law and custom.

Many of those who opposed the use of organs did so on the basis of the Westminster Confession, the Westminster Directory, and the Catechisms. These people faced two major problems. In the first place, not one of these documents specifically prohibits, or even mentions, the use of instrumental music in worship, nor do any of the Acts of the General Assembly or the parliamentary Acts which gave binding force to the Westminster standards. Attempts to argue that "singing of psalms with grace in the heart" implied the exclusion of accompanying instruments could not be taken seriously. Arguments based on the Confession's prohibition of worship "according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, or in any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures" simply led back to the scriptural arguments, and could additionally be answered by reference to the exception of "circumstances common to human nature and societies ... which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence". The Shorter Catechism, which interprets the second commandment somewhat widely as forbidding the worship of God "by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word" led some of the wilder organ opponents to refer to organs as "idols", to the amusement of the organ party and of the English press.<sup>22</sup> In relation to the Westminster Assembly, the only mentions of organs which anyone could find were in a letter to the General Assembly from the Scottish commissioners at Westminster in which the commissioners mentioned with approval the removal of, among other abuses, the organs at "St. Paul's and St. Peter's, Westminster", and the General Assembly's reply that they were "greatly refreshed" to hear of it. But, the organ party replied, these letters did not form part of the standards; should nineteenth-century practice be bound by the incidental opinions of seventeenth-century churchmen?

This brings us to the second problem faced by those who based their arguments on the Westminster standards. By the middle of the century the Westminster Confession was increasingly under attack. Attempts to enforce de-

tailed conformance had been made during the evangelical ascendancy which preceded the Disruption, but the departure in 1843 to the Free Church of many of the conservative-minded made it possible for adherence to the letter of the Confession to be openly and increasingly challenged in the Established Church. The United Presbyterians already renounced the association between church and state. Generally, the doctrines of seventeenth-century English puritans seemed less and less relevant in an era of science and biblical criticism. The Reformation spirit was re-asserted. When explicit doctrines of the confession were being abandoned, none but the most reactionary had any patience with niceties of its interpretation which sought to establish mere implications on a matter as minor as the use of organs in worship.

Though the Westminster standards were still officially authoritative, the emphasis of nineteenth-century teaching had little in common with the spirit of the Confession. In worship, a number of the Directory's stipulations were universally ignored. It was asserted that this was quite in keeping with the spirit of the Westminster divines, who had said:<sup>23</sup>

"We have not advised any imposition which might make it unlawful to vary from it in any thing; and albeit we have not expressed in the Directory every minute particular which is, or might be, laid aside or retained ... yet we trust none will be so tenacious of old customs, not expressly forbidden, or so averse from good examples, although new, in matters of lesser consequence, as to insist upon the liberty of retaining the one, or refusing the other, because it is not specified in the Directory".

The nineteenth century saw a great acceleration in the rate of change. None of the presbyterian churches in the land conducted worship according to the letter of the Directory. Anyone who sought to interpret the Directory as excluding instrumental music was unanswerably challenged with his own departures from the Directory's explicit provisions.

If the use of organs could be regarded as a violation of the Westminster standards, then it could also be seen in the Established Church as a breach of state law, for

the standards had been given legal force by Acts of the Scottish and U.K. parliaments. Further, according to chapter 23 of the Confession, the civil magistrate had a duty to "take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that all corruptions and abuses in worship be prevented or reformed". On these grounds the Presbytery of Glasgow stated in 1807 that organs in worship were "contrary to the law of the land"; but, with the problems of the church-state relationship which led to the Disruption, this dangerous position was never again taken by a church court. Nevertheless, parliamentary legislation was often cited in debates and pamphlets, the words of the Act of Security being particularly favoured: "The form and purity of worship, presently in use within the Church, shall remain and continue unalterable". As there were no organs at the time of the Act, it was claimed, organs were for all time excluded.

As was often pointed out, the purpose of the Act was to safeguard presbyterianism in Scotland, not to specify the detailed ordering of worship. The detailed arrangements of worship had, in any case, changed since the early eighteenth century. Nevertheless James Begg and other extremists were in the habit of calling for legal action against those in the Church of Scotland who used organs.

Another legalistic argument was that ministers who allowed organs to be used in their churches were breaking their ordination vows and could be deposed. Every minister had on ordination subscribed a formula by which he "sincerely owns the purity of worship presently authorized and practised in this Church, and that he will constantly adhere to the same". But did "purity" imply the absence of organs? And, more generally, could the vow possibly mean that no details in the conduct of worship should be changed? Of course not, said the organ party; the history of Scots worship was a story of evolution. Institutions perished which did not adapt. In the past, adaptation had often taken place as a result of changes made by individual congregations without reference to the superior courts, and Robert Lee thus claimed that precedent was on his side.

Lee's was an extreme position, though not as extreme as that of those who, while including in their worship all innovations which had been introduced up to their own time, objected to, or expressed disquiet about, further changes in worship simply because these were innovations. The Scots debaters, however, rarely went as far as some in the Irish Presbyterian Church, who claimed that the custom of not using organs amounted to "common law".

### 3.4. Purity of Worship

#### 3.4.1. The danger of lapsing into popery or episcopacy.

In 1856 Candlish wrote:<sup>24</sup>

"I am persuaded that if the organ be admitted, there is no barrier, in principle, against the sacerdotal system in all its fulness - against the substitution again, in our whole religion, of the formal for the spiritual, the symbolical for the real".

During the next thirty years this statement was repeatedly quoted with approval by one side in the organ debate and ridiculed by the other. Yet Candlish was saying nothing that had not been said many times before. To its opponents, the organ was the first step on the road to Rome or, at least, to Canterbury, which lay on that road. By mid-century a terrible warning of what could happen when you tampered with established forms of worship was being given by the defection to Rome of so many English ritualist clergy and their people. The reforms being introduced in presbyterian worship were a world away from the innovations of the English ritualists; but did Bisset not say in his moderator's address in 1862 that one of the objects of worship reform was to draw the national churches of Scotland and England closer together? And was not the Church of England a breeding-ground for Romanists? The increasing strength of the episcopalian and Roman churches in Scotland itself was ground enough for alarm; their growth should not be encouraged by giving approval by word or deed to their practices. The presbyterians must allow no departure from the purity of their worship.

But the growing strength of the episcopalians in Scotland was in part due to their acquisition of numbers

of influential and educated people from the Established Church. These people, the worship reformers claimed, were not concerned with theology, or bishops, or indeed anything other than the manner of public worship. They left a church in which "the dreary service consisted of the minister's preachings, lecturings and prayers (which often were as much preachings ...) and of that exercise on the part of the people which is called singing, but of which melody and harmony are not component parts".<sup>25</sup> They left it for a church which gave the people their part in an orderly form of worship and which was rapidly improving its musical standards. The worship reformers saw that ministers could not continue to deliver lengthy sermons to people whose education and experience exceeded their own. The absence of instrumental accompaniment of the singing was one of five deficiencies of the presbyterian service listed by Bisset in 1862.<sup>26</sup> Along with Lee and others, he saw the introduction of organs as one of the improvements which would keep people in the Established Church and attract back those who had gone.

The conflict, then, was between those who feared to place a foot on a slippery slope which might lead to episcopacy and ultimately to popery, and those who believed that episcopacy was best resisted by bringing presbyterian worship into line with the times.

Boyd believed that fear of prelacy was the *only* reason why some Scots opposed organs:<sup>27</sup>

"Had the Committee of the Glasgow Presbytery [in its 1808 pamphlet] assigned their true reason for rejecting the organ, it might have been very simply set out: it was simply to be different from the Prelatists. A true-blue Presbyterian does not think of discussing the fitness of any observance on the ground of its own merits. He brings the matter to a shorter issue - viz., is it used in the Episcopal Church, or is it not? If he goes beyond that, his final question would be, What did John Knox say about it? *His* infallibility is held in Scotland much more strongly and practically than the Pope's is in Italy".

Many other organ apologists said that presbyterian prohibition of organs had more of the character of popery than had the Roman attitude of indifference to instrumental music. Musical instruments, they observed, were no essen-

tial part of popery, and the music in the Pope's own chapel was exclusively vocal. Logically, rejection of any practice on the sole ground of its use by the Roman church should lead to abandonment of singing, prayer, and nearly everything else. Saying "play the organ and bring back the Pope" was like saying "play the bagpipes and bring back the Pretender". Examples of other churches were often cited to show the absence of any correlation between instrumental music and corrupt doctrine. The Greek Church, "the most heathenish and barbaric embodiment of the Christian faith",<sup>28</sup> prohibited instruments, while the Dutch reformed church, in many respects a model, permitted them.

In the end, what allayed presbyterian fears was the use of organs by other British denominations whose anti-papal soundness was beyond question. The methodists and independents in England had organs early in the century; organs were in use in Scottish presbyterian churches in the West Indies and Holland, and the organ at St. Andrew's, Calcutta, one of several in Scots churches in India, had been introduced by the highly respected Dr. James Bryce. Not even the most bigoted could claim to see any papist tendency in the Evangelical Union or among Scottish congregationalists, both of whom started to adopt organs just after mid-century. Among the early organ-favouring clergy in the Established Church, the more extreme innovators like Robert Lee and John McLeod were many times outnumbered by respected men whose soundness was undeniable and humble country ministers whose only motive was to improve the singing of their congregations. Year by year the number of these cases increased, and by the mid-seventies only extremists dared to claim that there was any necessary association between organs and popery.

#### 3.4.2. Vicarious praise.

Some organ opponents went further - organs not only led to popery but had themselves a sacerdotal aspect. They silenced congregations and offered praise on the people's behalf. This was "worship by proxy" for, if a



worshipper stopped singing, the organ continued to play.<sup>29</sup> The organ thus became an intermediary between man and God; it "put musicians into the mediatorial and semi-priestly position between God and the people".<sup>30</sup>

This view was treated as ludicrous by the organ party, who claimed that the same argument might with more justice be advanced against choirs (as indeed it had been many times). They denied, in any case, that organs, properly used, silenced congregations; rather, organs were an aid to worshippers in expressing their praise. Objection to vicarious praise, they pointed out, came strangely from those whose congregations were expected to stand silently while lengthy prayers were offered on their behalf. In contrast to the presbyterians, an episcopal minister said forcefully in 1811, the episcopal church "respects the privileges of Christian people, and assigns them their part in public prayer, that they may personally join it, and not be merely spectators at its performance".<sup>31</sup>

Associated with this argument was the charge of "worshipping God by machinery", in which organs were likened to the prayer wheels of the east. God could be worshipped only by the spirit; an organ, being a material thing, could not worship God. Those on the other side had never claimed that it could, but they took the opportunity to answer that the human larynx too was a material thing, and the same argument could be used against singing. Not at all, replied the organ opponents, for the human voice was made by God and was superior to any man-made musical instrument. They had to concede that this superiority might not be evident from hearing the human voices in a Scottish church, but they answered that God could be pleased by praises which men despised, and, somewhat inconsistently, that efforts must be made to improve the singing of congregations.

But, said the organ party, it was not a question of voices *versus* organs; the real question was whether organs helped voices to sing. An organ was a mechanical aid to singing just as a preacher's spectacles were a mechan-

ical aid to reading. Their opponents, especially later in the century, replied that, whatever the initial intention, organs usually ended up by doing more than just accompanying the congregational singing.

### 3.4.3. "Carnalisation" of worship.

What was the objective in improving church music? Was it that the music should be as good as possible? Or was it that the congregation should sing as well as possible? This unresolved question, Temperley says,<sup>32</sup> was at the root of most Anglican church music disputes. One view - which we shall call the "holiness of beauty" view - was that music, and art generally, could aid devotion, and that man's greatest achievements in these fields should be dedicated to the service of God. As a popular Victorian hymn<sup>33</sup> put it:

"Yea, we know that Thou rejoicest  
O'er each work of Thine;  
Thou didst ears and hands and voices  
For Thy praise design;  
Craftsman's art and music's measure  
For Thy pleasure  
All combine."

But, taking the opposing view, how could God be given "pleasure" by human art, devised solely for the pleasure of men? God required only the sincere worship of the heart, which needed no art for its expression and could easily be corrupted by art. Men should not go to church for "carnal gratification". "In proportion as the senses and imagination are excited and gratified, the soul is generally starved", said Begg in 1866,<sup>34</sup> and he was able to quote Ruskin in support of his position.

Earlier in the century the question did not arise in Scotland. The aim of presbyterians was good congregational singing - the "correct" singing of the metrical psalms at a "proper" speed and without embellishment and false harmonies. The multitude of English pamphlets of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which commended the devotional effects of beautiful music and art were quite foreign to the Scots presbyterian outlook. Even in

the sixties and seventies, Scots who used "the holiness of beauty" as the primary justification of organs tended to be episcopal and congregational clergymen; for most presbyterians it was a subsidiary argument, the main justification being to help the congregation to sing.

Lindsay Alexander, the leading congregationalist minister of his day and an organ pioneer, had the singular honour of preaching in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, at one of the services on the Sunday in 1873 when the choir was reopened after major restoration work. His sermon was on the aid which the finest in art and music could contribute to worship.<sup>35</sup> It is an indication of how attitudes had changed in the Established Church that such a sermon, on an important occasion and from an outsider, raised no whisper of controversy. "Beauty of holiness" sermons had in the preceding decade or two become customary in the Established Church at the opening services of new and restored church buildings. When a new church was built, or an old one rebuilt, the trustees or heritors embodied their taste and reflected their prosperity in fashionable gothic. Stained glass windows were commonplace by the end of the sixties; in 1867 it was conjectured that Glasgow Cathedral had "the most magnificent array of modern stained glass to be found in the world".<sup>36</sup> The Free Church did not long retain its "felt-roofed shed" image, and even Begg had to concede<sup>37</sup> that art might be acceptable in the design of church buildings, though he regarded its use in worship as "a very different matter". His adversaries pointed to the literary and oratorical arts involved in sermons, and some of his allies had good choirs in their churches. Treading carefully, he concluded, with particular reference to organs: "Art, applied to what God has expressly appointed ... can never be held to justify the introduction of new and unauthorised corruptions into the worship".

After about 1860 there was little sympathy for those who, as a matter of principle, would exclude art from worship. "If 'the beautiful in nature and art can never make man holy', are ugliness and meanness endowed with

the power of making him so?" asked Robert Lee<sup>38</sup>; and A.K.H. Boyd came to rejoice that presbyterians were abandoning their belief in "the holiness of ugliness".<sup>39</sup>

To a large extent the change of attitude resulted from changes in the educational and cultural environment - "the higher taste of the age" was the contemporary phrase. With reference to music, many who could not afford to have pianos in their homes were able to buy, and learn to play, six-guinea harmoniums. By the seventies there was scarcely a district outside the highlands which did not have its choral societies, and in the cities orchestras and opera companies could regularly be heard. Concerts of sacred and secular music were popular events. Much was done to improve congregational psalm-singing by instituting "psalmody associations" and "sacred music classes" which were often associated with particular congregations, but were sometimes open to those of all denominations. Ironically, these classes gave many people an ability to read musical notation and an ambition to sing more adventurous music which could never be managed by congregations. The urge for instrumental accompaniment in church services was increased by its use at the practices of these classes and in their public recitals of sacred music, usually given in church. Everywhere these recitals drew large crowds and helped to foster in audiences as well as participants a new musical awareness. There is not much evidence in Scotland, even in the Free Church, of the objection which had been voiced by English nonconformists to the illogicality of performing sacred music to an audience.

Another factor in changing the presbyterian attitude, especially among the clergy, was the crude fact that the churches were in competition for the richer members of the population. If the Established Church was to stop the flow of its wealthier and more cultured members to the episcopalians, it had to make its services more attractive. And, when once it had started to do so, the Free and U.P. Churches could not lag far behind, for members who would never think of defecting to the episcopalians might easily defect to the Established Church.

But, for the many small and rural congregations who took to harmoniums, the question of art in worship just did not arise. These congregations simply wanted to be helped in singing their customary music, and they found that the harmonium served the purpose. And, in general, the fear that aesthetic gratification might take the place of true worship was at least as well grounded in relation to choirs, and even to preaching, as it was in relation to organs.

#### 3.4.4. Purity of worship as a distinguishing feature of presbyterianism.

It was sometimes stated that presbyterianism must retain its purity of worship, since that was its most distinctive feature; reject pure worship, and you might as well reject presbyterianism. When used, this was usually no more than a make-weight assertion and it was easily answered by the observations that presbyterianism was a method of church government and that presbyterian churches in some lands worshipped in ways which would be regarded as impure by those elsewhere.

One of Alexander Bannatyne's curious arguments seemed to be to the effect that the absence of instrumental music was the *only* distinguishing feature of presbyterianism. In 1857, when he was a minister in the English Presbyterian Church, he argued<sup>40</sup> that, if that Church were to introduce organs, the town congregations would be able to afford them, and the rural congregations would not. Then, if presbyterians from the country went to live in towns, "and find the organ in Presbyterian places of worship as well as the others, it will be comparatively a matter of indifference to them what congregation they shall join, and of course many of them will forsake the church of their fathers". Conversely, presbyterians going from a town to live in the country would be used to organs, and therefore would join the only church there which could afford to have an organ - the "well-endowed church of the Episcopacy".

It appears that nobody troubled to answer this argu-

ment.

### 3.5. Uniformity of worship.

Bannatyne was calling for the retention of uniformity in worship among presbyterians, as required in the Established Church by law from the time of the Revolution Settlement. In the view of its opponents, the use of instrumental music in some churches would make worship non-uniform. The organ apologists pointed out that the uniformity stipulated would continue to exist in the broad form of the worship; in inessential matters there never had been uniformity. Congregations differed on many minor matters, including those connected with praise; in some the singing was led by a precentor, in some by a choir; some sang hymns, some did not; a few sang doxologies; and congregations in Orkney had traditionally always stood up to sing.

One argument used in favour of uniformity was that a presbyterian could attend worship in any presbyterian church in the world and immediately feel at home. As an argument against organs, this became less convincing as the century progressed and more and more presbyterian churches overseas sanctioned the use of instrumental music.

The organ apologists sometimes turned the uniformity argument against its proposers. Their opponents, they said, sought uniformity either within their own denomination or within presbyterianism generally; both views were too narrow - the uniformity to be aimed for was uniformity throughout all the reformed churches. And the majority of the reformed churches permitted the use of instrumental music.

Allied to this was the question of church union. As we shall see, projected unions between denominations, as well as the desire to retain unity within a denomination, sometimes influenced attitudes on the organ question. Some believed that union among reformed churches would be possible only if the churches concerned were willing to reduce worship to its simplest form by removing every

practice which could give offence to anyone. But this approach was unrealistic, and union between denominations was possible only where there was Christian toleration on inessential matters like instrumental music. Uniformity on these matters was neither practicable nor desirable, said the innovators; if diversity was not tolerated within a denomination there could be no hope for its union with others.

Another argument for uniformity, as applied to instrumental music, was that there should not be one form of worship for rich congregations and another for poor ones - if the advantages claimed for instrumental music really existed, then the worship of a poor congregation would be inferior to that of one which could afford an organ and an organist. But, answered the organ party, an organ was not an essential part of worship, and rich congregations already worshipped in warmer, more beautiful, and more comfortable churches; they had better choirs and precentors, and - most telling of all - they could afford better preachers.

### 3.6. The definition of "public worship"

Scarcely anyone objected to the mere presence of an instrument in a church building, or to its use on occasions other than those of "public worship". When the second Earl of Fife built Macduff Parish Church in 1805-6, he had an organ placed in the gallery. It was never used by the congregation, but the Earl used to go into the church on weekdays to hear it played.<sup>41</sup> And no formal objection was raised to the presence of the organ in St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in 1807 until it came to be used in a Sunday service. Psalmody classes, like that for which the St. Andrew's organ was used, later became common; harmoniums were sometimes placed in churches for use at these classes or on other regular occasions such as Sabbath school, choir practices, or Sunday evening lectures. The only case in which a presbytery objected to the use of an instrument in church outside the normal Sunday services was that of the meetings in Claremont Street U.P. Church, Glasgow, in 1858;<sup>42</sup> and the presbytery had previ-

ously raised no objection to its use at identical meetings in the church hall. Even in this case there was no suggestion of ordering the organ's removal.

There were, however, at least two instances of *kirk sessions* prohibiting the very presence of harmoniums in their churches. It should be explained here that it was the custom to bring a piano or a harmonium (or even, on one occasion, the precentor's own chamber organ)<sup>43</sup> temporarily into church for use at a congregational or Sabbath school soiree. Around mid-century, many a congregation held its soirees in the church itself. This was entirely consistent with presbyterian principles, which attached no special significance to church buildings. But with the "holiness of beauty" movement came the wish to exclude secular activities from church buildings. In 1863 the General Assembly of the Established Church stated<sup>44</sup> "without claiming for these edifices any inherent sacredness" that the practice of holding social entertainments in church was "unseemly and incongruous, offensive to the feelings of decent worshippers, and calculated to suggest to the congregation on the Lord's Day recollections which are by no means in harmony with the solemn service ... and enjoin all ministers and Presbyteries of the Church to take all proper means to discourage the said practice". Due in part to lack of suitably large alternative accommodation in many places, compliance was but slowly achieved. In 1865 the Presbytery of Edinburgh was shocked to learn that comic songs had been sung at a soiree in one church,<sup>45</sup> and more than a decade later soirees in church were still common, solos on the organ (where there was one) taking a prominent place.<sup>46</sup>

At Queen's Park, Glasgow, in 1866, a harmonium was brought into a Free church to accompany some pieces of sacred music at a soiree, but an emergency meeting of the session ordered its instant removal.<sup>47</sup> In 1871 the session of the Free High Church in Elgin refused to allow its precentor to organise a recital of sacred music in the church on the ground that the singing would be accompanied by a harmonium; they had no objection to his holding the recital in the City Hall.<sup>48</sup> But these cases were



in the Free Church and were exceptional even there. Throughout the country, kirk sessions and managers enthusiastically welcomed the recitals of sacred music given in their churches, with instruments sometimes being used for solos as well as accompaniment.

There seems to have been general agreement that these sacred music events, like choir practices and congregational psalmody practices, did not constitute "public worship". But what was public worship? Churches in which the ordinary Sunday services were unaccompanied sometimes had an instrument for use at weekday religious meetings, at Sabbath school, or at Sunday evening lectures. The last of these categories appears to have included acts of worship almost indistinguishable from the services held earlier in the day, yet many a parish church adopted the use of a harmonium on Sunday evenings while regarding congregational unanimity and presbyterial sanction as being necessary for its use in the other services. Harmoniums were sometimes introduced into these evening services to give congregations a chance to assess the effect of instrumental accompaniment. This evening use of harmoniums appears to have sprung up quite suddenly in the eighteen-sixties.

Equally sudden, and as quickly assimilated, was the use of instruments at "children's services". In 1865, the use of a harmonium at a Sunday evening children's service in sophisticated Glasgow (in St. Paul's Church) was regarded as a novelty and attracted a great crowd, including clergymen of various denominations.<sup>49</sup> Yet only a couple of years later, while the Crieff organ was under the ban of the General Assembly and a hostile presbytery, no notice was taken of its continued use, not only for regular Friday evening "organ psalmody" sessions, but also for children's services on Sundays.<sup>50</sup>

Those who favoured instrumental music frequently pointed out that the description "public worship" could be applied as accurately to many of the occasions on which instruments were permitted as to those on which they were prohibited; most of the arguments against in-

struments applied equally to both. They also pointed out that some clergy who strenuously resisted the use of instruments in church services had no objection to using a harmonium or a piano in their family worship, and that family worship was more akin to apostolic worship than congregational services were.<sup>51</sup>

The organ opponents apparently failed, until too late, to appreciate the danger represented by these other uses of instruments. The organ enthusiasts, for their part, saw only too clearly the strategic advantage of accustoming congregations and children to instrumental accompaniment. A pamphlet of 1863, warning that the time was not yet ripe for a favourable General Assembly ruling on organs, said:<sup>52</sup>

"In the meantime, those inclined that way ... might familiarise the public mind with instrumental music by the use of harmoniums in singing-classes, and on week-day practices for the Sunday's services".

Begg seems to have been the sole opponent to speak against the danger, and that in only a single sentence in a book of 271 pages:<sup>53</sup>

"We should strongly resist the rage for having harmoniums in Sabbath schools, singing classes, and soirees, not only as inconsistent with principle, but as directly leading to the ultimate corruption of public worship".

And indeed many of the early instruments used in the Church of Scotland found their way into the churches through such uses. Yet these uses went virtually unchallenged until 1876, when A.T. Niven complained to the Presbytery of Edinburgh against the kirk session of Robertson Memorial Church, Edinburgh, which had agreed to the use of a harmonium at weekly practices. He claimed that such use would

"familiarise and educate those attending the meetings, up to a point at which they very probably, and at no very distant date, would desire the employment of the instrument at public worship".

Despite his personal record of service to psalmody in the Church of Scotland, he received no support in the presbytery,<sup>54</sup> and none in the synod on appeal.<sup>55</sup> He subsequently abandoned his appeal to the General Assembly when the Assembly's mood was made clear by its decision in the

Elgin case.<sup>56</sup> Niven's complaint would have been unlikely to succeed at any time, but in 1876, when well over a hundred congregations of the Established Church were already using instrumental music in their normal Sunday services, it was hopeless.

### 3.7. Expediency

The organ question was ultimately resolved, not on grounds of principle, but as a matter of expediency.

#### 3.7.1. Organs help congregations to sing.

In the nineteenth century there was a widespread wish to improve music in the churches. Wherever we look - newspapers, speeches in church courts, religious and musical journals - we find accounts of congregational singing in Scotland which, if taken literally, indicate a horrifying situation. Nobody, it seems, disputed these accounts; the debate was always about how the situation could be improved.

The concern was not confined to Scotland - writers of all the major denominations in Britain wanted to see the advances in general musical culture reflected in the music of the churches. For many Anglicans, the solution was the adoption of the choral service,<sup>57</sup> and the problem of congregational singing was not tackled. But the more evangelical Anglicans were insistent that the people should bear their part in the praise, and even on occasion advocated the disbanding of choirs.<sup>58</sup> Most of these saw the organ as a necessary adjunct to congregational praise, and Drutt's opinion<sup>59</sup> that "the surest method of all, to extinguish anything like singing, is to set up a grinding organ" is exceptional among Anglican writers of the period. St. Pancras Parish Church, fortunate in having Henry Smart as its organist, achieved a high standard of unison congregational singing in the sixties and seventies without a choir and without congregational practices, but it too was exceptional.<sup>60</sup> The genuine attempts of some Anglicans to get the people singing were, however, largely ignored outside the Church of England itself, and nonconformists were prone to treat congrega-

tional participation in the music as a point of distinction between themselves and the establishment; Curwen in 1872<sup>61</sup> contrasted the nonconformist ideal with the Church of England's practice of "dressing up" its choirs, railing them off from the congregations, and "investing the singers with priestly functions".

There was a surprisingly widespread belief, to be found in writers of all denominations, that every person who attended worship had a sacred duty to join in the singing. On this view it was nothing short of immoral for a worshipper to remain silent during praise. But it was observed in answer that joining silently in praise was no more blameworthy than joining silently in prayer. "If it be necessary to a proper expression of devotion, that every person in church should sing, it follows, for the same reason, that every one of the congregation should pray aloud", said a Scot in 1816;<sup>62</sup> and the *Musical Standard*, still fighting the same battle in 1874, said:<sup>63</sup> "It is no more absurd to make the congregation an auditory of music in the course of a service than to make them an auditory of sermons". Similar views were expressed throughout the century. Nevertheless, the assumption of a universal duty to sing was often accepted by both sides in the organ debate. Did an organ encourage and help the ordinary worshipper to fulfil his obligation, or did it discourage and hinder him?

Instrumental music was only one of the solutions proposed and tried. Before organs found their way into English nonconformist chapels and into Scottish churches, the common solution was to form a choir which would help the precentor or clerk to lead the singing. As we have seen, the choir movement in the Church of Scotland started in Aberdeenshire in the mid eighteenth century; in 1864 a report to the General Assembly<sup>64</sup> stated that "two or three hundred" (a strange approximation for a report based on a survey) congregations had choirs and that "many of these are paid for their singing". But choirs were not always a help to praise and devotion. In both Scotland and England they were criticised, especially when composed of mercenaries from outside the congrega-

tion. The extreme antagonism of Campbell<sup>65</sup> was perhaps unusual, but there were constant criticisms of the distracting behaviour of choir members during service and complaints that too many new tunes were introduced and known tunes were being sung too fast. In some cases a choir's excellence inhibited the congregation. Choirs also tended to have minds of their own and be difficult for the clergy to control. Nevertheless, choirs appeared in more and more churches as the century progressed. Outside the cities it was not always easy to form a voluntary choir - at Luss, for example, at least three separate attempts were made<sup>66</sup> - and failure to do so was sometimes the reason for adopting instrumental music.<sup>67</sup>

A variation was to have a choir which met as a body for practice but whose members on Sundays took their normal seats in the congregation. These "dispersed" choirs were regarded as unsatisfactory since they resulted in isolated part-singing, and they failed to solve the major problem of congregations not singing in time. Another variation, which originated in Scotland and was favourably regarded south of the border,<sup>68</sup> was to have a choir whose members served in rotation. Members not on choir duty sat in their family pews. This arrangement, which gave both a concentrated and a dispersed choir, seems to have been very successful in city churches where the necessary human resources were available.<sup>69</sup>

Dislike of choirs and fear of "praise by proxy" led many to propose the ideal of treating the whole congregation as a choir. This solution entailed regular singing classes and congregational practices. A quite phenomenal interest in sacred music is shown by the establishment of singing classes throughout the country. Recitals of sacred music given by the pupils of these classes or by church choirs were popular social events for which special trains were sometimes run,<sup>70</sup> and which sometimes had to be repeated in order to accommodate all those who wished to attend.<sup>71</sup> In the fifties a General Association for the Improvement of Psalmody was formed in Aberdeen, and during its first year its "general classes" were attended by 900 people in Aberdeen and 400 in the coun-

try.<sup>72</sup> In that city in the same year, the Free Church presbytery was taking the first steps in forming the Free Church Psalmody Association,<sup>73</sup> and the Established Church synod was recommending congregational practices and the appointment of music teachers to serve several parishes each.<sup>74</sup> In 1869, "the majority of congregations" of the Established Church in Glasgow had "classes for instructing the young in music, and meetings for congregational practice",<sup>75</sup> and in 1873 a London periodical said of Glasgow that "no city possesses a greater number of sight-singers and others well instructed in music".<sup>76</sup> The Presbytery of Ayr in 1869 urged ministers to encourage the teaching of music in their parishes.<sup>77</sup> Classes held in the Free Church, Nairn, in 1874 had 250 regular members<sup>78</sup> and were conducted by Reddie, whose classes in Inverness gave rise to an amateur choir of 300 members.<sup>79</sup> Even in the tiny village of Stobo in 1867, the session paid someone three pounds for a series of twenty singing lessons to the young people of the parish.<sup>80</sup>

These are no more than a few illustrations of the strength of a movement which caught on in city, town and countryside. By the seventies, sacred music had become a common pastime. All this activity called for an improvement in the ability and status of precentors and teachers. The Glasgow Precentors' Association was formed in 1861 and precentors throughout the country studied for Curwen's certificates and those awarded by the Free Church. By 1873, places the size of Perth, Brechin and Inverness had full-time teachers of singing who, as well as being precentors in major churches, taught in schools and held singing-classes in local churches.<sup>81</sup> The Church of Scotland's Psalmody Committee took steps to encourage congregational classes and practices, instituted a scheme of psalmody inspections, and established a fund for augmentation of the salaries of properly qualified precentors.<sup>82</sup> Many of those who encouraged these developments were motivated partly by a desire to exclude organs from worship - the convener of the Psalmody Committee was the organ-hating A.T. Niven, and congregational singing classes were repeatedly advocated as an alternative to

instrumental music.<sup>83</sup> At the Established Church's General Assembly in 1867, a statement that "if more attention were paid to the importance of psalmody, it would supersede in great measure the desire for the introduction of organs" met with approval.<sup>84</sup>

Events did not work out in the way these people had planned. In churches which achieved some success in choral or congregational singing an appetite was often developed for further improvement, which it was felt could be achieved with the aid of instrumental accompaniment. As early as 1829, John Street Relief Church, Glasgow, had been successfully holding congregational practices for seven years "with a spiritedness which is perhaps unequalled in Scotland", but the minister believed that an organ was needed.<sup>85</sup> And one of the first congregations in the Established Church to favour instrumental music was that of St. Mary's, Dumfries, where the choir was "said to be one of the best in the South of Scotland".<sup>86</sup> As Henry Batchelor put it:<sup>87</sup>

"To encourage more skilful and polished modes of vocal worship, in order to resist the addition of instrumental music ... is a strange infatuation. All who do it are unconsciously preparing for what they dread".

On the other hand, instruments were very often installed in churches where the singing was by general consent very poor; claims that instruments usually went into churches where the singing was already good<sup>88</sup> are not borne out by the facts.

Though choral singing improved greatly in a very short time, it still proved difficult to maintain attendances at congregational practices. The initial novelty soon wore off and the practices continued to be attended by only a hard core of enthusiasts. William Carnie, one of the outstanding teachers, acknowledged this in 1864,<sup>89</sup> and in 1873 Joseph Vickery said that congregations "are not usually receptive to musical training" and that, of church people in general, "at least seventy per cent of them are utterly torpid on the matter".<sup>90</sup> The views of these two men are of particular interest since both were in a district which had long been one of the leading cen-

tres of psalmody improvement. It was quite unrealistic to expect all, or even a large percentage, of a congregation to attend regularly for singing practice,<sup>91</sup> and those who did attend simply became more aware of the shortcomings of the singing in their churches. Organs, perhaps, were the answer.

But did organs really help congregations to sing? According to many, organs merely covered up existing imperfections or else discouraged singing in the same way as a good choir did. The opposing view was that an organ encouraged timid people to sing, and supplied harmony where there was no choir to do so. According to John Cumming, "it covers the discordant voices too loudly heard, and is a decent substitute for voices whose silence is their most expressive praise".<sup>92</sup> Undoubtedly organs enabled congregations to sing in time, though it was alleged that they often achieved this by overpowering the congregation. Opinions differed on whether organs were a remedy for flattening. Some said that flattening was caused by voices singing outside their natural compass, and could be cured only by the whole congregation learning part-singing; their opponents naturally saw this as an impractical solution. Some said that, even with an organ, the singing still flattened within each verse and was put back in tune at the start of the next; but surely this was better, said the organ party, than having the pitch descend several semitones in the course of a psalm.

The effect of an organ depended greatly, of course, on the ability and taste of the organist. In the early days of the organ movement, scarcity of good players was used as a subsidiary argument against organs, an argument invariably answered by the observations that the problem would disappear as more organs became available for tuition, and that a bad organist, in the nature of things, would be a better musician than a bad precentor.

Ministers and other spokesmen of those churches which installed instruments nearly all claimed that the result had been an improvement in the singing. These claims must be treated with caution, but they are to some extent con-



firmed by the change of heart of local opponents after they had experienced the effect of an organ in their own or another church. Yet congregational singing was still being criticised at the end of the century, when organs were common. Critics then were probably applying different standards, and the criticisms tended to be of the relative silence of congregations, rather than the quality of their singing. Wotherspoon<sup>93</sup> and Almond<sup>94</sup> both attributed the problem to the introduction of too many new tunes and other factors.

### 3.7.2. Better music attracts people to attend church.

The people to be attracted were not only those from rival denominations, but also the large unchurched masses. In the first place, those who came to hear the music would at least hear, and might be converted by, the sermons. Though there might be a few such cases, replied the conservatives, the experience of other churches should be consulted. The Dean of Carlisle, in a pamphlet defending the daily choral service,<sup>95</sup> provided ammunition by observing:

"Some persons attend the Cathedral only to hear good music, and feel no connection between the musical harmony and the sense of the words uttered - to them the service is a mere oratorio or religious opera. The conduct also of others who frequent the transepts and aisles of our Church during divine service on the Lord's Day only to hear the instrumental or vocal music, and who leave the Church before the prayers are ended or the sermon is delivered, cannot be too strongly condemned - it is a gross profanation of God's house and an insult to His worship..."

The introduction of organs in Scotland would lead to crowds of these "thoughtless intruders" running to church, as Erasmus had said, "as to a theatre, to have their ears tickled".

In reply, it was argued that "sermon-tasting" and the crowds which flocked to hear popular preachers were at least as reminiscent of the theatre as any interest in organs could be. In 1806 an episcopalian, evidently with presbyterians in mind, attacked those whose object "in coming to the house of the Lord is entertainment, which they discover by their predilection for sermons".<sup>96</sup>

In the second place, the music itself might induce devotion in those who were impervious to preaching. People like Begg and Bannatyne answered this assertion with one even more questionable - that anyone claiming religious feeling on such a basis was deluding himself. Caird, among others, more moderately advised caution against mistaking aesthetic for religious experience.<sup>97</sup>

Claims that organ-using churches were better attended than those without organs were answered by claims to the contrary. But, to many, crude attendance figures were irrelevant - what mattered was the religious feelings of those who attended, and organs might result in music-lovers replacing sincere worshippers.

One section of the population which organs were intended to attract was the youth. It was not only a question of youthful love of novelty; the young received a musical education which their fathers had never had. Young people in England were said in the sixties to be abandoning the English Presbyterian Church because it had unattractive services and lacked organs.<sup>98</sup> In Scotland, Begg answered the argument that organs would attract the young by saying, in effect, that the old knew better than the young; and, if parents did not stand fast by principles, their children could not be expected to do so. For him, the way to attract and retain the young was to make sermons more attractive.<sup>99</sup>

### 3.7.3. The organ question causes unnecessary strife.

Those who raised the question of instrumental music were guilty, in the eyes of their opponents, of causing needless trouble. Organs were, as the organ party readily agreed, no essential part of worship; so why should the feelings of "the weaker brethren" (which scripture says should be respected), who sincerely regarded the matter as one of conscience, be wounded? The organ enthusiasts were unnecessarily introducing a bone of contention. The feeling against organs might, or might not, be mere vulgar prejudice, but nevertheless it should be respected.

The cure for prejudice, replied the organ party, was

education and knowledge. Prejudice should be eradicated by sermons. Robert Lee was impatient with those ministers who, though favouring organs, took no action for fear of the reactions of their people:<sup>100</sup>

"A man must indeed be a thorough simpleton, who, having the ear of the people from week to week, and opportunity to reason with them, without reply, fifty or a hundred times in the year, does not soon succeed in persuading them of anything that is in itself right, reasonable, expedient, and necessary. Those who fail while possessing such advantages should not blame the people, but themselves".

But Lee's attitude could too easily lead to partisan speeches taking the place of sermons. John Cunningham of Crieff was so incensed by the General Assembly's Pirie Act that he lectured against it from his pulpit on the following Sunday, and was criticised in the national press for doing so.<sup>101</sup> And, in Elgin Parish Church one Sunday eleven years later, the congregation listened to a pro-organ sermon in the morning and to an anti-organ sermon by a visiting preacher in the afternoon.<sup>102</sup>

It was often forgotten that in a number of churches no dissenting voice at all was raised when the introduction of instrumental music was proposed. In these cases at least, it was nonsense to speak of the instrument causing strife in the congregation or in the Church. The only likely problem was that clergymen who opposed instrumental music might refuse to officiate in these churches as visiting preachers, though little evidence of such refusal has been found.<sup>103</sup> And why, the organ party asked, should any strife be occasioned in the superior church courts by a substantially unanimous decision on an inessential matter taken by a congregation and its kirk session? Any strife in such a case, they said, was the responsibility of the anti-organ party, who refused to recognise the constitutional liberty of congregations.

#### 3.7.4. The money paid for organs could be better spent.

As we shall see, organ opponents among the English independents often observed that money spent on buying organs would be better spent on purchasing singing education for congregations, or on the salaries of city mis-

sionaries. The same argument, really a particularisation of the opposition to spending money on beautifying church buildings, was frequently used in the Scottish debates, and was often answered in sermons on such texts as "To what purpose is this waste?" Those who gave money for church organs were beautifying God's house rather than their own houses; they were making services more attractive and therefore multiplying the flock. Those who donated to beautifying the church were making the church more significant in the lives of the poor and thus contributing to social change:<sup>104</sup>

"His church may be to the poor man almost the only beautiful thing with which he is familiar, and may greatly tend by the influence of its beauty to aid the preacher in his lessons, and quietly, in its own way, to refine and civilize".

On occasion, the criticism that the money should have been spent otherwise may have had some justification. The parishioners of Dun, near Montrose, bought a harmonium for their church in 1868, a year in which they were unusual in contributing nothing at all to the schemes of the Church,<sup>105</sup> and a drop in contributions to Church schemes was partly accounted for in Forfar Presbytery in 1878 by "a special effort of Kirriemuir parish in paying for an organ".<sup>106</sup> But usually, as was pointed out by Dr. Macduff of Sandyford Church:<sup>107</sup> "those who are most interested in what I call the aesthetics of the church, have been those who have been more warmly and generally interested in promoting every good spiritual work". Macduff said this when he was applying for the presbytery's sanction to an organ costing over £850 for his church, and he assured the presbytery that payment for the organ would "not interfere one iota with the generosity of the congregation in what I deem infinitely more important matters". A similar assurance had earlier been given to the Presbytery of Dundee by the minister of the East Church there, where the organ was to cost £700.<sup>108</sup> It appears that the purchase of an organ usually made no difference to a congregation's financial contributions to Christian works.

### 3.7.5. Emphasis on music reduces the importance of sermons and the clergy.

Not only organs had to be paid for; so did organists. Many choirs already included salaried members, and there seems to have been a fear among the clergy that their own stipends would suffer. Naturally, this was rarely expressed, but perhaps Dr. James Smith was only half joking when he said that he would not vote to sanction an organ until all the clergy of the Church of Scotland had stipends of at least £1000.<sup>109</sup> James Begg tried to play on the fears of the clergy:<sup>110</sup>

"It was a most costly thing paying for organists and sopranos and choirs. These musicians, who furnished the attraction, would not go on the voluntary system. They must be paid large salaries, and if there was anything over, the minister got it. By and bye the minister would become an incumbrance in the church altogether, and would require to make himself scarce".

Begg forecast that the minister's importance would decline as sermons were replaced by music. Sermons were becoming shorter; "attractive" worship meant that the people

"got little or no preaching worth while ... the population would be totally ignorant, and they would have the very ground that Romanists loved to work in ... Many men who had not much to say in the way of preaching got an organ to fill up the time".

According to Cochrane of Cupar,<sup>111</sup>

"these innovators evidently thought that Christ made a mistake when He sent forth Apostles to preach the gospel. In their opinion He should have sent forth a set of dancing masters, pipers, and tumblers".

These rantings bore little relation to the real situation in most churches which introduced instrumental music.<sup>112</sup> The only other innovation which regularly accompanied instrumental music was a change of postures. Six years before there was a single instrument in the Church of Scotland, there were references<sup>113</sup> to the "leisure" Robert Lee obtained by using his prayer book, abbreviating his afternoon sermons, and abandoning his morning sermons; he was evading what to many ministers was the most time-consuming and important of their duties. The adoption of shorter and less doctrinal sermons

had little to do with organs. The prominence of the didactic element, to the exclusion of the devotional and sacramental, had meant that Scottish worship had lost its catholic roots, and "a reaction against the stress of seventeenth-century Calvinism on instruction was bound to come".<sup>114</sup> Restoration of the balance of these elements in worship, however, probably created an environment in which organs were more favourably regarded.

### 3.7.6. Organists may be irreligious or troublesome.

The organ opponents often objected that the "hirelings" who played organs could not be expected to aid devotion and would use the instruments for musical display. Dissipated organists in America, they said, slipped out of church to the nearest bar-room during sermons. Criticisms of the conduct and playing of organists had been made for centuries. But, it was pointed out, similar criticisms had been made of professional and even amateur choristers, yet the church accepted them. And newspaper readers had long been delighted by tales of precentors who, in full view of the congregation, nodded off during sermons.

In 1889 a Free Church minister said that "he had no fear of organs, but he had some fear of organists. He thought that they were very difficult to manage".<sup>115</sup> But precentors too had been difficult to manage - ministers and sessions not uncommonly had public disputes with their precentors, sometimes in the course of public worship.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.7.7. Organs in churches lead to Sabbath desecration.

In 1856, a letter to the Times<sup>117</sup> argued that, if sacred music was played on organs in churches, there could be no objection to the same music being played on Sundays by bands in public parks. Taking his cue from this letter, Alexander Bannatyne produced one of his tortuous arguments, which appears to run as follows.<sup>118</sup> If a singer is singing a psalm and is entering into the spirit of the psalm, it is unlikely that he will pass on into secular song; but an instrumentalist much more easily

slips from one into the other. So, if instruments are allowed in church, people will play them at home on Sundays, and the danger of Sabbath desecration through secular music will be greater than when people in their own homes confine themselves to singing.

Like some of Bannatyne's other arguments, this appears to have gone unanswered.

### 3.8. The Insignificance of the Organ Question.

Organ debates in the church courts attracted large attendances of members and spectators:

"Our Assembly today presents a remarkable appearance. I fancy that if a foreigner came here this morning and saw such an Assembly, he would naturally ask or conjecture what was before us. He might conjecture that this day there was to be submitted to the Assembly perhaps some report connected with the conversion of the heathen at home or abroad - and he would not at all wonder that there was such a deep interest excited on such a subject. But alas! if he came on such a day he would find a very different attendance; .... he would be very much surprised to find so many people immensely excited about bringing an organ into church".

Time and again it was urged that the churches should attend to the things that really mattered. The very insignificance of the organ question was a powerful argument in favour of granting freedom to congregations, but it was also a reason for the organ opponents to question the disproportionate persistence of those on the other side. The ultimate victory owed much to sheer attrition. Those who were indifferent tended to favour the granting of freedom as the only course likely to settle the matter. Some who preferred to see organs excluded would rather yield than see the debate drag on year after year. John Cairns's attitude when he voted for congregational freedom in the U.P. Synod in 1856 was shared by others in his own and other denominations:<sup>120</sup>

"He did not share the fears and apprehensions which had been expressed in many quarters as to the detrimental effect of a decision in favour of forbearance. He did not wish to see the organ introduced into the Church. He had strong feelings of the opposite kind; but he thought that one of the most effectual means of imparting fictitious and artificial importance to the use of the organ was to oppose barriers to its

use, and to make it so frequently a subject of debate in the courts of the Church".

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Gelineau 1964, pp.150-2.
2. Sumner 1973, p.38; Scholes 1934, pp.214-7.
3. Williams 1966, pp.27,37,67,120,191.
4. Le Huray 1967, pp.24-39.
5. Sumner 1973, pp.135-8; Scholes 1934, pp.229-252.
6. Temperley 1979a, p.234. At the beginning of the century, few English parish churches outside London had organs (Temperley 1979b).
7. Temperley 1979a, pp.253,258.
8. *infra*, ch.5.
9. *infra*, ch.6.
10. The battle over the introduction of instrumental music was particularly vigorous in the various presbyterian denominations of Canada in the sixties and seventies; it produced several pamphlets which can be found today in British libraries.
11. *infra*, ch.7.
12. Hamilton nd., p.186.
13. Scholes 1934, p.219.
14. Ward 1982.
15. Batchelor 1866, pp.9-10.
16. Lee 1864, pp.124-5.
17. *Scotsman*, 24 May 1865.
18. Gelineau 1964, pp.150-1. Chapter 10 of this book gives the history of instrumental music in the Roman Church.
19. Boyd 1856, p.665
20. *Scotsman*, 24 May 1865.
21. Quoted in chapter 1 of Lee 1864.
22. For an ingenious, but apparently unfounded, explanation of the alleged association between organs and idolatry, see the correspondence column of the *Times*, 2 June 1865.
23. Quoted in Fleming 1808a, p.76 and Lamb 1856, p.4.
24. Candlish 1856, p.32.
25. Lee 1864, ch.4.
26. *Edinburgh Courant*, Supplement, 4 June 1862.
27. Boyd 1856, p.663.
28. Batchelor 1866, p.40.
29. Bannatyne 1865, pp.9-10.
30. Bannatyne 1857, p.53.
31. Milne 1811, p.62.
32. Temperley 1979a, pp.4-5.
33. "Angel voices", by Francis Pott. (*Church Hymnary*, 252).
34. Begg 1866, p.51.
35. *Edinburgh Courant*, 10 March 1873.
36. A.K.H. Boyd, in his preface to Robertson 1867.
37. Begg 1866, pp.49-50.
38. Lee 1864, p.139.
39. *Choir*, 4 May 1878, p.279.



40. Bannatyne 1857, pp.76-7.
41. The instrument was given to the catholic chapel in Banff in 1816, after the Earl's death, and was later moved to the new catholic chapel in Portsoy. (*Banffshire Journal*, 6 June 1865). Three later sources say that the organ was below the gallery in Macduff Church - McWilliam 1904, p.60, Scott 1915 (Macduff entry), Wiseman 1905, p.12.
42. *infra*, ch.8.
43. At Nairn Congregational Church. (*Scot. Cong. Mag.*, May 1866).
44. AGA 1863, p.58.
45. *Scotsman*, 6 Apr 1865.
46. e.g. at Hurlford in 1877 (*Ayr Advertiser*, 15 Mar 1877).
47. *Scotsman*, 4 Apr 1866.
48. *Elgin Courant*, 7,14,28 July 1871.
49. *Glasgow Herald*, 11 Jan 1865.
50. *Crieff Journal*, 6 July 1867, 2 Nov 1867. By February 1868, the organ, still banned, was in use every Sunday evening. (*Crieff Journal*, 8 Feb 1868).
51. Murphy 1870, p.26.
52. Sprott 1863, p.14.
53. Begg 1866, p.135. Begg made the same point in his moderatorial address in 1865 (*Proc & Deb*, 1865, p.290).
54. *Edinburgh Courant*, 27 Apr 1876.
55. *Edinburgh Courant*, 5 May 1876.
56. *Edinburgh Courant*, 25 May 1876.
57. It has been claimed that the first use of choral services in a Scottish episcopal church was at St. John's, Jedburgh, in the forties. (Baptie 1894 - entry for Robert Davidson).
58. Pears 1852, pp.7,19.
59. Druitt 1845, pp.52-3.
60. Temperley 1979a, pp.274-5.
61. Curwen 1872, p.230.
62. Graham 1816, pp.9-10.
63. *Musical Standard*, 23 May 1874.
64. *Aberdeen Journal*, 1 June 1864.
65. *infra*, ch.6.
66. *Dumbarton Herald*, 28 May 1868. Some years earlier, John Cumming complained of his difficulty in recruiting choir members even from his large London congregation (Cumming 1850, p.30).
67. e.g. at Carnbee (*Fife News*, 6 Dec 1873).
68. Curwen 1877, p.35.
69. Glasgow churches which were using this arrangement in 1871 included St. Mary's (Tron), Free St. Mary's, Free St. George's, Queen's Park Established Church, and Cambridge Street U.P. The Mail survey of that year speaks well of the singing in these churches.
70. e.g. *Elgin Courant*, 20 Feb 1872.
71. e.g. *Border Advertiser*, 22 Apr 1874.
72. *Aberdeen Journal*, 26 Sept 1855.
73. *Aberdeen Journal*, 5 Sept 1855.
74. *Aberdeen Journal*, 18 Apr 1855.
75. *Glasgow Saturday Post*, 14 Oct 1869.
76. *Musical Standard*, 15 Nov 1873.
77. *Ayrshire Express*, 8 May 1869.
78. *Nairnshire Telegraph*, 3 June 1874.

79. *Nairnshire Telegraph*, 4 March 1874.
80. Gunn 1907.
81. *Psalmist*, July 1873, p.85.
82. Full details of these arrangements can be found in the Committee's circular, reproduced in the *Musical Standard*, 30 Jan 1875.
83. e.g. Burder 1842; Druitt 1845; Protestant Witness 1846; Precentor 1858; Moran 1862; Niven 1864; Feaston 1872; etc.
84. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 3 June 1867.
85. Anderson 1829, pp.39-40.
86. *Choir*, 15 Dec 1866.
87. Batchelor 1866, p.6.
88. Johnston 1872, p.101.
89. *Aberdeen Free Press*, 16 Dec 1864.
90. Vickery 1873, p.2. Cumming 1840 (p.xviii) had predicted this situation.
91. By 1906, only 60 churches, out of 1249 surveyed in the Established Church, held congregational practices (Church of Scotland 1906, p.11).
92. Cumming 1859, p.438.
93. Wotherspoon 1891, pp.39-43.
94. Almond 1895, pp.208-211.
95. Close 1865, pp.6-7.
96. Milne 1806, p.173.
97. Caird 1858, pp.272-300. He returned to the same theme when preaching at Glasgow Cathedral in 1879 on the day when the organ was taken into use. (Boyd 1892, ii, p.42).
98. *Scotsman*, 9 March 1867.
99. Begg 1866, p.135.
100. Lee 1864, p.136.
101. *Crieff Journal*, 3 June 1865; *Edinburgh Courant*, 7 June 1865.
102. *Elgin Courant*, 23 May 1876.
103. On the contrary, Gordon Ingram, minister of Urquhart, was the main opponent of the Elgin harmonium in the presbytery meetings (eg. *Elgin Courant*, 23 Apr 1875, 7 May 1875), and he opposed it on principle. Yet he officiated at services in the parish churches of Speymouth and Lhanbryd when harmoniums were used. (*Elgin Courant*, 5 Oct 1875). The redoubtable David Johnston, however, "would not even preach where there was an instrument, unless it was silent in his presence" (Smith 1907, p.178).
104. Quoted (from Bampton Lecture 1861) by Robertson 1867, p.194.
105. *Montrose Review*, 4 Sept 1868.
106. *Dundee Advertiser*, 4 Apr 1878.
107. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 7 Dec 1865.
108. *Dundee Courier*, 2 Feb 1865.
109. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 3 Aug 1865.
110. *Edinburgh Courant*, 18 May 1876; *Choir*, 27 May 1876; also Begg 1882, p.22.
111. *Edinburgh Courant*, 18 May 1876.
112. This is pointed out by several contemporaries; e.g. letter in *Edinburgh Courant*, 1 Aug 1871, responding to similar allegations by Pirie (Pirie 1871, p.12). Many champions of the organ were renowned as preachers (Boyd 1876, p.60).
113. e.g. Smith 1857, p.4. Smith also suggested (p.57)

that prayers should not exceed 10 minutes in length, and that the lengths of sermons should be similarly restricted.

114. Barkley 1977, p.340.
115. *Glasgow Herald*, 27 March 1889.
116. e.g. Huntly Free Church (*Scotsman*, 24 May 1865); St. Marnock's Kilmarnock (*Kilmarnock Standard*, 3 March 1866); South Leith (*Greenock Advertiser*, 30 Sept 1869; *Ayrshire Express* 20 Nov 1869); St. Mary's Dumfries (*Weekly Review*, 26 Jan 1870; *Dumfriesshire Herald*, 10 Aug 1872); Crieff U.P. (*Glasgow Weekly Herald*, 11 Feb 1871; *Arbroath Guide*, 4 Dec 1874). The "junior minister" of Burntisland U.P. Church "resigned his charge in consequence of want of harmony between him and his precentor". (*Arbroath Guide*, 7 March 1868).
117. *Times*, 16 May 1856.
118. Bannatyne 1857, pp.73-4.
119. The opening words of Norman Macleod's speech in the 1865 Innovations debate. (*Scotsman* 24 May 1865).
120. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1856, p.274.

#### 4. EVENTS IN GLASGOW, 1806-1808

The story of the Scottish organ movement starts at St. Andrew's Parish Church, Glasgow. Described as "the finest church built in Scotland in the eighteenth century",<sup>1</sup> it had a "fashionable and intelligent"<sup>2</sup> congregation who had a friendly relationship with their neighbours at the episcopal chapel near the Green, also called St. Andrew's.<sup>3</sup> The episcopal chapel became known as "the whistlin' kirk" after it obtained an organ in 1775.<sup>4</sup> Influenced no doubt by the various efforts made in the city at that time to improve church music,<sup>5</sup> the parish church congregation too wanted to have an organ.<sup>6</sup> Successive ministers dissuaded them<sup>7</sup> until William Ritchie<sup>8</sup> was called to the church in 1802. Though Ritchie was in his mid-fifties and had already had a term of office as Moderator of the General Assembly, he had not entered the ministry until 1794. Previously he had spent several years on the continent and attended universities in the Netherlands and Germany, where organs were a prominent feature of reformed churches. He had a breadth of outlook and a personality which made him popular with his Glasgow people, and he whole-heartedly supported the session and congregation in their wish for an organ.

Holding that there was no legal objection, the congregation decided to instal an organ in place of some inconvenient seats in a shallow chancel behind the pulpit. But seats could not be removed, or the fabric interfered with, without the consent of the heritors, who were the magistrates and council of Glasgow. Accordingly, on 21 August 1806 a petition signed by seat-holders in the church was sent to the Lord Provost with a covering letter from Ritchie.<sup>9</sup> Ritchie's letter requested that the council should not concern itself with the question of instrumental music,

"but that the petition shall be granted or refused merely on the ground of expediency or in expediency as to the removal of the seats. To this alone, in my opinion, the jurisdiction of the Heritors extends".

The petition itself made the same point:

"The question as to the propriety of using an Organ in church, it becomes us not to discuss before you, either as Magistrates or Heritors".

Nevertheless, the petition went on to justify the use of organs, and the petitioners could not resist adding:

"Our Heritors, Magistrates of one of the first commercial cities of Europe, will thus give new evidence to mankind that the genius of commerce is not the contracted spirit of hostility to the liberal arts, but the enlivening sun of science, dispelling, in its progress, the gloomy fogs of prejudice that have too long benumbed the energies and untuned the feelings of our country".

Unimpressed, the Lord Provost and magistrates asked the town clerk, James Reddie, for his opinion on the legal aspects of the request. His lengthy reply came in an official letter dated 6 September.<sup>10</sup> He advised that the council could not ignore the organ issue and decide the matter purely on the question of removal of the seating. The civil magistrates were bound by law to "take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church", and there was a danger that the introduction of an organ would disturb the peace and harmony of the Established Church. Organs would constitute a material innovation in worship and as such ought to be sanctioned by the Church of Scotland before the magistrates could approve, directly or indirectly, of their use. The members of St. Andrew's were wrong, he said, in believing that they did not need the sanction of the church courts, and they should be advised to apply for that sanction.<sup>11</sup>

At a meeting on 8 September 1806 the council resolved to follow the course of action recommended by Reddie and to reply accordingly to St. Andrew's, sending a copy of his letter.<sup>12</sup> The church could therefore not have its organ, for Ritchie was well aware that an approach to the Presbytery of Glasgow would be useless.

But the matter did not rest there.<sup>13</sup> In June of the following year, Ritchie and his congregation succeeded in placing an organ in the church in such a way that neither the town council nor the presbytery could object. The town council, as heritors, were debarred by the fact that the instrument was a small free-standing chamber organ

whose introduction did not disturb the fabric or the seating. The presbytery and the civil magistrates had no reason to complain, for the organ was installed for a perfectly legal purpose, that of aiding weekday practices of psalmody. Some presbytery members later hinted that the presbytery could have put a stop to this use of the organ, and implied that their failure to do so was a result of tolerance and leniency;<sup>14</sup> the truth is that they would have found it very difficult to make a case.

In this connection, it is worth noting that the Established Church appears to have had a long tradition of regarding private devotion and family worship as being unfettered by the strict rules which were applied to public worship. For example, some writers believe that, though four-part settings of psalm-tunes were sung in the late sixteenth century, they were not used in public worship, where only unison singing was allowed.<sup>15</sup> Patrick<sup>16</sup> likewise suggests that the tunes "in reports" which so surprisingly appear in seventeenth-century Scottish psalters were "sung a good deal in private". Again, the presence in early psalters of such additional items as the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis and the Lord's Prayer is explained by later writers as being "for private use, in devotion or for instruction"; there is no evidence, says Patrick, that they were sung publicly.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, when the choir movement began in the eighteenth century, there was a clear distinction between what was permissible at choir practice and what was permissible in public worship. Thus at that time widespread use was made of practice verses<sup>18</sup> - secular words set to psalm tunes and used at choir practice in place of the sacred words which were sung only during public worship. An organ was in use at choir practices in Aberdeenshire as early as about 1748;<sup>19</sup> yet in the same district in 1754 great exception was taken to a precentor's use of a pitch-pipe in public worship.<sup>20</sup> Choir and congregational practices were not uncommonly accompanied by instruments long before the latter were admitted into public worship.<sup>21</sup> There does not, however, appear to be any recorded case before 1807 of instrumental accompaniment of practices held within

the actual place of worship.<sup>22</sup>

So, throughout the summer of 1807, the more extreme members of the Presbytery of Glasgow impotently watched as, in their own words, not only<sup>23</sup>

"the young, the gay and the idle, but likewise the old, the grave and the busy, repaired in the evenings to St. Andrew's Church to improve themselves in Sacred Music ... We became apprehensive, lest in that gaiety of heart which Music is said to inspire, they might be prompted to overstep that line of conduct which prudence and good sense should have taught them to observe"

but they believed that

"the persons under this Musical frenzy would be restored to their senses, ... not reflecting to what length an enthusiasm for Music will carry its votaries".

Their apprehension increased when the practice was introduced of closing these weekday sessions with an act of "family worship" in which the singing was accompanied by the organ.

On Friday, 21 August, at a function attended by the Lord Provost and most of the magistrates, a member of St. Andrew's indiscreetly announced that the organ was to be used in public worship on Sunday afternoon.<sup>24</sup> On Saturday, the Lord Provost sent a letter to Ritchie entering "a solemn protest" against him "for all damages which may be the consequence". Ritchie replied on the same day that he would lay the Lord Provost's letter before the church's music committee at the earliest opportunity. "They will, as becomes them, pay all due deference to your Lordship's declaration".<sup>25</sup> Such was the deference paid by them (or possibly by Ritchie alone - it is not clear whether the committee were informed at this stage) that they went ahead and used the organ the next day as planned. And so, on Sunday 23 August 1807,<sup>26</sup> an organ was used for the first time in the public worship of a Scottish presbyterian church.

Morning service proceeded as usual. So did the afternoon service until the closing psalm was announced. Then the organist took his seat and accompanied the precentor and the people in their singing.<sup>27</sup> Ritchie claimed that

the organ never did more than duplicate the precentor's notes,<sup>28</sup> but we may conjecture that the accompaniment was harmonised. (Certainly, the use of a small chamber organ to accompany a single psalm does not justify the accounts given by some later writers<sup>29</sup> or those by some contemporary reporters<sup>30</sup>). "This tentative beginning at the very close of the day's services was wise", writes Thomson.<sup>31</sup> "While taking the step which none had hitherto dared to take, it guarded against any unseemly disturbance of the service, if such were meditated. So far as the congregation itself was concerned, no opposition existed". Ritchie was able to say truthfully: "No explosion took place. No damage ensued. All was done decently and in order".<sup>32</sup>

If we are to believe writers of over half a century later, news of the event spread like wildfire from house to house and the city was in a ferment. It is difficult to reconcile these accounts with the small coverage the event received in the local press at that time, and the fact that it was not reported in other districts of Scotland until several weeks after the event.<sup>33</sup> But there is no question about the stir it created among the clergy or about the offence given to the Lord Provost and magistrates. On Wednesday, the Lord Provost wrote two letters.<sup>34</sup> One was to Ritchie, complaining that the town council's ruling of the previous year had been ignored, and warning him that he and his congregation would be held responsible for any damage to the pecuniary interest of the city and for any breach of the peace which might be occasioned. Ritchie paid no attention - in matters of the ordering of worship he would accede only to his ecclesiastical superiors; it would be a betrayal of the Church to yield to the civil powers.<sup>35</sup>

The second letter written by the Lord Provost was addressed to the moderator of the Presbytery of Glasgow, informing him officially of the offence and appending copies of the documents relating to the previous year's petition. But the matter was in any event bound to be raised in the presbytery, and there could be little doubt about the outcome of their deliberations; it is quite



likely that, had the Lord Provost not interfered, the presbytery would have been unanimous in their ruling against Ritchie. Ritchie himself saw the letter as an outrageous attempt by the civil authorities to influence ecclesiastical policy. In order "that the civil power might be no more seen in this business",<sup>36</sup> a delegation from St. Andrew's called on the Lord Provost on Saturday, 29 August, and said that the church would not use the organ again "for the present" if he would agree to withdraw his intimation to the presbytery. To this proposal he gave no definite answer, saying only that he would lay the matter before the next council meeting. On Sunday the organ was not used. On Tuesday the council unanimously approved the Lord Provost's action and resolved not to withdraw the intimation;<sup>37</sup> the Lord Provost thereupon wrote to the presbytery, informing them of the delegation's request and saying that the matter should now rest with the presbytery alone.<sup>38</sup> On Wednesday the presbytery, on receiving Ritchie's solemn promise "that the Organ should not again be used without the authority of the church", at his request postponed consideration of the matter to their October meeting.

If Ritchie's opponents are to be believed, the following month was a period of great activity on the part of the organ party. There were "deputations to Edinburgh" and "canvassings, consultations and convivialities at Glasgow for the furtherance of this singular business".<sup>39</sup> Two elders of St. Andrew's sent a circular letter to all members of the congregation asking them to attend the presbytery meeting in support of their minister.<sup>40</sup> The Lord Provost's part in the affair must have been brought up again, for there is a council minute dated 24 September recording that "the Council approves the whole actings of the Lord Provost in the organ question, and now leaves the matter in the hands of the Presbytery".<sup>41</sup> The public appetite was whetted.

And so, when the presbytery met in the Tron Church on 7 October to consider the case, it did so "in the presence of numbers of the best informed and most respectable inhabitants of the City of Glasgow".<sup>42</sup> The matter was

deliberated "at great length", but the length of the debate must not be taken as an indication that there was any approval for Ritchie's action. The disagreement was about the terms in which the disapproval should be expressed. Writing in 1866, one of those who were present summarised the proceedings thus:

"Certainly, if the *odium theologicum* ever appeared in a Church Court, it was exhibited there in rampant form. A lay spectator ignorant of the case might have supposed that the culprit had transgressed the laws of God and man".<sup>43</sup>

At the outset, Ritchie was made the offer that every word about the business would be expunged from the presbytery record if he would agree "never again to agitate the subject". This was later described by his opponents as an "honourable attempt.....to have the matter settled".<sup>44</sup> Naturally enough, he declined, and repeated, as a judicial declaration, "that he would not again use an Organ in the Public Worship of God, without the authority of the Church". Eventually it was moved and seconded that, in consequence of this declaration,

"the presbytery should find it unnecessary to proceed further in this business, declaring at the same time their judgment, that the introduction of an organ into public worship is inexpedient and unauthorized in our Church".<sup>45</sup>

A number of members believed that this motion could have been adopted unanimously had it not been opposed by a stronger one.<sup>46</sup> The presbytery described Ritchie's declaration as "vague and unsatisfactory", when it clearly was neither; their real motivation lay in Ritchie's failure, in their view, to respect authority, either ecclesiastical or civil. The presbytery

"reflecting on the cavalier manner in which they had been treated by that Gentleman, (never having been consulted by him, either directly or indirectly, when he first introduced it) ... were determined that they would not allow themselves to be *hoodwinked* by such a vague and unsatisfactory pledge. They were determined not to suffer such a palpable innovation to creep into the Church of Scotland. They considered it as their sacred duty, to pass judgment upon the legality of the measure, and to set the question for ever at rest with the Congregations under their jurisdiction".<sup>47</sup>

The Lord Provost too had been slighted - the St. Andrew's

congregation had ignored an earlier warning from the council, and the populace "saw the constituted authorities of the city trampled on - the order of the church deranged - the peace of the city disturbed ...".<sup>48</sup> On these specious grounds, it was moved, seconded, and carried by a very considerable majority:

"That the Presbytery are of the 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 their bounds; and with respect to the conduct of the clergyman in this matter, they are satisfied with his judicial declaration, that he would not again use the organ in the public worship of God, without the authority of the Church".<sup>49</sup>

This, then, became the official ruling of the presbytery, who thus "added one more stop to this organ than the builder intended - a *full stop*, which silences all the others".<sup>50</sup>

But an influential group of five, led by Dr. William Taylor, Principal of the University of Glasgow, recorded their dissent. Their Reasons of Dissent, dated 13 October, were received and recorded by the presbytery at its next meeting, on 4 November.<sup>51</sup> The presbytery, the dissentients said, had been asked to consider a particular case, with particular attendant circumstances, not to expound the law on a general question which was not within the province of an inferior court. More important, though, was a constitutional issue - what the presbytery had done was to declare that the question of organ use was not only *ultra vires* of individual congregations, but also, since such use was "contrary to the law of the land", *ultra vires* of the Church itself. The presbytery, they argued, had interpreted the Act of Security much more strictly than in the past;<sup>52</sup> the very existence of the Barrier Act indicated that such an innovation was entirely within the jurisdiction of the Church.

The presbytery appointed a committee, headed by Dr. William Porteous, to prepare Answers to the Reasons of Dissent. These were approved and recorded by the presbytery on 2 December.<sup>53</sup> The dissentients' document, under three pages long, was answered by 27 pages in which

Porteous and his committee took the opportunity to review the whole issue and to answer at leisure many points raised against them during the debate itself. In effect, the presbytery had now recorded detailed arguments on one side of the question only. For this and other reasons, two further members, who had not been among the original dissentients, gave in individual papers at the presbytery meeting on 6 January 1808.<sup>54</sup> They objected to the presbytery's adoption of a document written "with heat and passion"; the liberty taken in the Answers was "altogether indefensible".

The reaction of Porteous and his committee to these papers might well have further divided the presbytery, had not another paper lodged at the same meeting diverted attention from them. This was a statement by Ritchie himself,<sup>55</sup> explaining and justifying his action. Compared with the writings of the Porteous committee Ritchie's paper is remarkably mild in tone and moderate in expression. Only twice does a minimal controlled anger break the smooth recital of his arguments - once when he objects to accusations of image-worship, demolishing the barriers which secure religion, and committing perjury in relation to his ordination vows;<sup>56</sup> and again in his summing-up:

"The example is singular, of a Minister, and Elders, and People, uniting as one man for promoting their own improvement in Sacred Music, by means which they deemed fair, and legal, and honourable; while yet, by those to whom they were looking up for encouragement, they have been exhibited to the world as violating the law of the Church and of the state".<sup>57</sup>

At a presbytery meeting on 30 March, Answers<sup>58</sup> prepared by the Porteous committee were read, approved and recorded without a vote being taken. A reader seeing only this document might conclude that it had been triggered by a scurrilous attack on the presbytery and its members rather than by a paper showing a quite remarkable restraint. It began with a personal attack on Ritchie and it displayed throughout the "heat and passion" which its authors had exhibited earlier.

Many members of the presbytery must by now have been regretting the allegiance they had taken at the October

meeting, when a moderate approach would have ended the whole affair. By now, the newspapers and the public were showing increased interest in these ecclesiastical squabbings. It was said of this period:

"Where, in the city, was there a house you could enter, or a company you could join, that you did not meet with the subject of the organ? It became a standing dish at every table; as much as <sup>59</sup>the news of the day, or observations on the weather".

An anonymous poem ridiculing Porteous<sup>60</sup> was enjoying some popularity in Glasgow, and evidently other verses were in circulation.<sup>61</sup> By this time too, a pamphlet had been published by James Begg, a former Glasgow minister who was now at nearby New Monkland (in Hamilton presbytery). Entitled "A Treatise on the Use of Organs",<sup>62</sup> it is a concise well-organised statement of the case against organs, produced expressly in response to the "considerable interest" excited by the Ritchie affair.<sup>63</sup> One may suspect the influence of Begg's former colleagues in the presbytery in this publication, for it does have some appearance of answering Ritchie's arguments one by one. On the other hand, there are only a small number of essential arguments on each side, and Begg's manner of expression could scarcely be more different from that of the Porteous committee, giving an impression of great sincerity and no sign of rancour.

But in April a pamphlet of a very different nature appeared. A prominent newspaper advertisement<sup>64</sup> announcing the publication of "Two Letters Addressed to the Lord Provost of Glasgow" included the provocative quotation:

"Man, proud man;  
Dress'd in a little brief authority  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven  
As make the Angels weep."

The pamphlet itself<sup>65</sup> did not disappoint the public, who bought copies in greater numbers than even the author - now known to be Alexander Fleming,<sup>66</sup> minister of Neils-ton, in Paisley presbytery - had dared to hope.<sup>67</sup> Despite inaccuracies and internal contradictions, it makes a number of telling points. It is in the form of two letters, the first of which denies the Lord Provost's

right to do more than reinforce the judgements of the ecclesiastical courts when made. The second letter explains to his Lordship that the use of instrumental music is sanctioned and enjoined by scripture, is agreeable to the spirituality of the gospel, and is in accordance with the laws and constitution of the Church of Scotland. The "self-love" and "prejudice" of the Lord Provost are attacked as is his assuming the role of "public informer", and he is accused of abusing his power of patronage. Individual members of the Porteous committee are also subjected to attack for their part in the proceedings. Fleming appends twenty pages which answer, with varying degrees of success, the arguments put forward by Begg.

The presbytery reacted to Fleming's pamphlet on 4 May by recording a vote of thanks to the Lord Provost, magistrates and council "for the wisdom, propriety, and discretion of their conduct" and another to the Porteous committee for their efforts. Ritchie, Taylor junior, Lockhart, and the five original dissentients dissociated themselves from these sentiments, thus showing, in the view of their antagonists, a "regrettable" spirit after having been "indulged with liberty" by the presbytery.<sup>68</sup> The presbytery further declared that, though it was "beneath them, as a Court, to take notice of any anonymous pamphlet", yet "in this present instance they judged it proper" to deny some of Fleming's allegations about individual members.

Though the presbytery officially would not take notice of an anonymous pamphlet, the indefatigable Dr. Porteous was only too willing. Together with five other members, he put together a book of 291 pages which was published amazingly quickly, appearing on 23 May.<sup>69</sup> Entitled "Statement of the Proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow ...", it has, *prima facie*, the appearance of an official document. Its object, the preface declares, is to present the true picture of the situation and to correct the "gross misrepresentations" which "have gone abroad relative to the conduct of the Presbytery of Glasgow". The authors are throughout referred to as "editors", and the book does appear to include full copies of

all the relevant letters and official presbytery papers connected with the case. It is thus a useful historical document (and has been much used as a source in this chapter), but it does not give any account of the actual debates, and it is to these that many of Fleming's comments relate.

Even had the book restricted itself to a dispassionate listing of the letters and papers, the extremist party might still have seen it as a powerful pamphlet on their behalf. Though the documents stating the pro-organ and moderate cases are fully reproduced, the last word always lies with Porteous and his allies, and their answers are considerably longer than the documents they are answering.<sup>70</sup> But the book goes much further. Supplementary arguments are inserted as foot-notes; weak anti-organ arguments are buttressed; documents are interspersed with "editorial" comments drawing attention to the liberality of the presbytery.

In the preface and the conclusion of the book, the unpleasantness of the original Porteous committee has developed into a wild hysteria which is shamelessly indulged. The book claims, for example, that "some private person in England" has bequeathed a sum of money to the first established church in Scotland to introduce an organ, and that the St. Andrew's congregation is about to pocket the spoils. Again, it claims that the congregation was never democratically consulted, and that the organ is being foisted on it by a few prime movers.<sup>71</sup>

Fleming's arguments are answered, and he himself naturally comes under attack: "The public conduct of a legally constituted Court ... must not be attacked and vilified by an obscure individual; nor the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Glasgow ... be with impunity calumniated by an anonymous Pamphleteer"; those being attacked are "known to the world and pledged to the people", but the pamphleteer "may be, and very likely is, the veriest bankrupt in private character". Fleming's anonymity serves the authors well, for they are able to ascribe to him many conflicting motives: he is

conducting a defence of the Irish Roman Catholic claims and "a champion for Popery"; he is a follower of Paine and Voltaire; he is gratifying "private malice" - the organ controversy, "the popular topic of the day, is made a mere vehicle to give currency to the disappointed malice and envy of someone who has little character to lose"; he is an agent of Ritchie himself (this option is spoken of twice as "morally impossible").

Ritchie's possible involvement in Fleming's pamphlet is a matter of conjecture; Porteous and his co-authors base their suggestions on similarities between the pamphlet and Ritchie's Statement. Similarities there certainly are, but the same observation could be made in relation to Begg's pamphlet and the Porteous committee's Answers.

The book by Porteous and his friends achieved considerable fame as anti-organ propaganda. It was published in London<sup>72</sup> as well as in Glasgow, and an edition with an annexed "address to the reverend judicatories of the Presbyterian church in the United States" was published in Philadelphia.<sup>73</sup> It was much quoted later in the century, and extracts were republished during the controversies of 1856.

Fleming was not going to let the presbytery members have the last word. On the very day of publication of Porteous's book, he inserted in the newspapers<sup>74</sup> an announcement that "Answers to the Statement of the Proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow" would shortly be published, with a warning to the public to suspend judgement in the meantime. Publication followed on 4 July.<sup>75</sup> The pamphlet<sup>76</sup> is interesting mainly as an indication of the depth to which ecclesiastical debate, even among those of the same denomination, could sink. True to his declared intention, Fleming repays Porteous and the other presbytery members in their own coin. The result is a diatribe which must have given much amusement, if little edification, to the public. But the issue was now as good as dead, for Ritchie was about to leave Glasgow.



The rancour which emerged in the Presbytery of Glasgow almost certainly did not arise entirely from the use of the organ. Examination of the *Fasti* shows that three of the main protagonists - Porteous, Ritchie and the younger William Taylor - were born within six miles of each other in a country district of Perthshire. A fourth, Principal Taylor, Ritchie's senior by four years, came from nearby and attended the school where Ritchie and the younger Taylor were classmates.<sup>77</sup> The two Taylors were the most outspoken critics of the presbytery ruling, and Porteous was, of course, Ritchie's leading opponent. These remarkable facts seem to have escaped the notice of all commentators on the organ case.

Like Ritchie, the two Taylors were career men. Porteous, twelve or thirteen years Ritchie's senior, had given thirty-seven years of service to the Wynd Church (St. George's) while Ritchie had been abroad and moving in moneyed and educated society. Porteous may well, very understandably, have resented the meteoric progress of the career of a well-connected younger man from his own birth-place. It is not unlikely that the ambitions and success of a man who had been only a dozen years in the ministry (and had already been Moderator of the General Assembly) aroused disapproval and envy among other members of the presbytery. Ritchie's presentation in 1808 to "one of the first charges of the kingdom", the High Kirk of Edinburgh, can only have exacerbated such feelings - it certainly gave rise to at least one sour comment.<sup>78</sup> Under these circumstances the presbytery was unlikely to view the case entirely on its merits.

Some writers have claimed that Ritchie misjudged the extent of the anti-organ sentiment and, being averse to controversy, withdrew when he saw the strength of the opposition.<sup>79</sup> This seems unlikely. It is clear from his letter of 21 August 1806 that he was then well aware of the anti-organ attitude of the civil authorities; and, as a member of the presbytery for nearly four years, he must have been in no doubt that he could expect no sanction from that quarter. A number of factors - the care which he took to ensure, by regular weekday use, that the organ

would give no offence to anyone in his congregation, the cautious first Sunday use calculated to minimise any possible externally-provoked disturbance, and his courteously firm dealings with his opponents - all suggest a well-planned strategy. Such a strategy would have to take into account the certainty of a presbytery ban. Seen in this light, Ritchie's immediate promise not to use the organ again "without the consent of the Church" is not a sign of weakness - it is a clear indication that he intended to appeal to a higher court.<sup>80</sup> He may even have had grounds for hoping that, at the General Assembly, not only would the subject be aired, but the appeal itself would be successful. Quite apart from the personal animosity of presbytery members, the Glasgow district appears to have been notoriously conservative at the time - even the Porteous committee said that Glasgow was not the place for such innovations,<sup>81</sup> and Chalmers is quoted as having remarked on the Ritchie case:

"There was an attempt some time ago to introduce an Organ into the Scottish Kirk. It was the most unwise of all enterprises to attempt it in the West".<sup>82</sup>

Add to these sentiments the fact that some time later an organ was installed in Bryce's church in Calcutta (nominally, at least, under the Presbytery of Edinburgh) without interference from presbytery or General Assembly,<sup>83</sup> and Ritchie's case appears less hopeless.

The matter was never put to the test. Dr. Finlayson of St. Giles, Edinburgh, died in January 1808, and in June Ritchie was presented to the charge. After an "elegant entertainment" given for him at the Black Bull Inn by the St. Andrew's congregation on 8 August,<sup>84</sup> Ritchie set off for Edinburgh. A cartoon displayed at the time in print shop and booksellers' windows depicted him on the journey, with a barrel-organ, playing "I'll gang nae mair tae yon toun".<sup>85</sup> The following May he became also Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. The St. Andrew's music committee, thus deprived of its pastor and friend, abandoned its efforts, and no organ was heard again in that church until 1866.<sup>86</sup>

There can be little doubt that the presbytery handled

the Ritchie affair very badly. They could easily have silenced the organ without involving themselves in undignified public squabbles the fame of which spread throughout Scotland and beyond. Yet this very publicity to some extent achieved the presbytery's wider object. It delayed for many years any further attempt to introduce an organ into an established church,<sup>87</sup> for it would take a very determined minister and a very determined congregation to risk a repetition of the events of 1807-8. Such a combination was not to be forthcoming until 1863 when conditions were very different.

In their references to the Glasgow case several authors have been guilty of confusion and error,<sup>88</sup> mainly on the surrounding circumstances and the organs involved. It is therefore worth giving a little attention to these aspects.

In 1801 the Glasgow Sacred Music Association started to hold its meetings in what was described as the "choir" of Glasgow Cathedral - a walled-off unused space including the crossing and the three most easterly bays of the nave. In 1803 it placed there its large organ from the Trades Hall.<sup>89</sup> The Association was short-lived, and about 1806 it sold the organ to a consortium of "sitters in St. Andrew's Church".<sup>90</sup> The petition to the council in September 1806 thus arose from the intended installation of this organ in St. Andrew's. The council's refusal to allow the removal of the seats, together with the events of the following two years, meant that the members of the consortium ended up owning something of a white elephant. In 1812 they sold it at a bargain price to their friends at the episcopal chapel.<sup>91</sup> In the hard "Moscow" winter of 1812-13, the episcopalians dismantled the organ, carted it down from the cathedral, and set it up in their chapel.<sup>92</sup> This organ, therefore, never was "actually standing in the Inner High Church itself"<sup>93</sup> - the Inner High Church was the part of the cathedral which architecturally would be called the choir. Nor was the organ "discarded by the cathedral as being Popish",<sup>94</sup> nor did it ever come to St. Andrew's Parish Church<sup>95</sup> - it remained in the cathedral throughout the period when it

was owned by the members of St. Andrew's.

The instrument which was used in St. Andrew's in the summer of 1807 was a small chamber organ. Twentieth-century writers who mention the Ritchie affair have got into the habit of saying that the organ was built by James Watt, the celebrated engineer and inventor,<sup>96</sup> and of identifying it as an organ now in the People's Palace museum at Glasgow Green.<sup>97</sup> The only authority for these claims is Peter Mackenzie's "Reminiscences", published in 1866.<sup>98</sup> Nobody before Mackenzie appears to have connected Watt's name with the St. Andrew's organ.

These modern writers seem to be unaware that Mackenzie's account has been very seriously challenged. In the year of his book's publication, Mackenzie wrote to the *Glasgow Herald* giving substantially the same story as in the book, but the very same correspondence column carried another letter suggesting that the St. Andrew's organ had been another instrument.<sup>99</sup> And in 1889 Mitchell<sup>100</sup> demolished Mackenzie's story without being challenged by anyone. Mitchell's catalogue of Mackenzie's factual errors is so extensive that it is surprising to find further errors that he has missed. Mackenzie was wrong as to the nature of the 1806 petition (he believed it to relate to the chamber organ)<sup>101</sup> and he implies that the presbytery was divided as to the admissibility of instrumental music.<sup>102</sup> He also used a story which had traditionally been told of Ralph Erskine,<sup>103</sup> applying it virtually unchanged to Ritchie instead.<sup>104</sup> The story revolved round Ritchie's passion for playing various string instruments; but Ritchie's 108-page biography, written by a friend,<sup>105</sup> never mentions that Ritchie had any interest or ability in music, apart from desiring an improvement in congregational singing.

In short, Mackenzie is a thoroughly unreliable witness. He was the first writer to link the Watt organ with St. Andrew's Church, and he did so sixty years after the event, giving no authority for his claim. If the St. Andrew's organ was indeed built by Watt, it is strange that the fact was not mentioned before 1866 by any Watt

biographer or by any writer on the Ritchie affair. Even McLellan, enormously proud of the instrument attributed to Watt and anxious to record its history in his memorandum of 1854,<sup>106</sup> makes no mention of its use at St. Andrew's; nor does Mackenzie himself in his effort to promote its sale in his own newspaper.<sup>107</sup> There appears therefore to be no acceptable evidence that the organ used in 1807 was that now in the People's Palace, or that it was built by Watt.

When the Congregational Church, Baltic Street, Montrose, acquired an organ from Dundee in 1865, the minister claimed that it was the organ used in St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in 1807.<sup>108</sup> This claim can be forgotten - contemporary accounts of the Glasgow case speak of a chamber organ, but the Montrose organ was described when originally installed at Dundee as "the largest church-organ in Scotland".<sup>109</sup>

The organ used at Glasgow in 1807 was almost certainly a chamber organ later owned by Robert Burns's friend and superior in the excise service, Alexander Findlater. Mitchell<sup>110</sup> gives the history of this instrument, but no authority for his statements. However, we find some confirmation in a newspaper notice of 1840<sup>111</sup> advertising the sale of "a large chamber finger-organ, in excellent condition, having six stops and a Swell".<sup>112</sup> The notice goes on: "This is believed to be the identical organ that was made for St. Andrew's Church in Glasgow". Findlater had died in December 1839 and his library had been advertised for sale<sup>113</sup> only a few weeks before the advertisement appeared. In 1840 there would be many people still alive who remembered the Ritchie affair, and probably the organ concerned was still extant; nobody, however, seems to have challenged the claim made in the advertisement.<sup>114</sup>

## REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Thomson 1905, p.13.
2. Strang 1864, p.289.
3. The episcopal chapel was often flooded in bad weather (Denholm 1804, p.172). When this happened, the congregation was allowed to use the parish church (Mitchell 1889). Dr. Gibb, Ritchie's successor, even agreed to the use of his church by the episcopalians for the celebration of holy communion on Christmas Day 1816 (Wade 1822, pp.264-5) - a remarkable occurrence in view of presbyterian attitudes of the time.
4. There are two suggestions, for which no authority can be found, that this organ was preceded in the episcopal chapel by a barrel-organ (Mitchell 1889, who expressed doubt about it, and Thomson 1905, p.26). Earlier writers do not mention such an instrument, and Gordon was sure that the 1775 organ was the first church organ in Glasgow since the Reformation. (Gordon 1863, i,p.562).
5. See Farmer 1947, pp.268 *et seq.*
6. Ritchie's Statement to the Presbytery (Porteous 1808, p.61).
7. Porteous 1808, p.97.
8. Nelson 1830.
9. The full texts of the letter and the petition are available in Porteous 1808 (pp.3-7) and in Thomson 1905 (pp.56-60).
10. The full text of the letter is available in Porteous 1808 (pp.8-14) and in Thomson 1905 (pp.61-6).
11. In seeking to justify the Lord Provost's later action, Candlish 1856 asserts twice (pp.22,23) that Reddie's letter advised the council themselves to bring the matter to the notice of the church courts. Reddie said no such thing.
12. Council minutes, *per* Porteous 1808, p.8. Strang 1864 (p.290) wrongly states that the petition lay on the table and that no official answer was given.
13. Ross 1972 (p.55) appears to believe that it did. He mentions the unsuccessful petition to the council (which he dates as 1807) and nothing more.
14. Porteous 1808, pp.x,187.
15. See Farmer 1947, pp.156-7.
16. Patrick 1949, p.69
17. *ibid*, pp.209-10.
18. Examples of these verses can be found in Patrick 1949, pp.164-178 and Gibson 1907, pp.190-5.
19. Patrick 1949, p.151.
20. Correspondence in *Scots Magazine*, April 1754. Sefton's statement (Sefton 1984, p.73) that there were objections to pitch-pipes at *choir practice* appears to arise from a mis-reading of Patrick 1949.
21. This was true even in the Free Church. A harmonium was apparently used at congregational practices at a Hamilton Free church as early as 1854 (Centenary Book 1934, p.42).
22. Farmer finds it "passing strange" that the presence of an organ "in the Inner High Kirk" in Glasgow Cathedral in 1807 was not pointed out to the presbytery (Farmer 1947, p.367). The organ was not, in

- fact, in the Inner High Kirk at all but in a walled-off part of the Cathedral which was not used for worship (Wade 1822, p.36).
23. Porteous 1808, p.x.
  24. Porteous and his allies, eager to defend the Lord Provost against any charge of having prejudged the issue, can only say that he took a much smaller part in the ensuing "spirited conversation" than many of his colleagues in office (Porteous 1808, p.216).
  25. The texts of both letters are available in Porteous 1808, pp.14-15.
  26. Not on 30 August, as claimed by Gordon 1863, i, p.574 and Strang 1864, p.291; nor on 6 September as reported by the *Caledonian Mercury* (19 Sept 1807) and the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* (22 Sept 1807).
  27. The organist is said to have been John Fergus, from the episcopal chapel (Mitchell, 1889; Thomson 1905, p.27) and the psalm-tune the Old Hundredth (Strang 1864, p.291).
  28. Ritchie's Statement, in Porteous 1808, p.86.
  29. e.g. "The pealing organ swelled the note of praise" (Candlish 1856, p.24).
  30. e.g. "A grand organ, recently erected in St. Andrew's Church..." (*Caledonian Mercury*, 19 Sept 1807).
  31. Thomson 1905, p.27
  32. Ritchie's Statement, in Porteous 1808, p.90.
  33. The first mention in an Edinburgh newspaper appears to have been on 19 September.
  34. The texts of these letters are available in Porteous 1808, pp 2,16-18.
  35. Ritchie's Statement, in Porteous 1808, p.89
  36. *ibid*, pp.90-1.
  37. Thomson 1905, pp.66-70, gives details of the correspondence and the council's resolutions, as recorded in the council minutes.
  38. Porteous 1808, p.18.
  39. Porteous 1808, p.212.
  40. *ibid*, p.xv.
  41. Thomson 1905, p.70.
  42. Porteous 1808, p.xiii.
  43. Letter from "An Octogenarian", *Glasgow Herald*, 18 Jan 1866.
  44. Porteous 1808, p.xi.
  45. Porteous 1808, pp.19-20; *Caledonian Mercury*, 10 Oct 1807.
  46. "Reasons of Dissent", in Porteous 1808, p.22.
  47. Porteous 1808, p.xii.
  48. "Answers to Reasons of Dissent", in Porteous 1808, p.28.
  49. Porteous 1808, p.20; *Caledonian Mercury*, 10 Oct 1807.
  50. *Scots Magazine*, Feb 1808.
  51. The full text is available in Porteous 1808, pp.21-24.
  52. This point was not taken up in the Answers; it was made again by Fleming (*infra*), and was to be used quite devastatingly by Robert Lee nearly sixty years later.
  53. The full text is available in Porteous 1808, pp.25-52.

54. The texts of these papers are available in Porteous 1808, pp.52-60.
55. "Statement of the grounds on which the Minister of St. Andrew's Church thinks himself vindicated....." in Porteous 1808, pp.61-94.
56. *ibid*, p.82.
57. *ibid*, p.92.
58. The Answers (Porteous 1808, pp.94-201) are over three times as long as Ritchie's statement.
59. Fleming 1808b, p.30.
60. Strang 1864 (p.292) gives an extended extract from this poem.
61. Fleming 1808b, p.72.
62. Scholes 1934 (p.249) confuses Begg with his more illustrious son and misdates this pamphlet by some seventy years. The error is understandable: Scholes hints that he has not actually seen the pamphlet, and Begg's son, also called James, was a prolific pamphleteer.
63. Begg 1808, p.4.
64. *Glasgow Courier*, 9 April 1808; *Glasgow Herald*, 11 April 1808.
65. Fleming 1808a.
66. Scott 1915, iii, p.159. Fleming had evidently been a friend of Ritchie during the latter's residence in Ayrshire and in Glasgow (Nelson 1830, p.vii)
67. Fleming 1808b, p.3.
68. Porteous 1808, p.202.
69. *Glasgow Herald*, 23 May 1808. The pamphlet itself shows some signs of hasty preparation - though the proof-reading has been immaculate, one item is accompanied by a note stating that it should have been inserted some pages earlier; and the authors, who in the preface wish to remain anonymous, change their minds in the conclusion. McCrie 1892, p.317, is wrong in claiming that "the conflict of manifestoes ceased on the 4th of May 1808".
70. No official answers to the papers of Taylor junior and Lockhart were lodged, but these papers are answered at length in the book (pp.205-210).
71. It is true that there is not a single word about the organ affair in the kirk session records (Thomson 1905, p.88), but there are obvious reasons for this state of affairs. The presbytery never succeeded in finding a single aggrieved member of St. Andrew's.
72. Where it was reviewed with some amusement by the *Monthly Review*, July 1809, pp.333-4.
73. National Union Catalogue (pre-1956 imprints), vol.109, p.240.
74. *Glasgow Herald*, 23 May 1808.
75. *ibid*, 4 July 1808.
76. Fleming 1808b.
77. Nelson 1830, p.11; cf. Scott 1915, iii, pp.441,458.
78. Porteous 1808, p.xix.
79. Boyd 1856, p.662; Mackenzie, P. 1866, p.588; Eyre-Todd 1934 p.416.
80. It is possible that the "deputations to Edinburgh" referred to by his opponents (Porteous 1808, p.212) were connected with this intention.
81. Porteous 1808, p.27.
82. Lamb 1856, p.2.



83. Anderson 1829, p.44; Dalyell 1849, p.136.
84. *Edinburgh Advertiser*, 12 Aug 1808.
85. Nelson 1830, p.68. Glasgow International Exhibition: The Book of the Bishop's Castle (Glasgow, 1888) - item 859.
86. *infra*, chapter 9.
87. This was, at least, Wade's opinion. (Wade 1822, p.265).
88. None more so than Lord Cockburn, whose account, written in 1845, is pure romantic fiction. (Cockburn 1874, ii, pp.138-9).
89. Denholm 1804, pp.156,351-2. The organ stop-list is given at p.351.
90. Gordon 1863, i, p.562; Mitchell 1889.
91. The correspondence of November 1812 relating to the sale of the organ is reproduced in Gordon 1863, i, p.563.
92. On the way they become storm-bound and had to leave parts of the organ for some days in nearby shops. (Letters in *Glasgow Herald*, 27/29 Jan 1866).
93. Farmer 1947, p.367.
94. Lochhead 1966, p.104.
95. *ibid*.
96. e.g. Thomson 1905, p.28; Stewart 1926, p.241; Fleming 1927, p.117; Maxwell 1955, p.167; Drummond 1975, p.187.
97. Thomson, Maxwell. Drummond implies that the authors have heard the organ concerned and is probably referring to the same instrument. This organ is described by Beechey 1969 (pp.177-8) and a photograph can be found in Thomson 1905 (p.25).
98. Mackenzie, P. 1866, pp.585-595.
99. *Glasgow Herald*, 25 Jan 1866.
100. Mitchell 1889.
101. Mackenzie, P. 1866, p.587.
102. Mackenzie, P. 1866, pp.589-90.
103. McCrie 1875, pp.472-3.
104. Mackenzie, P. 1866, pp.585-6.
105. Nelson 1830.
106. Reproduced in Mitchell 1889.
107. *Glasgow Gazette*, 9 Oct 1863.
108. *Montrose Standard*, 27 Oct 1865.
109. *Dundee Advertiser*, 25 Sept 1812.
110. Mitchell 1889.
111. *Glasgow Herald*, 10 Apr 1840.
112. Mitchell says that the organ had four stops, but two of them may have been divided.
113. *Glasgow Herald*, 21 Feb 1840.
114. It is unlikely, however, that such an organ was specially "made for" the church.

## 5. THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY

### 5.1. Organs in Scotland before 1829.

At the time of the Ritchie affair, the only church organs in Scotland were those in episcopal chapels.<sup>1</sup> Outside the churches, organs had been installed by some masonic lodges<sup>2</sup> and in some halls used by musical societies.<sup>3</sup> A few private individuals had organs in their residences.<sup>4</sup> In total, there were not many organs in Scotland.

Several episcopal chapels had installed organs in the eighteenth century, but most were too poor to do so. By 1808 there were, in the cities, five organs in Edinburgh and Leith chapels,<sup>5</sup> two in Aberdeen,<sup>6</sup> either one or two in Glasgow,<sup>7</sup> and one in Dundee.<sup>8</sup> Other episcopal chapels which had organs by that time were those in Banff, Peterhead, Montrose and Kelso.<sup>9</sup> These thirteen or fourteen instruments are the only church organs known to have been in use in Scotland by the time of the Glasgow case, though there may well have been a few more.<sup>10</sup>

When the next presbyterian organ dispute occurred in 1829 the picture had changed dramatically. The ban on music in catholic chapels had been removed. With increasing toleration and increasing prosperity, both catholics and episcopalians built new chapels and equipped these and existing chapels with organs. Catholic priests and people were enthusiastic about organs. Some priests regarded them as an aid in raising money for chapel funds.<sup>11</sup> Wealthy protestants were attracted by the music; they attended concerts of sacred music which were occasionally held in chapels<sup>12</sup> and they attended services, significantly increasing the collections.<sup>13</sup> The number of church organs in Scotland almost certainly more than doubled in a single decade (1811-1820). Records have been found of the introduction of organs during this period in episcopal chapels at Aberdeen (possibly slightly earlier), Dundee, Kirkcaldy, Arbroath, Keith, Dumfries and Edinburgh, and in catholic chapels at Aberdeen, Edin-

burgh, Banff, Paisley, Greenock, Glasgow, Auchindoun, Park and Fochabers. In the same period, some earlier organs in episcopal chapels were rebuilt (e.g. Peterhead) or replaced by larger ones (e.g. St. Andrew, Glasgow; St. George, Edinburgh).

Not only were there more organs - there were bigger ones. The organ "of great power, melody and external excellence" installed in St. Paul's, Dundee, in 1812 was said to have cost £260<sup>14</sup> and to be "the largest church organ in Scotland".<sup>15</sup> If it was, it did not hold the record long. The organ installed in St. Andrew's Episcopal Chapel, Glasgow, a few months later<sup>16</sup> was probably bigger, and in 1817 a "magnificent" organ costing £630 was installed in the equally magnificent new catholic chapel in Glasgow.<sup>17</sup> In Edinburgh's affluent New Town, two splendid new episcopal chapels in the fashionable gothic style were opened in the same year, 1818. One of these - St. Paul's, York Place - was built for the congregation of the Cowgate Chapel, who wanted to worship in a more convenient and fashionable area. Their Snetzler organ went with them, and they took the opportunity to extend it,<sup>18</sup> though it was already a much-praised instrument.<sup>19</sup> The other new chapel was St. John's, Princes Street, built to replace nearby Charlotte Chapel. The congregation here, however, left its organ in Charlotte Chapel<sup>20</sup> and purchased, from as far away as Exeter, a large second-hand instrument built by England. The price was £500, the carriage from Exeter cost £40, and, by the time it had been extended and erected in a case designed by the church architect, the organ had cost £808.<sup>21</sup> A third New Town chapel, St. George's, replaced its organ by a new one in 1814.<sup>22</sup>

The trend continued in the eighteen-twenties in episcopal and catholic chapels, but by 1829 these two denominations no longer accounted for all the church organs in Scotland. Unitarians, who had never objected to instrumental music in worship,<sup>23</sup> had installed organs in their chapels in Glasgow (1812)<sup>24</sup> and Edinburgh (1823).<sup>25</sup>

A great deal of of this organ-building activity was

taking place in Edinburgh. There, church music and large church organs were becoming fashionable, though not, of course, among presbyterians.<sup>26</sup> It is hardly surprising, then, that when a presbyterian congregation did revive the organ question, it was an Edinburgh congregation which did so. Nor is it surprising that the church involved was a Relief chapel, since, of all the presbyterian denominations, the Relief was the least conservative. (Other Scottish presbyterians were arguing about the admissibility of hymns well past the middle of the century, but the Relief Synod had approved a book of hymns as early as 1794<sup>27</sup>). Roxburgh Place Relief Chapel had a musical tradition - it had published its own collection of hymns in 1810,<sup>28</sup> and for a time its precentor had been John Wilson who later became a world-famous opera singer.<sup>29</sup> Surprisingly, the popular minister, John Johnston, had little interest in music, and in 1813<sup>30</sup> he vetoed a proposal by the congregation for the purchase of an organ. The same happened in 1821 and 1823, but in 1828 he capitulated.

He could scarcely have chosen a less opportune time to do so. The Catholic Emancipation Bill was being hotly debated, resulting in a polarisation of attitudes on Roman catholicism. In the view of some presbyterians, an organ was the first step on the road to Rome - the anti-papists might not be able to stop the enactment of national legislation, but they could at least stop this Romanising tendency in their own church. More directly relevant, however, were the dispute, centred on Manchester a few years earlier,<sup>31</sup> about the use of organs in congregational churches, and the schism in the Wesleyan Methodist Church which had just resulted from the Leeds Organ Case.

## 5.2. Methodists and the Leeds case.

John Wesley himself was ambivalent on the organ question. He spoke approvingly of several organs;<sup>32</sup> he even enthused about the playing of an organ voluntary during the administration of the sacrament at Macclesfield on Good Friday, 1786.<sup>33</sup> His conversion in 1738 was associat-

ed with his hearing an accompanied anthem in St. Paul's Cathedral.<sup>34</sup> However, he also spoke of "the unreasonable and unmeaning impertinence of a voluntary on the organ",<sup>35</sup> and in his old age he was annoyed by an organ accompanying a hymn at Louth.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps it was simply a question of whether the playing was to his taste - he told the organist on the above-mentioned occasion at Macclesfield: "Mr McLardie, if I could ensure a performance similar to yours this afternoon, I would have an organ introduced into every one of our chapels".<sup>37</sup> During Wesley's lifetime, most methodists were probably too poor to afford chapel organs;<sup>38</sup> three chapels, however, apparently did have organs then.<sup>39</sup> One was installed at Keighley around the seventeen-seventies,<sup>40</sup> and the chapels at Bath and Newark had organs at that time or probably later in the century.<sup>41</sup> Dalyell<sup>42</sup> refers to violence resulting from the use, actual or proposed, of an organ in the methodist chapel at Moorfields, London, in 1770.

Wesley's followers seem to have been as undecided as he was. In 1796 it was enacted that no organ should be installed in any chapel without the Conference's permission. In 1805 the Conference said:

"Let no instrument of music be introduced into the singers' seat, except a bass viol should the principal singer require it".

(This was part of an attempt to remove the more elaborate music which had been finding its way into chapels<sup>43</sup>). In 1808, Conference judged it

"expedient to refuse, after this present year, the sanction or consent to the erection of any organ in our chapels ... Where organs have been introduced, the conference requires that they shall be used so as not to over-power or supersede, but only to assist our congregational singing".<sup>44</sup>

This ruling does not appear to have been fully effective. At the Conference in 1811 an organ proposal from Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool, was approved,<sup>45</sup> and about 1815 an organ was installed at Burley.<sup>46</sup> Increasing demand for organs is shown by the relaxation in 1820:

"The Conference judges that in some of the larger Chapels, where some instrumental music may be deemed expedient in order to guide the congregational sing-

ing, organs may be allowed by special consent of the Conference, but every application shall first be made to the District Meeting and, if it obtain their sanction, shall then be referred to a Committee of the Conference".<sup>47</sup>

There had earlier been cases of discord arising from the installation of organs sanctioned by the Conference,<sup>48</sup> and the object of the 1820 legislation was to have each application initially investigated by those with knowledge of local circumstances. Thus by 1827 a methodist organ could hardly be regarded as an innovation; the use of instrumental music generally was even less so. Though there are references to the common use of bass viols and other instruments in methodist worship before then,<sup>49</sup> it is surprising to find one of the 1827 pamphleteers saying that instrumental music "has long been admitted in all the Leeds chapels ... in their long-established practice".<sup>50</sup>

What happened in 1827<sup>51</sup> was that the trustees of the large Brunswick Chapel in Leeds applied to the District Meeting for consent to erect an organ there. The District Meeting refused, but gave the trustees leave to appeal to the Conference, which then reversed the decision.<sup>52</sup> The opponents of the organ, and others, regarded the Conference's action as illegal in terms of the 1820 legislation, while the Conference's supporters claimed that a right of appeal to the Conference always existed. The dispute escalated. Some preachers resigned and others were suspended. The trouble spread to London, and the matter took up much of the time of the 1828 Conference. As a result, no fewer than a thousand members left the Wesleyan connection and became the nucleus of the Protestant Methodist Church.

The Leeds Organ Case was not really about organs at all, nor was the resulting secession. They were about the powers of the Conference, about the relative standing of ministers and laymen, about the revivalist movement within Methodism. Curwen<sup>53</sup> is quite misleading when he speaks of "the Protestant Methodists - protesting, that is, against organs". As a contemporary pamphleteer put it, the Leeds organ was, "in more senses than one, an in-

strument".<sup>54</sup> The same pamphleteer points out that the dissentient preachers had officiated happily for many years in a chapel (presumably Burley) where an organ was used.<sup>55</sup> The leading "anti-organ" pamphleteer, John Barr, (who published no fewer than five pamphlets in 1827) was a seat-holder in Brunswick Chapel, and had been a signatory of the original petition to the trustees, seeking permission for erection of the organ.<sup>56</sup> In the flood of pamphlets generated by the affair, the question of using instrumental music in worship is scarcely addressed, except in one pamphlet by Daniel Isaac. Isaac had been for many years a vigorous opponent of instrumental music in worship, and he took the opportunity to publish a 68-page statement of the standard arguments.<sup>57</sup> Significantly, though, Isaac did not join the so-called "anti-organ" seceders, while among these seceders themselves were those who favoured organs - the Protestant Methodists were soon using an organ in a chapel near Leeds.<sup>58</sup>

Opposition to organs, then, far from being the cause of the secession, was not even a matter of principle to the seceders. But it was all too easy for those outside methodism, and particularly those in whose denomination organs would be a real innovation, to interpret the Leeds affair in a simple-minded way - an organ placed in a methodist chapel had caused a split in the Methodist Church.

### 5.3. Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, 1829.

Having at last secured the agreement of their minister,<sup>59</sup> the Roxburgh Place elders visited the homes of members to record their votes for and against the organ.<sup>60</sup> The response was favourable and the plan went ahead. It was later claimed that members who opposed the organ quietly left the church when it was introduced,<sup>61</sup> but Anderson<sup>62</sup> says that the number of disjunction certificates issued during the nine months following the organ's installation was no more than the previous half-yearly average. There appears to be little doubt about the unanimity of the congregation.

The organ was installed in the church gallery and was first used on 18 January 1829.<sup>63</sup> No voluntaries were played, and (as at St. Andrew's, Glasgow) the organ simply sounded the keynote before each psalm and hymn then quietly accompanied the precentor and the people; all the tunes used were "old and venerated melodies". Apparently everyone present was pleased with the innovation.

But there were others, outside the congregation, who did not like it. As at Leeds (and, almost certainly, at Glasgow in 1807), existing animosities were fired, and the organ question became a new battleground for old enemies. At Edinburgh the animosity was of twenty years' standing. In 1797 and 1808, two groups had broken away from College Street Relief Chapel.<sup>64</sup> The first breakaway had been by members who set up St. James's Place Chapel for reasons of geographical convenience. Then, when James Smith was inducted as minister of College Street, a second group who had instead favoured John Johnston as their pastor, broke away, eventually forming Roxburgh Place Chapel. Some contemporary sources<sup>65</sup> state or imply that continuing hostility between College Street and Roxburgh Place, which arose from this event, was responsible for the trouble which followed the installation of the organ. On 4 February 1829 the College Street congregation held a meeting<sup>66</sup> at which they condemned the use of organs as being unauthorised and they resolved to memorialise the presbytery and the synod on the subject. They also resolved to send a copy of their resolutions to every other Relief congregation, urging that all had a duty to "make it publicly known that they were resolved to abide by the Scriptural Presbyterian forms of worship for the maintenance of which many of their forefathers shed their precious blood".

Roxburgh Place would probably have been taken to task in any event, but this was trouble-making in a big way. The matter could easily have been taken up by College Street's representatives in the presbytery. Even one of the fiercest organ opponents regarded the unconstitutional step of stirring up other congregations as worthy of censure.<sup>67</sup> The hue and cry raised by College Street was



taken up by several other Relief congregations including their friends at St. James's Place. There, "perhaps a thousand persons" attended a congregational meeting called "for the purpose of expressing its opinion with respect to the use of an organ in public worship at the Roxburgh Place Chapel". But, if the *Caledonian Mercury's* jocular report<sup>68</sup> is to be believed, this chaotic meeting was far from unanimous in condemning the organ users.

The public press had already shown considerable interest in the matter, and the College Street action fanned the flames. Correspondence appeared in the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, the *Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle*, the *Caledonian Mercury*, the *Glasgow Chronicle*, and no doubt in other newspapers. One letter<sup>69</sup> accused College Street of hypocrisy, drawing attention to that chapel's own "innovative" practices which would have horrified the forefathers they so revered - preaching gowns ("surplices"), singing of doxologies, standing to sing, occasional use of a band of hired singers and, worst of all since it might lead to errors in doctrine, the use of "new and unauthorised hymns". This was no more than a particularisation of a general argument used by pro-organ speakers and pamphleteers throughout the nineteenth century, and the various pamphlets which soon came off the presses were not slow to make the same point. "Let us", says one of them,<sup>70</sup> "be more careful in preparing our own accounts than in attempting to regulate those of others. If we were more busy at home, we should have less time to gad abroad". Of six pamphlets which were written before the Synod meeting in May, five were in support of freedom in the use of organs. James Beattie's 1778 treatise,<sup>71</sup> in which organs were claimed to be permissible in Presbyterian worship, was now published for the first time. A pamphlet by "Clericus"<sup>72</sup> combines standard pro-organ arguments with condemnation of the "private animosity" which prompted the attack on Roxburgh Place and a graphic description of the College Street psalmody with its "screeching, groaning, quivers, shakes and solos" and its "unholy band". "A Presbyterian",<sup>73</sup> who may have been John Johnston himself,<sup>74</sup> does much the same in fewer pages and

condemns the "envious malignity" of College Street. This pamphlet formed the basis of an editorial review of the organ question by the pro-organ *Caledonian Mercury*.<sup>75</sup> A selection of pro-organ letters and notices from the Edinburgh newspapers of early 1829<sup>76</sup> was published in pamphlet form. But the most tenacious supporter of the organ was William Anderson.

William Anderson<sup>77</sup> was becoming one of the outstanding clerical figures in Glasgow. His "eccentricity" and his "bizarre and extravagant" manner must have been too well known to require detailed description in contemporary records, so we can only wonder what precise form they took. At the age of 22, he challenged the might of the Relief Presbytery of Glasgow on the issue of sermon reading. In the fifty years of his ministry, John Street Chapel was transformed into a thriving church with 1130 members, day and evening school classes, and Sunday and mission schools with 74 teachers and over a thousand scholars. He published many widely-praised religious books and received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Glasgow in 1850. His concern with civil and religious liberty led to involvement in such causes as the abolition of slavery, the improvement of social conditions, and the extension of popular and unsectarian education. He lectured to crowded audiences in Glasgow City Hall on the errors of popery, but was also an advocate of catholic emancipation. He had a passion for vocal music and published a collection of tunes,<sup>78</sup> some of which were of his own composition. At the age of 28, he wrote the preface to Alexander Duncan's combined music text-book and tune collection,<sup>79</sup> in which Anderson advocated congregational rehearsal in part-singing, as practised in his own church.

His hatred of oppression and his love of music prompted Anderson to spring to the defence of the Roxburgh Place congregation, which he regarded as being persecuted for its desire to improve the music of its worship. His "Apology for the Organ"<sup>80</sup> was something of a classic among organ pamphlets and was republished during the U.P. organ controversy of 1856. Though triggered by

the Roxburgh Place affair, it addresses the general question and is primarily concerned with demolishing the common arguments against instrumental music, particularly the general objection to innovations and "the cry of No Popery". The pamphlet's references to Roxburgh Place and the Relief Church do not, Anderson emphasises, mean that it

"is intended either entirely, or scarcely even principally, for these. Its tenor will show that it has a more ambitious aim. I design an Organ in every Church in Scotland where there is money to purchase it. When they come to be erected, let care be taken that they be large and well toned, and worthy of the service to which they are dedicated".<sup>81</sup>

These final sentences of the pamphlet were sure to be unnecessarily provocative at a time when, in Anderson's own words,

"the majority of serious people is decidedly hostile to it [the Organ], among all the Presbyterian denominations in Scotland".<sup>82</sup>

Anderson's pamphlet was answered by "An Anti-Organist",<sup>83</sup> whom we know from the 1856 edition of the Reply to have been James Russel, the Relief minister of Old Kilpatrick. He was sad to see Anderson committed to the evil cause:

"When the church is looking up to her pastors for protection against the approaching evil, she is sickened and mortified by the opposition of one of the most promising of her sons".<sup>84</sup>

In 46 pages, Russel's Reply does little more than reiterate the scriptural arguments against the organ, attack innovation generally, and assert repeatedly that the use of an organ is inconsistent with pure and spiritual worship.

Most of these pamphlets appeared after the Edinburgh presbytery met on 7 April<sup>85</sup> to consider petitions from three of the four Edinburgh congregations (College Street, St. James's Place, and Brighton Street) and the congregations of Biggar and Musselburgh, all requesting the presbytery to forbid the use of the organ. Johnston failed to find a seconder for his motion that the petitions be dismissed because they had not come through the sessions; but surprisingly, after a struggle, he succeed-

ed in his plea that the ministers and elders of the petitioning congregations should not be allowed to sit as court members. Later claims that this should not have happened<sup>86</sup> (suppose that all the presbytery's congregations had sent petitions) were answered by the assertion that the Edinburgh ministers, at least, had made themselves parties "by their clandestine manoeuvre and partial counsel to the complainers".<sup>87</sup> This left about four ministers and four elders, including those from Roxburgh Place. The result was that the "purged" presbytery agreed that "the petitions lie on the table for three months, and that both parties be recommended to take the matter into further consideration with a view to a conciliatory adjustment". Naturally, an appeal to the Synod was entered against this decision.

A "conciliatory adjustment" was clearly an impossibility in the circumstances. What the Roxburgh Place representatives probably had in mind in supporting this decision was that it would enable them to continue using the organ until May 1830 at the earliest; for, if the presbytery were to ban the organ after three months (i.e. in July 1829), Roxburgh Place could appeal and the appeal would not be heard until the Synod's annual meeting the following May. If the use of the organ continued while the appeal was pending, the continuing prosperity and soundness of the church could be demonstrated, visitors from other Relief churches might be converted, the heat of the opposition would have cooled, and it would be more difficult to demand the removal of the organ after it had been in use for seventeen months. A similar strategy was successfully used by an English presbyterian congregation in the fifties, but in a rather different environment.<sup>88</sup>

On the day following the presbytery meeting, a presbytery member wrote "a card"<sup>89</sup> which forecast that the Synod in May would prohibit the use of the organ "and that, too, without being very ceremonious in point of form". The Synod would not, he said, restrict itself to the appeal against the three-month delay, but would

"take up the organ question on the broad ground, and either order the Presbytery of Edinburgh to cut off

Mr. Johnston and his congregation from communion, if they persevere, or, by a commission of the Synod, or perhaps an extra meeting of the Court itself, to prevent appeal, bring the case to a termination".

This prediction proved to have a sinister accuracy. Even with the mass of Relief Church opinion behind him, it was unwise of the writer to recommend that a church be cut off from communion "without being very ceremonious in point of form".

In fact, the Synod was quite justified in going beyond the appeal against the presbytery's three month delay. The College Street circular had done its work - the Synod received a large number of memorials condemning Roxburgh Place, including several from outside the Edinburgh area. Only one memorial in support of Roxburgh Place was presented, and it came from Anderson's church at John Street, Glasgow. At the Synod meeting<sup>90</sup> a determined attempt was made to reject this memorial on technical grounds, but it was in the end formally received. Not that it mattered. In the six hours of Synod discussion, only Anderson was wholly in sympathy with the Roxburgh Place congregation; in an emotive speech, he hinted that he might himself leave the Relief Church. He had difficulty in getting a seconder for his motion for non-interference until his own father somewhat reluctantly agreed to second it.<sup>91</sup> The self-indulgent motion of William Thomson is worth quoting in full, since it was to become the last decision by a supreme presbyterian court in Scotland which rejected the organ on scriptural and legal grounds. These are the words described by an apologist<sup>92</sup> as "dignified, temperate and firm":

"It being admitted, and incontrovertibly true, that the Rev. John Johnstone had introduced Instrumental Music into the public worship of God, in the Relief congregation, Roxburgh Place, which innovation the Synod are of opinion,<sup>93</sup> is unauthorized by the laws of the New Testament; - contrary to the universal practice of the church in the first and purest periods of her history; - contrary to the universal practice of the church of Scotland; - contrary to the consuetudinary laws of the Synod of Relief; - and highly inexpedient: - The Synod agree, to express their regret, that any individual member of that body, should have had the temerity to introduce such a dangerous innovation into the public worship of God in this country, which has a manifest tendency to of-

fend many serious Christians and congregations; and create a schism in the body, without having first submitted it to the consideration of his brethren, according to the usual form - On all which accounts the Synod agree, to enjoin the Rev. John Johnstone to give up this practice, *instanter*, with certification if he do not, the Edinburgh Presbytery shall hold a meeting on the second Tuesday of September, strike his name off the roll of the Presbytery, and declare him incapable of holding office as a Minister in the Relief denomination.

And further, to prevent the recurrence of this, or any *similar* practice, the Synod enjoin a copy of this sentence to be sent to every Minister in the Synod, to be laid before his Session, and read after public worship in his congregation for their satisfaction, and to deter others<sup>94</sup> from following divisive courses in all time coming".

An attempt was made to introduce a motion more moderate than Thomson's, but the Synod refused to hear it on the ground that it was made irregularly at the wrong stage of the proceedings. The refusal was later debated in print, as was the hypothetical question of how much support it would have had.<sup>95</sup> The motion would have been:

"It being true that the Rev. John Johnstone has introduced Instrumental Music into the public worship of God, in the Relief congregation of Roxburgh Place; the Synod, without expressing any opinion, as to its consistency or inconsistency with Scripture, consider the measure in [the] present circumstances to be highly inexpedient; having a tendency to offend many pious Christians and congregations, and to create schism in the Relief Church; and therefore enjoin the Rev. John Johnstone immediately to discontinue the use of the Organ in his congregation, and order the Edinburgh Presbytery to report on this subject at [the] next meeting of Synod, and summon Mr. Johnstone to be present to answer for his conduct".

Since the proposer was ruled out of order, the Synod was faced with a straight choice between Thomson's motion and Anderson's. Those members (the great majority) who felt that the organ must be immediately silenced had therefore no option but to vote for Thomson's motion, which defeated Anderson's by 48 votes to 4. As in 1807, there was virtually no support in the court for toleration of the organ. But fifteen members declined to vote. Eight of the fifteen said that they voted for "neither motion", both being too extreme, and were allowed to enter reasons of dissent; the other seven said "no vote" and were denied, on formal grounds, any right to join in the dissent. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a

party of extremists succeeded in using every means at their disposal to obtain the ruling they wanted. It has been claimed<sup>96</sup> that their wrath extended even to Johnston's former assistant, who had just gone overseas, an unsuccessful attempt being made to persuade the clerk of Edinburgh presbytery to refuse to grant credentials or an extract of ordination in the event of these being requested by a foreign church.

However objectionable the conduct of the Synod meeting may have been, it was as nothing compared with the failure of the Synod to summon Johnston and representatives of his church to attend the meeting. The Synod had received memorials against the conduct of Roxburgh Place, and had proceeded to debate the case, to pronounce its severest sentence on the minister, and to order a denunciation of him to be publicly proclaimed to nearly 40,000 worshippers. All this had been done in Johnston's absence and without even summoning him to answer any charge against him, and it ignored the procedure laid down in the Church's "Form of Process". Johnston, no doubt believing that the Synod would hesitate to condemn an absent man, deemed it advisable to stay away from the synod meeting. He claimed,<sup>97</sup> perhaps disingenuously, that he had believed that only the appeal from the presbytery would be considered; when he heard that the general question was being dealt with, he had rushed to Glasgow but had arrived after the decision had been reached.

Johnston reacted swiftly to the Synod ruling. Three days later, Roxburgh Place Chapel was crowded with members and strangers for the Sunday afternoon service.<sup>98</sup> After the service, Johnston delivered a speech in which he renounced all connection with the Relief Church. He made it clear that this had nothing to do with the merits or demerits of the organ; he was resigning because of the Synod's "flagrant departure from law and justice" and to "resist their arbitrary assumption of unconstitutional power". On Monday evening, the congregation held a meeting<sup>99</sup> at which they unanimously resolved to stand by Johnston and themselves withdraw from the Relief connection, the proceedings of the Synod having been "illegal,

arbitrary, and oppressive, and a direct and open violation of the fundamental laws and constitution of the Relief Church". Roxburgh Place Chapel thus became independent.

But, though the case was as good as closed, there were those in the Relief Church who were aggrieved at the treatment it had received and the effect it would have on the image of their denomination. Led by the moderator, Robert Brodie, those ministers who had been allowed to do so had lodged their reasons of dissent. Their main objections were: that a final judgement had been given without Johnston and his congregation being heard or even summoned; that they were not prepared to say that instrumental music was at variance with scripture or the spirituality of gospel worship; and that the Synod had wrongly suppressed a moderate motion which would have commanded wide support. More detailed were Anderson's reasons of dissent, which took the Synod's obligingly discursive ruling apart phrase by phrase and listed thirteen objections, including those raised by the other dissentients. He pointed out, as Johnston himself had done,<sup>100</sup> that Johnston alone had been condemned and had been ordered to cease using the organ, which it was not legally in his power to do. Johnston had never been a moving force in obtaining the organ and had indeed opposed the idea for many years. Conceivably, he personally might acquiesce with the Synod's judgement, but his congregation might decide to continue to use the instrument; in this case, the judgement would result in Johnston, not the congregation, being cut off from the Relief communion. Anderson published a second edition of his pamphlet, extended by appendices including "A Chapter of Organ History" in which he told for the public benefit the whole sorry tale from his viewpoint, not hesitating to attack Synod members by name and to apply such epithets as "selfishly interested", "placemen", and "bigots". He listed his own reasons of dissent and those of the others. His object, he said, was that he had no wish to bear a share of the public odium attached to the Synod's "unauthorized doctrine and violation of justice".



The Chapter was well received by the press,<sup>101</sup> and it had to be answered. An answer came in the form of a "Vindication"<sup>102</sup> by Alexander Harvey, a leading member of the Synod. He accused Anderson of deliberate lying and warned him "not to vilify his brethren till he be himself a little further beyond the reach of equitable recrimination" and that "an apology will be demanded of him at the bar of the Synod". He answered Anderson's reasons of dissent competently enough in a standard way where these reasons related to general questions of scriptural authority, law, and church standards. But his answers on the specific Roxburgh Place case were less satisfactory. He defended the condemnation of Johnston in his absence by pointing out that Johnston had simply to "discontinue his disorderly practice" - it might have been unjust had Johnston been struck off immediately. But, in any case, "though Mr. Johnston had been before the Synod, they could not consistently have allowed him to speak one word in the defence of the organ" - the fact itself was indefensible. The possibility of Johnston being held responsible for the sins of his congregation was "a very improbable suggestion", and all that Johnston would have to do in such an event would be to rely on the goodwill of the Synod! "If any error was committed, it was in allowing a single member to speak of the unlawfulness of the Organ as at all doubtful".<sup>103</sup>

This kind of thing was hardly likely to win the Synod any friends. The Vindication was roundly attacked by the *Caledonian Mercury* in a long review<sup>104</sup> which pointed out its inaccuracies and said:

"If this pamphlet is to be taken as a specimen either of the honesty or of the talent of its author and his abettors, it must be a great relief to any clergyman or congregation to be freed from all connection with such a set of drivellers - for it is not only silly to the last degree as regards argument and composition, but is actually a compound of impudent misstatements in matters of fact which are established by written documents".

A few days later, Anderson wrote a long and forceful letter to the *Glasgow Chronicle*<sup>105</sup> answering the Vindication's accusations of dishonesty and disputing many of its own assertions. The Vindication was also at-

tacked by an anonymous pamphlet which concluded:<sup>106</sup>

"The sentence of the Synod, and its Vindication, form in connection one of the most pious frauds, one of the most ludicrous impostures ever palmed on the public by a band of jesuitical hypocrites. With such persons it were idle to reason on the subject...."

After September the tumult subsided, but an isolated pamphlet<sup>107</sup> appeared in 1830. The author, "A Catholic Presbyterian" was probably William Marshall, a Relief minister in Fife. In the form of seven letters to the moderator, the pamphlet goes over much familiar ground, condemning the actions of College Street Chapel and the Synod, and making personal attacks on William Thomson. But it is remarkable for an unsectarian breadth of outlook which we usually associate with churchmen of a later age. There are passages which could equally well have come from Robert Lee:

"A man who is openly immoral is far more likely to escape the severest discipline of the church, or at least of some churches, than the man who differs from his neighbour respecting forms of worship".<sup>108</sup>

The pamphlet cites the recent lenient treatment of Craig of Dalkeith<sup>109</sup> and that of a Relief minister who "was allowed to stagger for years along the streets of a western metropolis".<sup>110</sup> It includes passages which contrast the insignificance of the organ question with the social problems of the day. The author speaks of the people he would exclude from the communion<sup>111</sup> - those who conclude unfair bargains,

"those who take advantage of the labouring man, by paying him less than the regular hire, whenever they find that he would otherwise be unemployed; or those who do not give for good purposes according as God has prospered them; or, though last, not least, those who open low public houses ... for the sale of the intoxicating and family-starving drug to the labouring poor".

These people are more deserving of "excommunication" than "the men who differ from me only on the subject of instrumental music in churches".

A number of people<sup>112</sup> had forecast that if Roxburgh Place Chapel was expelled, or withdrew, from the Relief connection it would be followed by other congregations. In the event, this did not happen. The chapel, after four

years of independence, secured the General Assembly's agreement<sup>113</sup> to its becoming a chapel of ease in connection with the Established Church. The use of the organ had, of course, to be abandoned, and the instrument went to St. Margaret's Convent, Edinburgh, where Dalyell heard it played some years later.<sup>114</sup> After some difficulty in verifying Johnston's educational qualifications,<sup>115</sup> the established presbytery of Edinburgh admitted him as a minister of the Church of Scotland in July 1833,<sup>116</sup> but within two months he was dead.<sup>117</sup> His ally, William Anderson, became one of the most respected ministers in the Relief Church and later the U.P. Church. He lived to see the triumph of the cause which he had so ably championed; but, before organs were sanctioned in Scottish presbyterian worship, he was stone deaf.<sup>118</sup>

#### 5.4. The aftermath of the Roxburgh Place case.

After all the publicity given to the Roxburgh Place affair, those presbyterians who would have liked to use an organ appear to have become resigned to failure. Subscriptions were raised for an organ at Falkirk Relief Church in 1830, but the project was abandoned.<sup>119</sup> When the Relief Synod had decided so forcefully against organs, what hope could there be for members of more conservative denominations? The subject dropped from sight and, in the years which led up to the Disruption of 1843, Scots presbyterians had more important matters to argue about than instrumental music. The Disruption saddened many on both sides and made them, and others, cautious about introducing contentious issues. Dalyell's attitude is probably typical:

"The wise and temperate may perhaps inquire, how there is a greater impiety in receiving the aid of an instrument for reclaiming the voice from discord in celebrating the Divine praise, than in profiting by the aid of mute notation for uttering the music, or definite characters for versification. Yet it is far more prudent to concede many points, even to popular prejudice, though somewhat absurd, than to wage warfare in their favour. Thus, on the whole, from duly appreciating the beneficial simplicity of the Presbyterian service in Scotland, it is to be seriously questioned whether any innovation would be either expedient or desirable ... Is it not a heinous sin, that men shall wage such a war of opinion against

each other, that the acrimony which it generates shall give birth to falsehood, calumny and insult?"<sup>120</sup>

It should be remembered too that, for financial reasons, an organ was out of the reach of many congregations.

General interest in organs was on the increase in the first half of the nineteenth century. Henry Liston (a clergyman in the organless Church of Scotland) was one of several who built experimental "enharmonic organs" early in the century,<sup>121</sup> and an automatic organ from the continent was demonstrated at Edinburgh in 1838.<sup>122</sup> More organs came into secular buildings, such as the William Hill instruments<sup>123</sup> in the new Concert Hall in Edinburgh (1843) and the Reid Music Hall in Edinburgh University (1861), and the Joseph Wishart organ in the Blind Asylum Hall, Aberdeen<sup>124</sup> (1844). The era of the "town hall organ" in Scotland was heralded by the installation in 1853 of a large Gray and Davison instrument in Glasgow City Hall.<sup>125</sup>

During this period, episcopalians and Roman Catholics continued to instal organs in their chapels where they could afford to do so, and a few organs were in use in Scotland by unitarians and the Catholic Apostolic Church. It is evident from the debates of the fifties that many Scots still regarded church organs as being inevitably associated with liturgy, bishops and Rome. Such was the prejudice against organs, said Dalrymple in 1849, that "it becomes more and more questionable whether the organ will ever form an auxiliary in the service of our National Establishment".<sup>126</sup>

But in the eighteen-fifties several congregations of the independent or congregational order, having no superior courts to stop them, installed organs in their chapels. For the first time, many Presbyterians saw in Scotland the use of instrumental music in a form of worship which was not in any significant way different from theirs, and in denominations even further removed from sacerdotalism than their own.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Though it is possible that there were organs in private popish chapels, Farmer 1947 (p.276) is probably wrong in suggesting that some Roman catholic chapels had organs in the eighteenth century - no specific instance has been cited - and Johnson 1979 (p.856) correct in claiming that only the episcopalians used them. The requirement of secrecy and the determined opposition of Bishop Hay both argue strongly against Romanist use of organs before the second decade of the nineteenth century. See Anson 1937 (pp.76-7), Johnson 1983 (ch.15) and Cleland 1832 (p.76).
2. e.g. St. David's Lodge (1744) and Lodge Kilwinning, Canongate (1757), both in Edinburgh, and the Glasgow lodge for which James Watt is said to have built an organ.
3. e.g. Aberdeen Music Society (1752); St. Cecilia's Hall, Edinburgh (1762/1775); Trades Hall, Glasgow (1797); Assembly Hall, Edinburgh (1803).
4. e.g. Monymusk (c1748); Glasgow - Professor Black and James Watt (c1760); Grant Castle (1766); Oyne (1778); Aberdeen - Dr. Beattie (1778); Altyre House, Forres (pre1799). Chamber organs were occasionally offered for sale in the newspapers.
5. Cowgate Chapel (1774); Baron Smith's (1785); St. George, York Place (1793 - Sayer 1974, p.64; Lindsay 1948 - certainly not 1782 as claimed by Gray 1940); Charlotte Chapel (organ 1751); St. James, Leith (organ 1775). See Stewart 1975.
6. St. Paul (1722/1780); St. Andrew (1796). See Lawrance 1927, p.6, and Morrisson 1981, p.5. It is just possible that the organ of Aberdeen's third episcopal chapel, St. John's, was already installed. Wright dates it as "around 1812", but it was certainly there in 1811 (Thom 1811, p.106).
7. There was one other episcopal congregation in Glasgow besides St. Andrew's. This non-juring congregation had no organ before they moved in 1800 to a hall in the Grammar School (Mitchell 1889), but they had a small organ there by 1822 (Wade 1822, p.154).
8. Johnson 1972, p.54. This was the qualified chapel. The other Dundee congregation had no organ until 1812 (*Dundee Advertiser*, 25 Sept 1812).
9. Johnson 1972, p.176; Wilkinson 1914, p.133; Johnson 1979, p.856; St. Andrew's 1970, pp.2-3.
10. I have seen unconfirmed statements that there were organs at Arbroath, Inverness and Musselburgh.
11. Johnson 1983, p.167.
12. *ibid.*; Marr 1889, p.lxvii.
13. Johnson 1983, p.167.
14. *Montrose Standard*, 27 Oct 1865.
15. *Dundee Advertiser*, 25 Sept 1812.
16. *supra*, ch.4.
17. A detailed description of the chapel by Wade 1822 (pp.240-6) includes an outline description of the organ. Until 1828 this was the only catholic chapel in Glasgow (Cleland 1832, pp.76-9).
18. Stewart 1975, p.15.
19. The original organ is singled out for special com-

- mentation by general writers on Edinburgh - Arnot 1779 (p.285), Kincaid 1787 (p.152) and Stark 1806 (p.305).
20. Some baptists were by now discarding their opposition to music; there was an organ in their church at Elim Court, London, probably in 1790 (Davies 1962, iv, p.54). But the baptists who bought Charlotte Chapel apparently never used the organ left by the episcopalians; their first use of an instrument was in 1879 (Whyte nd., p.28). The episcopalians' organ was removed in 1833 to the new episcopal chapel at Peebles (Terry 1911, p.33; Stewart 1975, p.22 - date misprinted).
  21. Langdon 1932, p.83.
  22. Stewart 1975.
  23. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the choir and organ of the Unitarians' Octagon Chapel in Norwich were reputed to rival those of Norwich Cathedral (Davies 1961, iii, p.49). It is probably no coincidence that Elim-Yard Meeting House in Chesterfield acquired an organ in 1821, soon after its worshippers changed their denomination from presbyterian to unitarian (Davies 1962, iv, p.63).
  24. Wade 1822, p.209.
  25. St. Mark's 1908, p.14.
  26. Speaking of the established church, Stark 1806 (p.368) says "The church-music in Edinburgh ... is in much the same state at present as it was nearly a century ago. The Scottish clergy do not encourage innovations, even though these should happen to be improvements".
  27. Maxwell 1955, p.169.
  28. Church of Scotland 1939, p.168.
  29. Baptie 1894 - entry for John Wilson; Fraser 1916, pp.73-81.
  30. Not 1818, as stated by Farmer 1947 (p.367).
  31. *infra*, ch. 6.
  32. Manchester (1751), Exeter (1762), Macclesfield (1782 and 1786). See Routley 1968, pp.10-13.
  33. Routley 1968, p.11.
  34. *ibid*, pp.26-7.
  35. *ibid*, p.12
  36. Davies 1961, iii, p.196.
  37. Galland 1827b, p.4.
  38. Curwen 1880, p.28
  39. Townsend 1909, i, p.515.
  40. Galland 1827b, p.3.
  41. *ibid*, p.4.
  42. Dalyell 1849, p.136.
  43. Goldhawk 1978, p.132.
  44. Curwen 1880, p.29.
  45. Everett 1851, p.239.
  46. Curwen 1888, p.59.
  47. Gregory 1899, pp.51-2.
  48. *ibid*, p.54.
  49. See, for example, Curwen 1888, pp.60-1.
  50. Galland 1827b, pp.14-15.
  51. A discursive and partisan treatment of the Leeds story is given by Gregory 1899 (pp.51-73). See also Townsend 1909, pp.425, 515-6 and Currie 1968, pp.59-63.

52. Curwen 1888 (p.58) wrongly states that the Conference did not sanction the organ.
53. Curwen 1880, p.29.
54. Keeling 1827b, p.8. See also Keeling 1827a, p.7.
55. *ibid.*, p.6.
56. Galland 1827a, p.6.
57. Isaac 1827. According to Isaac's biographer, this pamphlet was "answered, in an insignificant diatribe, by a person in Leeds" (Everett 1851, p.239).
58. Goldhawk 1978, p.134.
59. *supra*, sect. 5.1.
60. This procedure was regarded as preferable to calling a congregational meeting because on an earlier occasion, though a proposal to change the method of administering communion had been approved unanimously by a congregational meeting, a later visitation had shown that a substantial minority were opposed to the proposal, which was accordingly dropped. (Letter from William Anderson in *Glasgow Chronicle*, 4 Sept 1829). Harvey 1829 (pp.5-6) had claimed that the elders omitted to visit those members known to be opposed to the organ and that the organ plan would have been thwarted if a congregational meeting had been held.
61. Harvey 1829, p.6.
62. *Glasgow Chronicle*, 4 Sept 1829.
63. *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, 24 Jan 1829.
64. Small 1904, i, pp.448, 435.
65. e.g. *Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle*, 11 Feb 1829; *Clericus* 1829, p.21.
66. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, pp.3-4; *Clericus* 1829, p.3.
67. Harvey 1829, p.9.
68. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, pp.5-6.
69. *Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle*, 11 Feb 1829.
70. *Presbyterian* 1829, p.9.
71. Beattie 1778.
72. *Clericus* 1829.
73. *Presbyterian* 1829.
74. The British library copy of this pamphlet bears a pencilled note: "Supposed to be by the Rev. John Johnston"; the *Caledonian Mercury* review (reproduced in *Nugae Organicae* 1829, p.7) attributes it to "a clergyman equally esteemed for his personal qualities and for his eminent attainments both in science and literature".
75. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, pp.7-8.
76. *Nugae Organicae* 1829.
77. Gilfillan 1873, pp.45-6, 58-9, 253, appendix; McEwan 1872, pp.25-30; Small 1904, ii, pp.46-8.
78. Anderson 1841.
79. Duncan 1828.
80. Anderson 1829.
81. *ibid.*, p.47.
82. *ibid.*, p.46.
83. *Anti-Organist* 1829.
84. *ibid.*, p.3.
85. Anderson 1829, 2nd. edn., appendix; Harvey 1829, pp.10-11; *Caledonian Mercury*, 29 Aug 1829.
86. Harvey 1829, p.10.
87. Anderson's letter in *Glasgow Chronicle*, 4 Sept 1829.
88. *infra*, ch.7.
89. *Caledonian Mercury*, 29 Aug 1829.

90. *Courant* 16 May 1829; *Scotsman* 16 May 1829.
91. Harvey 1829, p.15.
92. *ibid.*
93. It was claimed by Marshall 1830 (p.10) that the words "unauthorized by the laws of the New Testament" replaced the originally minuted and more extreme words "contrary to Scripture".
94. The version given in the *Scotsman* 16 May 1829 is abbreviated.
95. Anderson 1829, appendix; Harvey 1829, p.19; *Glasgow Chronicle* 4 Sept 1829.
96. Marshall 1830, p.15.
97. *Scotsman*, 20 May 1829.
98. *ibid.*
99. *ibid.*
100. *ibid.*
101. Harvey 1829, p.42; *Glasgow Chronicle*, 4 Sept 1829.
102. Harvey 1829. Published anonymously as by "A Member of the Synod".
103. *ibid.*, p.13.
104. 29 Aug 1829.
105. 4 Sept 1829.
106. *New Stop* 1829, p.16.
107. Marshall 1830. The pamphlet is attributed to Marshall in the British Library catalogue, and the British Library copy is signed by him.
108. *ibid.*, p.6. Compare the passage from Lee's notebook in Drummond 1975, p.303.
109. Report 1828.
110. This is presumably a reference to Harvey's predecessor at Calton, James Turnbull, who was eventually suspended for "insobriety and improper demeanour", when, incidentally, William Anderson was involved, pressing home the charge "with much vehemence" (Small 1904, ii, pp.58-9).
111. Marshall 1830, pp.8-9.
112. e.g. *Clericus* 1829, pp.39-40; Anderson's speech at the 1829 Synod (*Scotsman* 16 May 1829).
113. *Scotsman* 27 Apr., 1 May, 11 May, 22 May, 8 June 1833.
114. Dalyell 1849, p.137.
115. *Scotsman* 22 May, 8 June, 29 June 1833.
116. *Scotsman* 13 July 1833.
117. Small 1904, i, p.452.
118. Gilfillan 1873, pp.63-5.
119. Wade 1926, pp.48-9.
120. Dalyell 1849, pp.137-8
121. *ibid.*, pp.138-9.
122. *ibid.*, p.146.
123. Hopkins 1877, pp.607-8.
124. Wright, nd., p.1.
125. Hopkins 1877, pp.604-5.
126. Dalyell 1849, p.135.



## 6. THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES.

### 6.1. The English Independents.

In 1850, though there were almost certainly no organs in Scottish independent churches, organs were no novelty in such churches elsewhere. The first organ in a congregational church in the U.S.A. was installed in 1785 at the Old Brick Meeting House in Boston, and it was followed by several in the Boston area before the end of the century.<sup>1</sup> The musical situation in English congregational churches at the beginning of the nineteenth century<sup>2</sup> resembled that in the Scottish Established Church - the praise was led by a clerk, who might make use of a pitch-pipe; the congregation sat to sing, and lining-out was common; singing was bad, and in some places choirs had been established. By 1825, as among the methodists and in Scotland, attention was being drawn to the increasing use of unworthy music.<sup>3</sup>

In 1819 William Cole, an Independent layman from Essex, published a 120-page book attacking the "indecorum" of contemporary psalmody and making recommendations for its improvement.<sup>4</sup> Congregations should be helped to sing, he said, by the formation of choirs and, where possible, the acquisition of organs.<sup>5</sup> He allocated thirty-five pages to arguing the expediency of, and scriptural justification for, the use of organs in worship,<sup>6</sup> as well as eight pages to the proper selection and playing of organ voluntaries.<sup>7</sup> It can reasonably be assumed from what Cole says that in 1819 organs were not used in dissenting chapels in the south-east;<sup>8</sup> but it may well be that some congregational chapels elsewhere had installed organs. This was certainly the case among the methodists, whose congregations had less freedom of action.<sup>9</sup> Like the methodists, congregationalists were to instal many organs in the industrial north before organs were accepted in the London area.

A congregational chapel could of course introduce instrumental music into its services without reference to

any church court or conference. Nevertheless, there were some individuals like Cole who felt so strongly on the matter that they saw it as their duty to publicise their views. An occasion for pamphleteering occurred at Manchester in 1823 with the resignation of a deacon following the installation of an organ in Mosley Chapel.<sup>10</sup> One of the pamphlets stated that there were organs in "comparatively small chapels" at Leek, Hanley, Wigan, Rochdale and Sheffield.<sup>11</sup>

By 1830 there cannot have been many organs in use, for an article published that year, recommending that an organ be placed in the hall of the theological college, said:

"Some persons may fear that this might be the means of introducing organs into Dissenting chapels generally; but there is an answer most solid and conclusive. Few dissenting congregations could bear the expense, without materially subtracting from the minister's income, which he is not likely to recommend".<sup>12</sup>

In 1848, however, a correspondent in the *Christian Witness* (the official organ of the Congregational Union) could lament:

"All our churches in the West Riding, both town and country, nearly, wherever they could muster, both amongst Wesleyans and Dissenters, have organs, except the York, which we can perhaps scarcely claim... I rejoice to believe the churches in the south, and in London, have few or any organs." [sic]<sup>13</sup>

In concurring with the sentiments of this letter, the staunch anti-music editor John Campbell confirmed the statement about London, pointing out that the churches there were strong, healthy and active, with "as much godly simplicity as is anywhere to be found"; the money spent on an organ would be better employed in supporting a town or country missionary.

A few months earlier too<sup>14</sup> Campbell had referred to the cost of instruments, saying that the cost of the organ at Cleckheaton would have "more than sufficed, five times over, to procure a course of instruction in the science of Sacred Music for the entire assembly"; then no organs - or choirs - would be needed. The main theme of the article was an objection to weekday sacred music con-

certs given in aid of "organ funds" or on the occasion of "organ openings", particularly prevalent in the West Riding. Campbell objected more to choirs (especially when members were paid for their services) than to organs. The latter were "poor and impotent contrivances; but are infinitely to be preferred to choirs, composed of frivolous youth, despisers of the gospel, and matured enemies of the living God". Campbell and others like him were powerless to prevent the combination of choir and organ eventually becoming commonplace in congregational churches throughout the country.

Many independents in England believed, as did Campbell and for a time many Scots, that the way to improve the service of praise was by teaching whole congregations to sing. The outstanding contribution to this exercise was the work done by J.J.Waite. His lectures and classes were commended and supported by two prominent independent ministers, Thomas Binney of London and John Burder of Stroud and, later, Bristol. Binney<sup>15</sup> denied that there was anything in principle wrong with using an organ, even for voluntaries; and in fact he came to Glasgow in 1865 to preach at the first service in which the large organ at Trinity Congregational Church was used.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, at least in 1848, he advocated the use of exclusively vocal praise. In common with many writers of the period, he attacked the quality of much of the music then in use, which he attributed to the vulgarity of the singers.<sup>17</sup> Like Binney, Burder<sup>18</sup> did not regard the use of organs as unscriptural. In 1842 he acknowledged "the grand and imposing effect" of "a good organ well played" ("two conditions, however, the union of which constitutes the exception rather than the rule") but could not agree that this had any relevance to religious devotion; he echoed Campbell's criticisms of concerts of sacred music. By 1860, it was becoming clear that, despite continuing efforts at congregational education, choirs, organs, concerts and recitals were increasing in number. In that year Burder,<sup>19</sup> writing as an old man, was less compromising, and he roundly condemned the things he saw happening in English chapel music, contrasting them with the

"staunchness" of the churches in Scotland. He estimated that, of the 4000 or so independent and baptist chapels in England, about 1000 had organs.<sup>20</sup>

## 6.2. The Scottish Independents.

Returning to Scotland, we find Farmer<sup>21</sup> saying:

"The next onslaught by the organ enthusiasts [after Roxburgh Place] came from a body of Independents at North College Street Church in Edinburgh, where the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Alexander (1808-84), an eminent Scottish divine of the Congregational persuasion, was minister. Since the congregation itself was its own ruler, there was no dissent when, in 1845, an organ was erected in this church. This meant that, in addition to the Episcopalians and the Roman Catholics, the Congregationalists were now using the organ. Little impressed by this, the Presbyterians maintained their attitude of forbiddance...".

The source of these statements, which are echoed by Ross,<sup>22</sup> can be traced via J.R. Fleming<sup>23</sup> to Lord Cockburn's Journal.<sup>24</sup> We find there that Cockburn was doing no more than repeating dinner-table gossip to the effect that an organ was to be set up in the church. Had an organ actually been installed at that time, Dalzell, who knew his Edinburgh and his organs, would certainly have mentioned it.

In fact there never was an organ in North College Street Church. It was not until 1863, after they had moved to the new Augustine Church on George IV Bridge, that Alexander's congregation installed their first organ.<sup>25</sup> Farmer's statement that "there was no dissent" is scarcely true - Alexander had cherished the plan of buying an organ for "nearly twenty years", but he had respected the opposition of members of his flock.<sup>26</sup> In 1845, Cockburn's dinner party had presumably been discussing Alexander's early consultations with his congregation.

The first use of an instrument by a Scottish independent congregation was probably by Morison's own E.U. congregation while it was worshipping in the Assembly Room, Ingram Street, Glasgow, in 1851.<sup>27</sup> This seems to have attracted no attention, even though it came soon after the U.P. presbytery's objection to an organ at

Shamrock Street.<sup>28</sup> Though organs were no less an innovation among Scottish independents than among presbyterians, their introduction into independent churches went on with very little public notice. There were no church courts, and each congregation was able to decide for itself. Thus, when a new chapel was opened in Bath Street, Glasgow, in 1852, the fact that it had a "magnificent" organ was reported in the press briefly and without comment.<sup>29</sup> And when Morison's congregation moved into its new premises in North Dundas Street in 1853, apparently taking its organ with it,<sup>30</sup> the organ was not even mentioned in press descriptions of the opening.<sup>31</sup>

Within the congregations themselves, however, some of the early instruments gave rise to much discussion and disagreement. After the introduction of a small organ at Leith E.U. Church<sup>32</sup> in 1854, there were frequent proposals, always defeated, for its removal. In 1860 a motion to remove the organ was carried at a church meeting, but the proceedings were annulled on account of the "irregularity" of the meeting. The opposition seems to have waned by 1867, when the congregation built a new chapel and raised £225 to buy a larger organ for it. When a congregation in Glasgow was building a new chapel in Elgin Place in 1856, a proposal to equip it with an organ was withdrawn "on account of the strong measure of dissent elicited"; even nine years later, when the proposal was again made, "considerable feeling emerged" at two church meetings called to discuss it, but the proposal was finally agreed to with 35 dissentients.<sup>33</sup> In 1856, Brighton Street E.U. Church, Edinburgh, cautiously obtained a small organ on a temporary basis; despite some criticism, especially when the organist and the precentor could not agree on the tune to be sung, the organ was retained and purchased.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, "the most entire harmony and cordiality prevailed" at Dunfermline Congregational Church, where the congregation had apparently been keen to have an organ for some years before being given one by a deacon in 1859,<sup>35</sup> but even there a minority regarded the organ as "unnecessary and unwarranted by the Word of God".<sup>36</sup>

Absence of publicity, in the cities at least, makes it difficult to determine the rate of introduction of instruments into the independent churches. In addition to those already mentioned, the fifties saw also the installation of an organ at St. Paul Street, Aberdeen in 1855,<sup>37</sup> and in 1858 there was a reference to "the harmonium and choir of the chapel" at Albion Street Mission in the same city.<sup>38</sup> In 1857 Princes Street Chapel, Dundee, was rebuilt with an "organ gallery", and a harmonium may have been in use.<sup>39</sup> Some time before 1865, Greenock E.U. Chapel had a harmonium<sup>40</sup> and Huntly Congregational Church an organ.<sup>41</sup> An organ was installed at Greenock Congregational Church in 1861.<sup>42</sup> In the same year the congregationalists at Helensburgh listened to a talk on the advantages of instrumental music in worship,<sup>43</sup> but they did not buy an organ until six years later.<sup>44</sup> In 1862 a new Glasgow congregation used an organ from its very first Sunday service in the Queen's Rooms<sup>45</sup> and in 1865 it had a large organ placed in its new chapel (Trinity).<sup>46</sup> Hymns were accompanied by the Glasgow City Hall organ at the first annual meeting of the Glasgow Congregational Union in 1863.<sup>47</sup>

The Evangelical Union stood aloof from public debate of the organ question and evidently regarded the matter as being of little importance, its churches quietly installing instruments when the time was ripe. The congregationalists had much the same attitude, but they allowed themselves to be drawn into some public discussion when the question was raised among presbyterians. In April 1856 the *Scottish Congregational Magazine* reviewed Candlish's anti-organ pamphlet,<sup>48</sup> saying<sup>49</sup>

"we shall not regret if our Scottish churches continue as hitherto (virtually at least) to protest against the instrumental music of the Romish church, as well as against her false doctrine, and her idolatrous and wicked practices"

and a letter in the December issue had a passing swipe at organs;<sup>50</sup> but never after this date do we find a congregationalist objecting to organs on the ground of their association with Rome.

Between 1863 and 1866 a flood of newspaper editorials

and correspondence, pamphlets and articles accompanied the appearance of instrumental music in the Church of Scotland and proposals for its use in the U.P. Church. The prominence given to the organ question at this time resulted in the first public airing of the views of congregationalists. In the presbyterian debate, extremists were claiming that instrumental music in worship was inconsistent with scripture and would lead to Rome; some response was deemed necessary to allay any doubts among members of congregational churches which already had organs. When the organ was opened in Augustine Congregational Church, Edinburgh, in 1863,<sup>51</sup> the minister, Lindsay Alexander, justified the use of organs in a speech which was widely and fully reported.<sup>52</sup> Henry Batchelor, minister of Elgin Place, Glasgow, where an organ had just been installed, felt called upon to justify organs again in a pamphlet in 1866,<sup>53</sup> and James Begg's major anti-organ pamphlet of the same year was unequivocally criticised in the *Scottish Congregational Magazine*.<sup>54</sup> When congregationalists publicly objected to the use of organs - and very few of them did by the mid-sixties - they never did so on grounds of principle. They argued rather that organs failed to achieve their primary objective of improving congregational singing,<sup>55</sup> and that aesthetic considerations were becoming too prominent in the conduct of worship.<sup>56</sup>

The first of these objections was reinforced by John Curwen's review of music in London churches, published in a Congregational magazine<sup>57</sup> - he found no correlation between the quality of congregational singing and the presence of an organ. The second objection reflected a concern lest churches should congratulate themselves on their fine music and their organs and lose sight of more important things. Certainly there is much evidence that an organ was regarded as a symbol of prosperity, and not only in the cities. In Shetland in 1865, the minister officiating at the opening of a new congregational church expressed a hope that the congregation would so prosper that it would be able to buy an organ.<sup>58</sup>

In 1871 and 1872 the organ question again came to

prominence in the U.P. Church, and the organ movement in the Irish Presbyterian Church was gathering momentum and attracting publicity. Congregationalists throughout Britain once more debated the question. From 1871 to 1873, the *Congregational Miscellany* and the *Congregational Advance* carried many letters and articles on church music, particularly congregational singing, and how it could be improved. It was entirely in this context that the organ question was discussed; no appeal was made to scriptural principles. Attacks on organs came on grounds that their aid discouraged people from learning to sing properly (J.S. Curwen,<sup>59</sup> with an obvious professional interest), that they were sited too prominently in churches, and that organists usually played unsuitable voluntaries and accompanied badly. Clergymen as well as musicians took part in the debate, Joseph Vickery of Aberdeen being an almost fanatical organ enthusiast.<sup>60</sup>

While events in the presbyterian churches stimulated debate among congregationalists, they also seem to have triggered an increase in the number of congregational and E.U. churches adopting instrumental music. The independents had shown the way, and perhaps the less bold among them took courage from seeing the presbyterians follow; they must also have been influenced by the public support given to the cause by Alexander, the leading Scottish congregational minister of his day, and by Batchelor during his term as chairman of the Scottish Congregational Union. Certainly, after the installation of the organ at Alexander's church in 1863,<sup>61</sup> the next four years saw at least ten churches adopting instrumental music for the first time and another three replacing their existing instruments by better ones; this compares with only nine churches definitely known to have adopted instrumental music, and three or four others which probably did so, in the twelve years preceding 1863.

Forty-five congregational and E.U. churches are known to have been using instruments by the end of the seventies, but the actual number is likely to have been greater, since many of these forty-five come to our notice as a result of incidental mentions. Little enough



notice had been taken of organs in independent churches even in the fifties; by the seventies, organ-builders' records occasionally contained details of instruments which were not even mentioned in the local newspapers. If some new organs in independent churches went unnoticed, we can expect to know about only a small minority of the harmoniums which came into use. But even the churches definitely known to have had instruments by 1879 represent a proportion of the total number of congregational and E.U. churches in Scotland which is much higher than the corresponding proportions for the established and U.P. churches at that time.

After the first half-dozen organs installed in independent churches, instrumental music was by no means confined to the large cities. By the mid-seventies, instruments were in use in independent churches in all areas of the country from Kirkwall in Orkney to Garliestown in Wigtownshire. (The independents were virtually unrepresented in the conservative highlands and western isles). In only a few cases are details available of how congregations reached the decision to have an instrument, but these cases seem to indicate that they differed little from presbyterian congregations in the procedures used or, where a vote was taken, in the size of the majority in favour of the change. By the mid-sixties opposition minorities were small.

The sequence of introduction of instrumental music into the churches of a number of Scottish towns (though by no means all of them) was the same as that in the large cities. By the fifties most episcopal chapels had instruments and, if there was a catholic chapel in a town, it too probably had one. Then followed the E.U. and/or the congregational chapel and, later, the presbyterian churches. The independents therefore, along with a few methodist and baptist chapels, played an important part in the organ movement by undermining the credibility of those presbyterians who ranked organs with incense and the priesthood as being exclusively associated with episcopacy and popery.

That the independents had such a role was largely a result of their system of church government. By the time the independents started to use instruments, several presbyterian congregations had already tried to do so but had been thwarted by the church courts. It is doubtful whether in the fifties the wish for organs was more general among independents than among presbyterians. Nevertheless, the independents maintained their lead - not in absolute numbers, but proportionally - after the Church of Scotland permitted the use of instruments. This was probably due in part to the facts that no Scottish independent minister of any note opposed the use of organs (indeed, leading congregational ministers were organ enthusiasts), and that organs were widely used in English independent churches. Presbyterian waverers, by contrast, must have been influenced by the attitude of Begg and his followers and by the continuing prohibition in the Free Church as well as the presbyterian churches of Ireland and (until 1870) England.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. These organs are enumerated in an anonymous article in *The New England Magazine*, vol. IX (1835), pp.123-8.
2. Use of a precentor and absence of instrumental accompaniment are said by Cole 1819 (p.5) to be the method of praise "adopted by almost all the dissenting congregations in London, and by many, both of dissenters and of the establishment, in the country". See also Jones 1962, pp.223-4.
3. *Congregational Magazine* 1825, p.684.
4. Cole 1819.
5. *ibid.*, p.6.
6. *ibid.*, pp.8-42.
7. *ibid.*, pp.44-51.
8. *ibid.*, p.5; this is confirmed by the apparent absence of instruments there later in the century (*infra*).
9. *supra*, ch.5.
10. Davies 1962, iv, p.86. A pro-organ pamphlet came from J. Bedford (Bedford 1823) and two anti-organ pamphlets from the Rev. John Adamson, minister of Charlesworth (Adamson 1823a, 1823b).
11. Adamson 1823b, p.29.
12. *Congregational Magazine* 1830, quoted by Curwen 1888,

13. *Christian Witness*, vol V (1848), p.428.
14. *ibid.*, pp.338-340.
15. Binney 1848, pp.43-4.
16. *North British Mail*, 27 Apr 1865.
17. Binney 1848, p.44.
18. Burder 1842.
19. Burder 1860.
20. Burder 1860, p.59.
21. Farmer 1947, p.368.
22. Ross 1972, p.55.
23. Fleming 1927, p.117. This book is quite evidently a source for other material in Farmer's book.
24. Cockburn 1874, ii, p.138 (written in 1845).
25. Alexander's own account can be found in *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Dec 1863, pp.385-8. See also Ross 1887, pp.193-7; Murray 1911, p.28.
26. Ross 1887, p.193; *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, *ut supra*.
27. Escott 1960, p.159.
28. *infra*, ch.8.
29. *Glasgow Chronicle*, 31 Mar 1852.
30. Notes on Scottish organs, by Col. G.I. Burgess Winn, in Organ Club library, Royal College of Organists, London.
31. e.g. *Glasgow Chronicle*, 9 Feb 1853; *Christian News*, 12 Feb 1853.
32. The organ history of this church is very fully documented by Laurie 1871.
33. Clark 1904, pp.112, 222.
34. Brighton Street 1894, pp.36-7.
35. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Feb. 1863, p.64; *Dunfermline Press*, 1 Dec 1859.
36. Canmore Street 1940, p.8.
37. Wright nd, p.1.
38. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Feb 1858, p.62.
39. *ibid.*, Jan 1858, p.31.
40. *Greenock Advertiser*, 13 June 1865.
41. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Feb 1865, p.62. The organ is mentioned also in the *Huntly Express*, 13 July 1867.
42. *Greenock Advertiser*, 19/29/31 Oct 1861; Centenary Committee 1906, pp.52-4.
43. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Feb 1861, p.64.
44. *Dumbarton Herald*, 25 Apr 1867.
45. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, July 1862, pp.246-8.
46. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 27 Apr 1865; *Choir*, June 1865, p.446.
47. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Feb 1864, p.61.
48. Candlish 1856.
49. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Apr 1856, p.120.
50. *ibid.*, Dec 1856, p.381.
51. Ross 1887, pp.193-7.
52. The full speech appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* and in *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Dec 1863, pp.385-8.
53. Batchelor 1866.
54. K 1866.
55. Nemo 1864.
56. Melankome 1866.
57. Curwen 1866.
58. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Apr 1865, p.122.
59. Curwen 1872.
60. Vickery 1873. In 1876 Vickery's church (Blackfriars,

Aberdeen) installed its third successive instrument, an organ by Forster and Andrews. This replaced an earlier organ, which in turn had replaced a harmonium. (*Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 1 Nov 1876).

61. It is perhaps more than coincidence that only a few months separated the installation of the instrument at Robert Lee's Old Greyfriars - the first in the Established Church - from that at Alexander's Augustine Church. The churches of these two prominent clergymen stood literally across the street from each other.

## 7. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN ENGLAND AND THE FREE CHURCH

### 7.1. The Presbyterian Church in England.

The first two presbyterian congregations in Britain to use organs regularly and legally in public worship were in the Presbyterian Church in England.<sup>1</sup> These English instruments and the debate which they occasioned had a considerable impact on Scottish presbyterians, partly because the organ question was being debated at the same time in the U.P. Church, and partly because of the special relationship which existed between the Presbyterian Church in England and the Free Church of Scotland.

In the eighteen-fifties there were in England three groups of presbyterians.<sup>2</sup> First, there was the Presbyterian Church in England, which until 1843 had been associated with the Church of Scotland, but which at the Disruption had allied itself with the Free Church. A second group, consisting initially of only 18 congregations, had retained its connection with the established Church of Scotland. The third group consisted of United Presbyterian congregations in England.

In relation to the organ question, the story of the third of these groups is an integral part of the general story of the U.P. Church.<sup>3</sup> Within the second group, instrumental music was not a problem; when it became clear that organs were being tolerated in the Established Church in Scotland, the English congregations felt free to introduce them, and no cases appear to have come before the church courts. The first of these congregations to use an organ was St. Andrew's, Rodney Street, Liverpool, where A.K.H. Boyd preached on the occasion of its first use in 1866.<sup>4</sup> We are concerned here only with the first of the above groups, the Presbyterian Church in England.

The organ entered this Church in an unusual way.<sup>5</sup> St. John's Church, Warrington, was one of the Lady Huntingdon Chapels. By 1853 its membership had dwindled and the

chapel building was offered for sale. It was bought by a benefactor for the presbyterians, and the remaining members of the Huntingdon Connexion became the nucleus of the presbyterian congregation. With the agreement of the newly ordained minister, they continued as formerly to use the organ in their worship. As the congregation increased, nobody saw fit to object to the organ.

The Warrington organ did not go unnoticed by the congregation of St. George's Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, where the psalmody was poor and there had been trouble with precentors.<sup>6</sup> Members of this congregation decided that they might solve their musical problems by following the Warrington example. Accordingly 214 "heads of families and others" presented a memorial to the church session, which resolved in May 1855 to instal an organ. But the session was not unanimous, and an elder who opposed the innovation complained to the Presbytery of Lancashire. In July the Presbytery considered and dismissed his complaint, leaving it to the session of St. George's to act as they deemed expedient.

In the light of what had happened in Scotland in 1808 and 1829, this was a remarkable outcome. In 1808, not a single member of Glasgow presbytery had openly approved of Ritchie's action; in 1829 an overwhelming majority in the Relief Synod had condemned Johnston. Yet in Lancashire in 1855 the presbytery had not only tolerated the use of the Warrington organ for two years; when the issue was brought before them they decided, all but unanimously, that the session at Liverpool was within its rights. The only dissentient among the eleven presbytery members present failed to find a seconder for his counter-motion.<sup>7</sup>

This presbytery member, Dr. A. Munro, together with the aggrieved elder, dissented and protested for leave to complain to the Synod.<sup>8</sup> The Synod, however, would not meet until the following April, and meanwhile the Liverpool session went ahead. In August and September the church was closed for a period to enable the necessary alterations to be made, and the congregation worshipped,

with organ accompaniment, in the Mechanics' Institute.<sup>9</sup>

On hearing of this, Munro moved at the September presbytery meeting that an admonition be sent to St. George's asking that the use of instrumental music be abandoned until the Synod had considered the matter; his motion was carried by 8 votes to 6, against a counter-motion "that the presbytery deem it inexpedient to interfere".<sup>10</sup> Alexander Cromar, the minister of St. George's, lodged a complaint to the Synod, and his session ignored the admonition. From October on, the congregation, back in its normal place of worship, was using the new organ every Sunday.<sup>11</sup>

News of what was going on appeared in the August number of the *English Presbyterian Messenger* and, from September 1855 to April 1856, nearly every issue of the *Messenger* devoted several pages to heated correspondence. Pamphlets appeared and the session of St. George's published a 23-page statement of the facts.<sup>12</sup> As usual with cases before the church courts, the fact that the matter was *sub judice* was an incentive to public debate rather than a deterrent.

The opponents of instrumental music included the influential ministers of two of the wealthiest presbyterian congregations - Dr. Alexander Munro, of Grosvenor Square Church, Manchester (whom we have already met), and Dr. James Hamilton, of Regent Square Church, London. The latter was responsible for initiating an overture to the Synod, adopted unanimously by the Presbytery of London in January 1856, calling for a prohibition of instrumental music.<sup>13</sup> As in the case of the independents,<sup>14</sup> a difference is evident between the attitude in London and that in the north-west: a proposal in the Presbytery of Lancashire in November 1855 for a similar overture had been defeated by 15 votes to 4.<sup>15</sup>

On an April evening in 1856, a large, "excited" audience gathered for the Synod's debate on Hamilton's overture.<sup>16</sup> Hamilton's motion defeated a counter-motion (that an *ad hoc* committee be set up to report to the Synod in

1857) by 58 votes to 32, after an "animated" debate which continued until one o'clock in the morning, when the decision was greeted "with loud cheers and hisses". The next day, reasons of dissent were given in; these were later answered for the synod by Munro and Hamilton. Then the specific complaints regarding the Liverpool case were considered; in the light of the previous night's decision, Munro and Lang (the aggrieved elder) withdrew their appeals, and Cromar withdrew his complaint against the presbytery's admonition. The use of instrumental music was thus banned in the Presbyterian Church in England.

Or so it seemed at the time. But the Presbytery of Lancashire, having sent copies of the Synod's deliverance to all sessions in its bounds,<sup>17</sup> found that St. George's Church, Liverpool, was continuing to use its organ. This was too much even for Lancashire and, by a majority of two, the presbytery decided to appoint a committee to confer with the Liverpool session with a view to silencing the organ. Cromar thereupon protested for leave to complain to the Synod, his objection being based on the wording of the Synod's deliverance, which referred to the "introduction" of organs but was silent on those already in use. The presbytery ruled that his complaint was incompetent.<sup>18</sup>

A flat refusal<sup>19</sup> by Cromar and his session to confer with the presbytery's committee turned the presbytery almost unanimously against them. The presbytery members had been willing to support the use of an organ when there was no explicit prohibition, but they could not go along with what they saw as defiance of a Synod decision and of their own authority. In September, when the presbytery ordered them to give up the organ, the session issued a statement to the press justifying their position;<sup>20</sup> in January 1857 they received a "solemn remonstrance" prepared on behalf of the presbytery by Munro and a committee,<sup>21</sup> to which they responded with a printed leaflet giving their reasons for non-compliance.<sup>22</sup> By March, the presbytery, "having exhausted all the means of admonition and counsel at their disposal", could do nothing but



refer the whole business to the Synod.<sup>23</sup>

By this time the organ at Liverpool had been in use for nearly eighteen months, and that at Warrington for nearly four years. The latter had been ignored by the presbytery, whose zeal had been concentrated on Liverpool. When, in March 1857, the presbytery delayed consideration of the Warrington case until after the next Synod meeting, Cromar facetiously suggested that the two members who had been appointed to explain to the Synod the presbytery's action in the Liverpool case should also be appointed to explain its inaction in the Warrington case.<sup>24</sup> It has been suggested<sup>25</sup> that Cromar was the author of a pro-organ pamphlet called "The Organ Heresy" published in September 1856 by "Lazarus Short, Liverpool". Alexander Bannatyne, minister at Warenford, Northumberland, produced an anti-organ treatise of 79 pages, written expressly so that the 1857 Synod members "should have before them some of the leading principles at stake".<sup>26</sup> At the Synod, Bannatyne was to second a motion by Thomas Duncan of Newcastle "that instrumental music shall forthwith cease in St. George's, Liverpool and St. John's, Warrington".<sup>27</sup> This Thomas Duncan had seconded Hamilton's anti-organ motion the previous year, and was to be the most vociferous opponent of organs in 1857 and 1858.

To the surprise of many, Cromar's tactics proved successful. After much heated debate at the 1857 Synod, Duncan's motion was defeated and the Synod found, albeit by only four votes, that the use of instrumental music

"is not in accordance with the ordinary practice of this Church, and ought not to be introduced in any case without the permission craved and obtained of the Supreme Court, and enjoin Presbyteries to take order accordingly. But with regard to St. John's, Warrington, and St. George's, Liverpool, inasmuch as instrumental music had been introduced into them by the sanction, express or implied, of the Presbytery of Lancashire, and is agreeable to the feelings and wishes of said congregations, while its prohibition would disturb their peace, destroy their prosperity, and endanger their very existence, the Synod instruct the Presbytery of Lancashire to take no further action with regard to them..."<sup>28</sup>

The opponents of instrumental music were furious. The

Synod had rejected it on the basis of "the ordinary practice" of the Presbyterian Church, rather than on law and principle. It had declared that the Synod could permit individual congregations to introduce organs. It had left the door open to any congregation to follow the Liverpool precedent by introducing an organ, using it in defiance of the church courts, then, when the organ had been in use for some time, claiming that the peace and prosperity of the congregation would suffer if it were removed. These and other reasons of dissent were given in by Duncan and other Synod members. Duncan also objected on the ground that the decision cast contempt on the Presbytery of Lancashire, which had simply been trying to enforce the injunction of the previous Synod. This last point forced the committee which answered the reasons of dissent to record that the presbytery had had no right or duty to deal as they had with the Liverpool congregation while ignoring Warrington; the Synod in 1856 had forbidden the introduction of organs but had not directed any existing use to be discontinued; the presbytery had "systematically disregarded all dissents and complaints" in the case, which should, on account of its difficulty and delicacy, have been referred to the Synod for advice.<sup>29</sup>

The decision of the 1857 Synod therefore represented a substantial advance for the organ movement. But the movement's opponents were determined that the tide should be turned back. William Wrightson, minister of Wark, Northumberland, went further in a pamphlet<sup>30</sup> which called for the abandonment not only of instrumental music but also of preaching gowns and read sermons. Munro and Duncan both published their 1857 Synod speeches in pamphlet form,<sup>31</sup> and Duncan, through the Presbytery of Newcastle, overtured the 1858 Synod to prohibit instrumental music on grounds of law and principle and to "re-establish uniformity of public worship without any exception, in all congregations of this Church".<sup>32</sup>

On a Thursday in April 1858, when the Synod met at 10.30 a.m., a large audience was present, "as it was understood that the debate on the use of organs ... would take place".<sup>33</sup> Once again the debate continued until one

o'clock the following morning. By 72 votes to 62, the Synod decided that "the use of instrumental music is hereby disallowed" as being "an innovation on the authorised mode of worship", likely to disturb peace, unity and discipline, and so on. The wording of the general prohibition was everything that the organ opponents could desire, and there were many dissents on the other side. But the attempt to silence the organs at Liverpool and Warrington was defeated by 77 votes to 43, on the understanding that these cases could not be used as precedents for the use of organs elsewhere.<sup>34</sup>

The Synod demonstrated its determination on this last point when, at the same meeting, it had to consider a prayer from a congregation in Cheltenham to be admitted to the communion of the presbyterian church.<sup>35</sup> The congregation asked for permission to retain an organ which they had always used in their services. The Synod declined to admit them unless they gave up the organ, and a commission was appointed to confer with the congregation.<sup>36</sup> The commission was soon able to express its "warm admiration of the noble and truly Christian spirit" of the congregation, which had been persuaded to abandon the organ.<sup>37</sup>

In 1861, the Synod agreed to admit a congregation at Exeter "provided they agree within a reasonable time to abandon the use of instrumental music in their public worship".<sup>38</sup> The congregation did so, but in 1862 160 of their number petitioned the Synod for permission to resume its use,<sup>39</sup> claiming that the absence of the organ had led some members to leave the church and that it was proving detrimental to the recruitment of new members and to the cause of presbyterianism in the city. The committee of bills refused to transmit the petition on the ground that it had not come through the presbytery. The Exeter people appealed to the Synod against this refusal. After some digression into the general organ question, the Synod voted, by 76 votes to 45, in favour of Munro's motion that the appeal be rejected. Probably the persuasive argument was that, where 160 petitioners claimed to represent the views of a much larger congregation, the

Synod could not be well enough informed unless the case had previously been investigated by the presbytery.

Apart from the Exeter case, the organ question did not come before the Synod in any year between 1858 and 1870. During that period, instrumental music was forbidden, except in the two churches in Liverpool and Warrington. But in the mid-sixties congregations started to agitate as they saw what was happening in the Church of Scotland and the U.P. English Synod. Now most of the trouble was coming from London, where a conference of the presbytery ministers and office-bearers took place in March 1867. It was argued that the introduction of organs and the "freer" use of hymns would help deter young people from leaving presbyterian churches for the more attractive services of other denominations.<sup>40</sup> In 1869 it was claimed that the Synod "had winked at the case of a congregation where one [an instrument] had been known to the whole Church to have been in use for some years",<sup>41</sup> and in that same year at least two congregations in the Presbytery of London were defying the Church courts. Since 1868, while the church of St. Andrew, Gravesend, was being built, the congregation had been worshipping in the Assembly Rooms and using the organ there,<sup>42</sup> and the congregation at Camden Road, London, was using a harmonium every Sunday. Though a motion of censure at the presbytery was supported even by some organ sympathisers, no further action was taken.<sup>43</sup> The strength of feeling in London was so great that even the organ opponents in the presbytery felt that a change in the law was preferable to a constitutional crisis. It was in fact a prominent organ opponent who took the initiative in the transmission of an overture to the Synod for authorisation of organs.<sup>44</sup> Two other presbyteries - Lancashire and Berwick<sup>45</sup> - also overtured the 1870 synod to reconsider the question. It is an indication of the changed attitude that the Lancashire overture was initiated by a minister who had opposed Cromar in the fifties.<sup>46</sup>

By 1870 the passage of time had done its work. The four most prominent anti-organ spokesmen in the Presbyterian Church in England had gone - Duncan was long

dead; Bannatyne had moved to a Free Church charge in Aberdeen, where he had published in 1865 an amended version of his 1857 pamphlet;<sup>47</sup> Hamilton had died in 1867 and Munro in 1869 during his term as moderator. Organs were in use in the Church of Scotland and in congregations in England associated with it; the question had been agitated afresh in the U.P. Church; and the continuing and increasing presence of organs in other English nonconformist churches was giving the lie to the charge that organs brought popery. The 1870 debate<sup>48</sup> maintained the tradition of organ debates, both in its length (six and a half hours; during the last two hours, each speech was limited to ten minutes) and in its quality (before speakers' times were limited, "most of the speeches were long; they were all animated, and one or two were able"). But this time there was no doubt about what the outcome would be. By 129 votes to 49, the Synod

"having regard to the unsatisfactory position in which the question has been left by the previous deliverances of Synods, and being of the opinion that the Church ought not, by any general resolution, to fetter the action of Sessions in this matter, hereby rescinds the several resolutions on the subject in the years 1856, 1857, 1858, 1861 and 1862 ... and enjoins Presbyteries to take order that the substantial prosperity and harmony of congregations be regarded".<sup>49</sup>

And so, at last, the congregations of the Presbyterian Church in England were free to instal organs if they chose.<sup>50</sup> Similar freedom was granted to United Presbyterians in 1872,<sup>51</sup> and only ten years later a survey showed that, of the 279 presbyterian congregations in England which replied, as many as 218 were using musical instruments in their worship.<sup>52</sup>

## 7.2. The Free Church involvement.

In Scotland, innovations in worship were resisted more stoutly in the Free Church than in the other two major presbyterian denominations. The special relationship which existed between the Free Church and the Presbyterian Church in England meant that the advent of instrumental music in the latter was a matter of concern to the Free Church leaders. In order to appreciate the extent of their concern, it is worth looking first at the mid-

century situation as they saw it.

Outside Scotland, they saw a rapid expansion of the organ movement. In England, organs were being adopted in large numbers among nonconformists and were commonplace in the industrial north. In the U.S.A., Old School Presbyterian congregations had not been slow to make use of the sanction granted in 1845, and it was clear that the New School Presbyterians would soon follow suit.<sup>53</sup> In the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, there was dissatisfaction with the music of worship, and the use of organs was being openly advocated and opposed.<sup>54</sup> In Scotland itself, some independent congregations had quietly adopted organs.<sup>55</sup> Even the rapidly increasing number of organs in Scottish episcopal churches, though in one sense reinforcing presbyterian prejudices, posed an indirect threat. A number of Scots - especially influential Scots - attended the worship of more than one denomination; seduced by the instrumental music of the episcopal church, they might start to demand the same in the presbyterian. Even in the Free Church itself a few ministers and congregations were apparently expressing a desire for organs,<sup>56</sup> and a prominent Free Church precentor in Aberdeen had published a pamphlet on psalmody which recommended their use.<sup>57</sup> However, these people had not found a concerted voice and they must have known that their wish was not realistic. Afraid that these few dissentients in their midst would gain encouragement and increase in numbers, the Free Church leaders had viewed with impotence and increasing impatience the trends elsewhere. In 1856 they could remain silent no longer.

1856 was a bad year for anti-organ presbyterians. A presbyterian church at Brockville in Canada was defying a ban placed on its organ by the Canadian synod,<sup>58</sup> opening up the possibility that the vast majority of presbyterians in North America might soon be free to use instruments. A wealthy U.P. congregation in Glasgow was building a church containing a large organ,<sup>59</sup> just at the time when the leaders of the U.P. and Free Churches were beginning to explore the possibility of union.<sup>60</sup> And, worst of all, the Lancashire presbytery had declined to inter-

fere with the use of the organ at Liverpool.

This last event was too much for the Free Church, and Candlish himself entered the lists in the ill-natured run-up to the 1856 English Synod meeting. To support the overture of his old personal friend<sup>61</sup> Hamilton, he produced a pamphlet in February 1856. It took the form of a republication from Porteous's 1808 pamphlet of the statements of Ritchie and the Porteous committee, together with Candlish's own 30-page introduction, discrediting the former and extolling the latter. His references<sup>62</sup> to Ritchie's statement as "evasive", to Porteous as "a learned and profound divine" and to the Porteous committee's statement as "the work of a master" were to be ridiculed in correspondence columns and by Boyd, who saw in the work of Porteous only "ignorance, stupidity, and vulgarity, in the very highest degree".<sup>63</sup> Even the *Witness*, while naturally supporting Candlish, felt obliged to qualify its enthusiasm for Porteous.<sup>64</sup> Candlish's own arguments, mainly on the needless disturbance of the Church's peace and on the association of organs with popery, are the common currency of the time. But the pamphlet's impact had little to do with the merits of the case; it was justifiably seen as a blatant attempt to influence the actions of an independent church in another country. Candlish's pious regret at the schism which in his view would be caused among presbyterians by the sanctioning of instrumental music was a clear threat to the English presbyterians that their special association with the Free Church would cease if the English synod failed to prohibit the use of organs. To remove any doubt as to his meaning he ended with a reminder that "they have been warned in a friendly spirit and in time".<sup>65</sup>

In practical terms, the association between the English presbyterians and the Free Church consisted mainly of mutual eligibility of ministers. Scottish ministers sometimes served for a time south of the border before returning home to a Free Church charge; Candlish was threatening those currently in England that the Synod decision on the organ question would determine whether they

would be able to return.<sup>66</sup> The reaction was swift. Within a few weeks, J.W. Lamb, an elder in South Shields, produced a reasoned reply,<sup>67</sup> saying that the responsibility for any schism on so minor a matter would rest not with the friends of the organ but with their opponents. In April a more substantial answer to Candlish came from the minister of the Liverpool congregation, Alexander Cromar. Taking up Candlish's claim that organs lead eventually to popery, Cromar lets himself go. After showing, in the standard way, that organs and popery are quite unconnected, he launches into a vicious personal attack on Candlish.<sup>68</sup> If I wanted to bring popery into a presbyterian Church, he says, I wouldn't do it by introducing organs. I'd do it by following the example of the Free Church of Scotland : by setting certain men above the presbyters - "a bench of prelates in an assembly of presbyters", those "who would sway the mass of Christian men as with a rod of iron", "men who are possessed of a conscience which appropriates to itself all Christian privilege, and portions out nothing but Christian duty to its neighbours", who "in their utter selfishness and unsubdued self-sufficiency, demand of their fellow-men that they shall become conformed to their likeness", and so on.

These criticisms had some foundation and were being voiced, not a great deal more moderately, in Scotland,<sup>69</sup> and, even within the Free Church itself, by James Begg.<sup>70</sup> But

"is the organ conflict to be the struggle of a few English congregations to maintain their ecclesiastical independence against a Northern Potentate, a Free Church Czar, who insists, in his great goodness,<sup>71</sup> on being the Protector of their little Principality?"

Cromar's question was to be echoed for some time by English presbyterians,<sup>72</sup> and one 1858 pamphlet attributed the whole controversy to the Scots in their midst, who had "brought all their Scottish prejudices across the border with them, as the best weapons wherewith to attack English depravity and impiety".<sup>73</sup> But many who were critical of Free Church interference were in fact Scotsmen. Cromar himself was a Scot who had previously been in the Free Church.<sup>74</sup> It is possible therefore that Candlish's intervention did more good than harm to the organ cause.



The Free Church continued its policy of intimidation. In 1857 the Assembly appointed a committee to consider "on what footing the intercourse and correspondence between this Church and the sister Presbyterian Churches of England and Ireland should be placed".<sup>75</sup> Aware that the English Synod would again be considering the organ question in April 1858, Candlish, seconded by Begg, proposed an overture to the Assembly at the Edinburgh Presbytery in February of that year.<sup>76</sup> The overture, which was duly transmitted, stated that "in sanctioning any plan for regulating that matter [i.e. the relations with other Churches], regard should be had to the maintenance of purity of worship in the Presbyterian Churches of these realms". In their speeches, both men were quite explicit that the overture referred to the use of organs in England. About the same time, Begg republished his father's anti-organ treatise of 1808,<sup>77</sup> specifically, as he later said,<sup>78</sup> in response to events in England.

We cannot know how all this interference influenced the voting at the English Synod meetings. There is little evidence, in the reports of the debates, of speakers looking north over their shoulders. The threat was likely to influence ministers more than elders, yet analysis of the detailed voting figures (where these are available<sup>79</sup>) shows that the elders were far more opposed to organs than were the ministers. Indeed, if the ministers alone had been voting in 1858, the less rigorous ruling of 1857 would not have been superseded.

Shortly after the English Synod had given its 1858 ruling, the Edinburgh Presbytery overture was considered by the Free Church Assembly.<sup>80</sup> Buchanan supported Candlish and Begg:

"If the Presbyterian Church in England were to go to the length he pointed out [sic], and actually to sanction the introduction of the organ, then he would take the responsibility of moving the repeal of the law by which ministers of the Presbyterian Church in England could be translated to charges in the Free Church".

A counter-motion to Candlish's proposal was withdrawn on the condition that its mover and his supporters be allowed to enter their dissent; the dissentients numbered

only four ministers and four elders. The Free Church Assembly thus showed at that time almost complete agreement in condemning instrumental music, even when used by others. Candlish and others were soon to regret the stance they had taken.

During the sixties, the Free Church was divided by the proposal for union with the U.P. Church, which was one of Candlish's most cherished projects. The minority opposition, Begg's "highland host", had by 1872 effectively defeated the wishes of the majority of U.P.s and Free Church men by their threat of secession. During this period, most matters were viewed in the light of the union dispute. The well-known fact that many in the U.P. Church favoured freedom on the organ question gave Begg's party another convenient argument against union. Nowhere does this emerge more clearly than from the two Free Church monthly journals which were started in the sixties - the anti-union *Watchword* and the pro-union *Presbyterian*. The *Watchword* eagerly sought out, and condemned, every stirring of the organ question among English presbyterians and U.P.s, and it delighted in reminding Candlish of his commitment to the principle of having no special communion with users of organs.<sup>81</sup> The *Presbyterian*, edited by Rainy, faithfully reported the facts, but managed to convey the suggestion that the question was of minor importance,<sup>82</sup> and went so far as to argue, in relation to the 1870 English Synod decision, that "it would be a mistake to consider it as a vote in favour of organs".<sup>83</sup>

Begg's pamphlet of 1866<sup>84</sup> protested vehemently against the continuing use of the Liverpool and Warrington organs, and his party made much of the organ question. He was supported by some in the U.P. Church, such as the minister who complained in the Orkney U.P. Presbytery that the English presbyterians appealed to Scotland for help in building churches, into which, with their own money, they later put musical instruments, these "rags of Popery and black Prelacy".<sup>85</sup> For the same reason, the Free Presbytery of Dunoon and Inverary opposed the granting of financial assistance to presbyteri-

ans in England.<sup>86</sup>

By 1870 it was clear that union with the U.P. Church could not take place without a major secession in the Free Church; perhaps the best that could be achieved would be mutual eligibility of ministers, which in fact Candlish was to support in 1872. But it had emerged at the U.P. Synod in 1867<sup>87</sup> that, if the union did not take place, organs were likely to be sanctioned in the U.P. Church. The Free Church could therefore soon be seeking mutual eligibility with a Church which allowed the use of organs.

In 1870, when the English presbyterians sanctioned instrumental music, Begg embarrassed his 1858 allies by reminding them of the earlier decision and proposing at the Assembly that mutual eligibility with the Presbyterian Church in England should now be discontinued.<sup>88</sup> Candlish, opposing the proposal, was speaking for the majority of the Assembly when he declared that "he was not now prepared, as he once was, to make the introduction of such music a ground for a revision of the relations between the two Churches". Foreseeing defeat, Begg's supporters persuaded him, just before the vote was to be taken, to withdraw his motion. In the end, therefore, the threats of earlier years had come to nothing. The principle of purity of worship had to yield to the more important consideration of presbyterian unity.

The Free Church was later to enter its own period of organ controversy, and that period will be the subject of a later chapter.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. The Second Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which had used organs since the beginning of the century, did not subscribe to the Westminster Confession and was Unitarian in all but name. (Callender 1982).
2. Drysdale 1889, Black 1906.
3. *infra*, ch.8.

4. Black 1906, p.312, gives the year as 1865; but see *Greenock Advertiser*, 9 October, 1866. Part of this congregation had broken away in 1843 to form St. George's Church, Liverpool, which figures later in this story (Congregational papers in U.R.C. Library, London).
5. Robson 1914.
6. *English Presbyterian Messenger*, Oct 1855, p.311.
7. *E.P. Messenger*, Aug 1855, p.248. Lancashire was the largest presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in England, and represented one quarter of the membership of that Church (Session 1856, p.10).
8. Munro's protest appears to have been irregularly made, and there is some suspicion that the elder's Reasons of dissent and complaint were prepared for him by Munro. (Session 1856, pp.11-13).
9. *E.P. Messenger*, Oct 1855, p.311.
10. *E.P. Messenger*, Oct 1855, p.320.
11. *E.P. Messenger*, Dec 1855, p.368.
12. Session 1856.
13. *E.P. Messenger*, Feb 1856, p.60.
14. *supra*, ch.6.
15. *E.P. Messenger*, Dec 1855, pp.378-9.
16. *E.P. Messenger*, May 1856, pp.160,167-170; June 1856, pp.190-2; Acts & Procs, pp.176,179,183.
17. *E.P. Messenger*, June 1856, p.187.
18. *E.P. Messenger*, Aug 1856, pp.248-9.
19. *E.P. Messenger*, Oct 1856, p.316.
20. The statement can be seen in the *E.P. Messenger*, Dec 1856, p.380.
21. *E.P. Messenger*, Feb 1857, pp.58-9.
22. A copy of the session's leaflet survives in the URC Library, London.
23. *E.P. Messenger*, May 1857, pp.153-4.
24. *ibid*.
25. *Watchword*, April 1866, p.158.
26. Bannatyne 1857, p.vi.
27. Acts & Procs, p.209.
28. *ibid*.
29. *E.P. Messenger*, June 1857, pp.182-4.
30. Wrightson 1857.
31. Duncan 1857.
32. *E.P. Messenger*, May 1858, p.154.
33. *ibid*, pp.153-6; Acts & Procs, pp.251-3.
34. This curious but pragmatic solution of declaring a practice to be unauthorised while approving of it in particular instances has a parallel in the decision of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1827 on the removal of communion tables (see Drummond 1975, p.190).
35. Acts & Procs, p.256.
36. The four ministers appointed to the commission were none other than the moderator, together with Hamilton, Munro and Bannatyne! Perhaps Duncan too would have been a member but for his ill-health.
37. *E.P. Messenger*, June 1858, p.197. The published history of this congregation (Hart 1966) contains no mention of instrumental music before 1872.
38. Acts & Procs, p.358.
39. *ibid*, p.10; *E.P. Messenger*, June 1862, pp.171-2.
40. *Scotsman*, 9 March 1867.

41. *Presbyterian*, Aug 1869, p.104.
42. *ibid*, and newspaper report from Oct 1868, in congregational papers at URC Library, London.
43. *Presbyterian*, Aug 1869, p.104. And, at an ill-tempered meeting in November, the London presbytery declined to prohibit the use of the Camden Road harmonium (*Weekly News*, 13 Nov 1869).
44. *Presbyterian*, Nov 1869, p.172.
45. Unlike the other two overtures, the one from Berwick was for a ban on organs, but the overture was transmitted by only one vote out of a total of five. (*Berwick Advertiser*, 8 Apr 1870).
46. *Messenger and Missionary Record*, 1870, pp.77,99.
47. Bannatyne 1865.
48. *Messenger and Missionary Record*, 1870, pp.114-5.
49. *Acts & Procs*, p.370.
50. Ironically, the first presbyterian church in the Manchester area to decide to instal an organ was Munro's old congregation at Grosvenor Square. The decision was taken by a large majority just three years after his death (Congregational papers in URC library, London; *Glasgow Herald*, 18 Apr 1872).
51. *infra*, ch. 8.
52. Chadwick 1970, p.327.
53. Cromar 1856, p.13; Blaikie 1865, quoted by Begg 1866, pp.128-9.
54. *Protestant Witness* 1846, Moore 1856 pp.152, 182-3.
55. *supra*, ch.6.
56. Editorial in *The Witness*, 15 March 1856.
57. Anderson 1855
58. Cromar 1856, p.14.
59. *infra*, ch. 8.
60. Drummond 1975, pp.315-6.
61. Watson 1882, p.128.
62. Candlish 1856, pp.29-30
63. Boyd 1856, p.664.
64. *Witness*, 15 March 1856.
65. Candlish 1856, p.35
66. This was a fairly obvious interpretation at the time (e.g. Cromar 1856, p.15) and was reinforced by later events.
67. Lamb, 1856.
68. Cromar 1856, pp.105-9, 112.
69. e.g. Cutlar 1857 (written 1854-5), p.81.
70. *Aberdeen Journal*, 30 May 1855.
71. Cromar 1856, p.117.
72. In December 1855, J.W. Lamb had made the same point, anticipating Scottish interference (*E.P. Messenger*, Jan 1856, p.18). Later expostulations are to be found in the *E.P. Messenger*, April 1856, p.116, and April 1858, pp.113-5.
73. Deacon 1858, pp.3-4.
74. *English Presbyterian Fasti* (URC Library, London).
75. Smith 1885, ii, p.249.
76. *ibid.*, pp.249-251.
77. Begg 1858.
78. Begg 1866, p.145.
79. *E.P. Messenger*, May 1856, pp.190-2, and May 1858, pp.159-160.
80. Smith 1885, ii, pp.257-9.
81. e.g. *Watchword*, Dec 1866, p.273.

82. e.g. *Presbyterian*, Aug 1869, p.104.
83. *Presbyterian*, June 1870, p.37.
84. Begg 1866, pp.136-7.
85. *Orkney Herald*, 4 Dec 1866.
86. *Choir*, 20 June 1872.
87. *infra*, ch.8.
88. Smith 1885, ii, pp.458-9.

## 8. THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Relief Church, which had prohibited the use of the Roxburgh Place organ in 1829, joined with the United Secession Church in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian (U.P.) Church. The Synod of the Anti-burghers, a precursor of the United Secession Church, had warned congregations against the use of organs as early as 1758.<sup>1</sup> In the United Secession Church too the organ question had been addressed. In the eighteen-twenties the congregation at Albion Street, Glasgow, had decided to have an organ, but had been dissuaded "not by the stern command of a Presbytery, but by advice tendered in due time, and in a Christian spirit, with which advice they, in a spirit equally Christian, complied".<sup>2</sup> About 1844, the musical association of Greyfriars Church, Glasgow, placed an organ in the session house, the session's permission having been granted on condition "that this step has no connexion with any proposal to introduce an organ into the church".<sup>3</sup>

The first appearance of the organ question in the U.P. Church occurred in 1850, when a new church in Shamrock Street, Glasgow, was opened, complete with an organ.<sup>4</sup> It was claimed that the ministers who opened the church declined to officiate "if there was to be an organ performance on the occasion",<sup>5</sup> but one of these ministers was William Anderson,<sup>6</sup> and the warning probably referred only to the playing of voluntaries. The organ was used on one Sunday only. Despite being urged to fight,<sup>7</sup> the church accepted the presbytery's objection, stated that the use had been only a "trial", and immediately advertised for a precentor.<sup>8</sup>

Unlike the presbyterians, the E.U. and Congregational churches had no presbyteries to stop them, and at least four such churches adopted organs between 1851 and 1855, two of them in Glasgow. This may have encouraged a congregation at Claremont Street, which raised the question again in the U.P. Church.

In 1855, seventeen members of the U.P. Church successfully applied to Glasgow Presbytery to be formed into a new congregation. They put up a church building in Claremont Street in the expanding west end of Glasgow - and they ordered an organ for it. Anticipating trouble, they asked Dr. William Anderson, by now a respected figure in the U.P. Church, for permission to republish his 1829 "Apology for the Organ". He agreed on condition that those appendices of his "junior and hurried publication" (as he called it) which named individuals be omitted.<sup>9</sup>

When their building was nearly complete, the congregation petitioned the presbytery for moderation in their call of a minister. On considering the petition in February 1856, the presbytery delayed granting the moderation because the organ had been ordered, and stipulated that a congregational meeting should be held to discuss the matter.<sup>10</sup> At the March meeting, the presbytery received a unanimous memorial from the congregation, accusing the presbytery of exceeding its authority in withholding the moderation; the congregation also expressed its unanimous intention to have an organ, but not to use it "in public worship on the Lord's day until such use has been sanctioned by the Supreme Court of the Church". Some presbytery members wanted to decline the moderation,<sup>11</sup> but in the end this course of action was defeated by 29 votes to 16 in favour of one by which

"the presbytery grant the moderation, but enjoin the congregation not to put the organ into the building till they would [sic] obtain the sanction of the Synod".<sup>12</sup>

Thereupon the congregation prepared a memorial to the Synod, asking for a decision to the effect "that the matter does not call for any express enactment" since the use of organs was something on which "brethren and congregations may conscientiously hold different opinions without any sacrifice of principle". The memorial<sup>13</sup> contains a refreshingly concise summary of many of the arguments in favour of instrumental music. It refers to the 1855 Synod's interest in psalmody improvement, and says that instruments are used in family worship and in psalmody practice, and are not anti-scriptural; that other



evangelical churches use them; that a U.P. congregation in Jamaica, supported by mission funds, uses an organ in its public worship; and that organs are as much a matter of liberty as hymns, precentors, choirs, etc. No doubt with 1829 in mind, the memorial ends by craving the Synod to "recommend the exercise of Christian forbearance on the part of other congregations".

By this time the reprint of Anderson's pamphlet had appeared, and the organ opponents approached James Russel of Old Kilpatrick, the "Anti-Organist" of 1829, for permission to republish his "Reply". At first he demurred, for Anderson was now a friend whom he greatly respected, but he was convinced by the argument that, in fairness, both sides should be heard.<sup>14</sup> Both sides were, however, already being heard, for Candlish's pamphlet<sup>15</sup> had already appeared and had quite evidently been read by at least two speakers at the 1856 Synod.

The memorial, of course, gave rise to a long debate<sup>16</sup> at the 1856 Synod and to much press coverage. The arguments used contained nothing new - the real interest is in the Synod's reaction to the various motions. One extreme motion against the memorial, based entirely on scripture, could not find a seconder; a more moderate scripture-based rejection was defeated by "a very large majority" in favour of the one which was eventually successful:

"Inasmuch as the use of instrumental music in public worship is contrary to the uniform practice of this Church and other Protestant Churches in this country, and would seriously disturb the peace of the Church, the Synod refuse the petition of the memorialists".

By "a considerable majority", this motion defeated one which was in favour of granting the petition. Like the English Presbyterian Synod a year later,<sup>17</sup> the U.P. synod of 1856 was therefore unwilling to commit itself to scriptural or legal justifications for rejecting the organ.

The tone of the debate was admirably set by the second speaker, the interim moderator of Claremont Street Church. In speaking of the disturbance of the Church's

peace, he said:

"A good deal of that peace depends on the manner in which this court discusses the subject. Let us enter upon it in a right spirit, and we shall send down not only the subject but the spirit and temper with which we have discussed it".

And, as organ debates go, the debate was reasonably dignified, despite the efforts of some extremists. Dr. Wilson of Greenock in particular, spoke of organs costing £2000 and organists being paid £300 per annum, at a time when a serviceable instrument could be had for under £200 and an organist for £30. The instrument at Claremont Street cost £552,<sup>18</sup> but it was one of the largest installed in Scotland up to that time; its builders were so proud of it that they used a drawing of it on their letter-heads.<sup>19</sup>

There was no repetition of the rancour which followed the 1807 and 1829 decisions, and for a while the subject disappeared from public view. In July 1856 a proposal to use an instrument at Junction Road Church, Leith, was defeated by "an overwhelming majority".<sup>20</sup> At Claremont Street itself,<sup>21</sup> the minister and the session persuaded the congregation, "at a considerable sacrifice both of feeling and of means", to comply with the rulings of the church courts. The organ, instead of being erected in the church, was placed in the hall under it,<sup>22</sup> where it was used at weekly prayer meetings on Wednesday evenings throughout the winter of 1856-7. But the arrangement was unsatisfactory - the height of the organ had made it necessary to cut away part of the hall ceiling, so that the top of the instrument protruded into the church. The church was disfigured, space needed for pews was occupied, and damp began to affect the organ. In the summer of 1857, the organ was moved to the position in the church which it was originally intended to occupy. This considerable expense was undertaken without reference to the presbytery, the session feeling that asking for the presbytery's permission "would be a very unpleasant course of procedure, and certain to give rise to an acrimonious discussion". They took the view that the presbytery's injunction of the previous year had been "a provisional measure", and they had no intention of using

the organ at Sunday services. During the winter of 1857-8, the Wednesday evening meetings were held in the church instead of the hall, and the singing was again accompanied by the organ, now in its new position.

In January 1858, the presbytery asked the session for an explanation - the organ, they had heard, was being used in public worship in the church. The session's reply was contrite and respectful but pointed out that the Wednesday meetings were not of the kind "of which these courts have ever been in the habit of taking cognisance". In the U.P. churches generally, instrumental accompaniment was frequently used at weekday congregational meetings; in Glasgow itself, UP ministers officiated and preached at religious meetings where musical instruments were used. Certainly, it could not be denied that the Claremont Street meetings constituted "public worship"; but, said the session, the distinction between these meetings and those at which instrumental music was tolerated was too fine for sensible and effective legislation by a church court.

At its meeting in February, the presbytery considered the session's reply, and was about to vote on a motion to ban the use of the organ, when Alexander McEwen, the minister of Claremont Street, pleaded against such a course of action, with the assurance that, if no ban was issued, "the matter would be arranged to the satisfaction of the presbytery". On the basis of this assurance, "the presbytery unanimously accepted their [the session's] explanations as being made in good faith, declared itself satisfied with them, and inculcated the principles of peace and order".

The Claremont Street session now prepared a memorial to the Synod, craving the Synod to leave individual churches to regulate their own psalmody as they saw fit. In the memorial they referred to the presbytery's "satisfaction" with their explanation, as recorded at the February meeting. This reference caused much anger among presbytery members.<sup>23</sup> According to one of them, "the presbytery had often been dissatisfied with the Claremont

session and church; but at this moment there was a degree of dissatisfaction with that congregation in the minds of the presbytery which had not been equalled in the past". They had recorded their satisfaction only because McEwen had made a statement which many of them had interpreted, naturally enough, as an undertaking at least to do what he could to stop the use of the organ; but the organ had continued to be used at the Wednesday meetings. The presbytery therefore appended to the session's memorial a note that they did "not homologate the view which it gives of the presbytery's decision in February", and also a request to the Synod to give a ruling on "the use of the organ at congregational meetings and diets of worship on weekdays".<sup>24</sup>

Claremont Street's was not the only memorial requesting general freedom in the use of organs which the 1858 Synod had to consider - similar requests came from four other Glasgow churches,<sup>25</sup> including those of the veteran organ campaigner, William Anderson, of John Eadie, and of Dr. Macfarlane, who was to prove an assiduous campaigner after he moved to London.<sup>26</sup> But much of the time at the Synod's debate<sup>27</sup> was taken up with the details of the Claremont Street case. McEwen was accused by Professor Lindsay of having broken faith with the presbytery after his assurance at the February meeting. McEwen replied rather unconvincingly that what he had meant was that the session would memorialise the Synod on the general question. Though he felt that it would have been "a gracious thing" to give up the use of the organ until the Synod had given its ruling, he did not want to "agitate and distract the congregation". When the Synod finally got on to the general question, the speeches followed the familiar pattern. Once again, motions based on scripture and law found little support. An interesting speech came from John Cairns who, though declaring his opposition to organs, said that he would vote for forbearance, believing that "one of the most effectual means of importing fictitious and artificial importance to the use of the organ was to oppose barriers to its use and make it so frequently a subject of debate in the courts of the

Church"; this was to become a common view in later years as people tired of the constant agitation of the organ enthusiasts. The question of weekday meetings seems scarcely to have been addressed at all, but the motion which was ultimately successful by a "very large" majority was:

"That the Synod reaffirm its decision of 1856, and declare that decision to be applicable to those particular meetings to which there is reference in the note of the presbytery".

The organ at Claremont Street was thus now silenced completely, and it was destined to remain so for fourteen years.

McEwen had been in a difficult position all along. In the presbytery and the Synod he had to defend his session, and in his church he had to put the views of the church courts. But it was now that he faced his sternest test.<sup>28</sup> In the course of the debate, things had been said which wounded the feelings of his congregation, and many of them were now bent on following the Roxburgh Place example and leaving the U.P. Church. He urged them to submit to a defeat which he believed would be only temporary. Schism on such a minor matter would harm the Christian cause. "The principle of toleration is fundamental to the church unions of the future", he said, and "certain ere long to triumph". McEwen succeeded.<sup>29</sup> The congregation remained in the U.P. Church, prospered, and was long an example to other churches in the liberality of its contributions to the schemes of the Church.

Unlike the other two major Scottish presbyterian denominations, the U.P. Church had congregations in England as well as in Scotland.<sup>30</sup> In the sixties there were about a hundred U.P. congregations south of the border, and there was an English Synod which was subservient to the general Synod. The general Synod's decisions of 1856 and 1858 had been based on "the uniform practice of this Church and other Protestant Churches in this country" and on serious disturbance of the peace of the Church; but these reasons did not fully apply to the English congregations. Most of them, like those in the Presbyterian Church in England, found their evangelical work severely

hampered by the ban on instrumental music. Virtually all the denominations around them used organs, and the prohibition gave people an unfavourable view of presbyterianism. "To an Englishman, it gave the idea of rigidity of rule, which, if true of Presbyterianism in other matters, would strangle it among free men".<sup>31</sup> Agitation (and, indeed, the illegal use of instruments) by congregations in the London area resulted, in January 1866, in the London presbytery passing a set of resolutions.<sup>32</sup> These resolutions deplored the action of congregations which contravened the ruling of the general Synod, but stated that organs should be allowed in English U.P. churches, and proposed that the general Synod delegate to the English Synod the settlement of the organ question south of the border. Copies of the resolution were sent to all presbyteries in England, and their general tenor found widespread support. The Carlisle presbytery, for instance, was unanimous in its wish to see the prohibition removed.<sup>33</sup> The resolutions were accordingly transmitted by the London presbytery to the English Synod in October 1866.<sup>34</sup> When the English Synod met later in October,<sup>35</sup> nearly three-quarters of those who voted were in favour of the motion that

"in the opinion of this Synod, the use or non-use of instrumental music, as an aid to praise, is not a case for coercive uniformity, and should be made an open question for individual sessions and congregations..."

The English Synod apparently did not wish to regard the question as a purely English one, and the same view was expressed by Edmond at a London presbytery meeting in March 1867.<sup>36</sup> At that meeting also, a remarkable decision was taken. A congregation at Hastings had joined the U.P. Church, bringing their harmonium with them; because the congregation had not been a settled charge, the presbytery had "winked at" the continuing use of the harmonium. But now a minister had been called, and the presbytery would be expected to ban the harmonium. Instead, led by Edmond and Macfarlane, the presbytery allowed its use to continue, at least until the general Synod met in May. This showed a change in the attitude of a presbytery which had on earlier occasions suppressed the use of in-

strumental music at Stratford and at Aldershot. The organ question was discussed also at the February and April meetings of the London presbytery,<sup>37</sup> Edmond and Macfarlane being again the prime movers in favour of freedom, and a memorial from Edmond's session at Park Church, Highbury, was transmitted to the Synod. In April, the presbytery of Lancashire transmitted both a pro-organ memorial from the members of Brunswick street Church, Manchester, and an anti-organ memorial from two elders of Coupland Street Church, Manchester.<sup>38</sup> So the stage was set for the Synod's organ debate of 1867.

By 1867, the negotiations for union between the U.P. Church and the Free Church had been going on for some years. Even before the organ debate of 1858, the suggestion had been made that the U.P. and Free Churches undertake a joint investigation of the organ question;<sup>39</sup> and during that debate speakers had referred to the prospect of union. Regret was expressed that votes were not counted at the conclusion of the 1858 debate (the vote had been by a show of hands) - "It would have been well, for the sake of giving additional weight out of doors to the decision formally arrived at, if the votes had been counted and the exact result formally announced".<sup>40</sup> This is unquestionably a reference to the Free Church, whose General Assembly that year was all but unanimously opposed to the use of organs in the Presbyterian Church in England.<sup>41</sup> In the U.P. Church, all discussion of the organ question was coloured by the union question. The joint union committee, it has been said,<sup>42</sup> worked on the assumption that "complete uniformity, not merely of faith, but of opinion on virtually everything, was essential to unity". As the negotiations proceeded, it became clear that Begg's party would require such uniformity, or rather conformity with their own ideas, particularly in modes of worship. But the requirement of uniformity was challenged all along by many, especially in the U.P. Church. McEwen of Claremont Street in 1858 expressed it thus:

"Was all the work about Christian union of late years come at last to this, that they could not tolerate in their fellowship a church that preferred to lead its

music by an organ, rather than by a precentor?"<sup>43</sup>  
The essence of union, in the view of McEwen and many like him, lay in toleration, rather than suppression, of differences in matters of minor importance. Dr. McKerrow, of Brunswick Street Church, Manchester, said in 1867 that "this union question would never be settled till, first of all, they gave toleration to their different churches to act according to their conscientious convictions in matters non-essential".<sup>44</sup>

On the face of things, agitation for organs in the U.P. Church in the sixties came entirely from England; and certainly it was only the English congregations who raised the matter in the Synod. If the records of the church courts alone are studied, the Scottish U.P. congregations appear to have quietly accepted the prohibition. But the Scottish newspapers of the period tell a different story. Macfarlane's former congregation at Erskine Church, Glasgow, was rumoured to be agitating for an organ in 1865;<sup>45</sup> also in 1865, a lecture by one of the U.P. Church's most popular preachers, George Gilfillan, defended the organ movement and forecast that the traditionalists of all the churches would fail to stifle the movement for more comely worship;<sup>46</sup> at Jedburgh in 1866, a U.P. congregation bought a harmonium, expecting soon to be allowed to use it in their church services,<sup>47</sup> and apparently were not the only congregation to do so;<sup>48</sup> in the same year, a stormy congregational meeting at Moss Street Church, Elgin, almost succeeded in introducing a harmonium in defiance of the church courts;<sup>49</sup> Allan Park Church, Stirling, was built in 1867 with space reserved for the future accomodation of an organ;<sup>50</sup> at a service of sacred music in Portland Road Church, Kilmarnock, in 1869, the main speech, which recommended the use of organs in church services, was warmly received.<sup>51</sup> The *Organ* entry in the 1862 edition of *The Ecclesiastical Cyclopaedia* by the U.P. professor, John Eadie,<sup>52</sup> ends almost like a pro-organ pamphlet. By 1867 the unfortunate Claremont Street congregation in Glasgow found itself, like the English congregations, surrounded by organ-using churches. In just over two years, organs had been installed in six nearby churches (two of them in Claremont



Street itself) - three established churches (Anderston, Park and Sandyford),<sup>53</sup> two congregational churches (Trinity and Elgin Place)<sup>54</sup> and one methodist church (Claremont Street).<sup>55</sup> Together with organs which had been installed earlier, these gave the west end of Glasgow by far the densest concentration of organs in Scotland. And, while its own organ stood silent, the Claremont Street congregation was contributing more than any other U.P. congregation to the building of mission churches abroad which were sometimes equipped with organs.<sup>56</sup>

There is much evidence in the speeches at the 1867 Synod that all this dissatisfaction had been kept out of the church courts for one reason only - the fear that public discussion would damage the negotiations for union with the Free Church. Though the English section of the U.P. Church was represented on the union committee, the mass of English congregations were less concerned with the union movement; it is likely that the various attempts to have the organ question settled for England alone arose from a recognition of the inability of their Scottish brethren to treat the question on its own merits and from a fear that, if and when union took place, the dead hand of the Free Church would make continuing prohibition a certainty. One elder said in the 1867 debate<sup>57</sup> that "if they could not get a revocation of the prohibition of the organ, there must be started in England an agitation for immediate union with the English Presbyterian brethren".

A number of speakers at the 1867 Synod expressed regret that the organ question should have been raised at such a sensitive time in the union negotiations. But there were also those who wanted the prohibition removed before union would make its removal virtually impossible; these people, notably Edmond and McKerrow, argued that no good could come from concealment of their views - they should "tell their Free Church brethren what their sentiments were". One motion was proposed for delaying a decision; but, asked McEwen, what would be the point?

"Did they suppose their Free Church friends were so stolid and obtuse as to misunderstand the meaning of

this discussion? Dr. Begg and Dr. Gibson had in that night's debate got as much as would enable them to make a hue and cry about the unsoundness of the United Presbyterians".

The general impression given by reports of the debate is that opinion was in favour of freedom, but not in favour of granting it during the union negotiations. Some speakers were quite explicit on this point, and the result was that McEwen's motion for general freedom was defeated, the successful motion being "That the Synod considers it inexpedient to disturb the decision of 1858 on this subject".

McEwen's motion was defeated by 232 votes to 136, which, considering the influence of the union question and the resounding defeat the organ party had suffered in 1858, represents an extensive change of opinion in the U.P. Church. Opinion outside the U.P. church was that there had been little point in retaining the ban on organs while indicating that they might be sanctioned later.<sup>58</sup> But this is scarcely fair to John Cairns in particular, who had expressed the reasonable enough view that the place to take such decisions, in the event of union taking place, was on the floor of the united church. Certainly there would have been no point in trying to conceal from the Free Church the degree of organ sympathy which existed among United Presbyterians. Reports of U.P. debates in England appeared not only in the Scottish national newspapers but also in local newspapers, particularly in localities where there was at the time a strong interest in organs. Thus the *Glasgow Herald* carried an extensive report of the U.P. London presbytery meeting in January 1866,<sup>59</sup> and the *Blairgowrie Advertiser* gave a long detailed report of the meeting of the same body in October 1866.<sup>60</sup> But the Begg party was kept informed chiefly by its own monthly *Watchword*, which drew censorious attention to every rumbling of the organ question in the U.P. Church, deploring the "spirit of disunion" and "this growing corruption in the south".<sup>61</sup> The *Watchword* even made capital out of the conciliatory attitude of the 1867 U.P. Synod - as one of nine reasons why the Free Church should avoid union, it cited "the organs threatened by Dr. Cairns and others".<sup>62</sup> The U.P. Church

had no such partisan periodicals, but its official magazine departed on one occasion from its generally non-controversial nature by publishing a short but very unfavourable review<sup>63</sup> of Begg's 1866 *magnum opus* against organs. Trying to make amends, it included in the next issue a five-page attack on the use of organs,<sup>64</sup> but even this did not please the *Watchword*, which saw in it "an utter lack of clear scriptural principle".<sup>65</sup>

Between 1867 and the final breakdown of the union negotiations, U.P. congregations in England started to take the law into their own hands. Several started using musical instruments in their Sunday services. The presbyteries were unable, or perhaps unwilling, to control them - after all, the English Synod had decided in favour of freedom, and the 1867 general Synod debate had indicated that only the union negotiations stood in its way. By this time, too, plans were well under way for union between the English U.P. congregations and the Presbyterian Church in England, where the use of organs was permitted. It is difficult to determine the extent of these acts of defiance, and we know of their existence mainly from speeches at the 1872 Synod,<sup>66</sup> one speaker going so far as to claim that "there were a great many instruments in use in their churches". (It is interesting that the *U.P. Magazine's* report of the debate<sup>67</sup> omits all reference to these instruments). In July 1871 the congregation of Westbourne Grove U.P. Church, London, contracted with Conacher for the provision of a 16-stop organ by November.<sup>68</sup> There is also a newspaper report<sup>69</sup> of a concert of sacred music held at Trinity Church, Stratford, London, in March 1872, at which the minister said that "there was nothing in beautiful music irreconcilable with true religion", after which "a collection was made on behalf of the Organ Fund".

By 1872 Begg's party had effectively brought the union negotiations to an end. The time was now ripe for a consideration of the organ question on its own merits. Overtures<sup>70</sup> from the Presbyteries of Newcastle, Lancashire, Carlisle and London were presented to the 1872 Synod.<sup>71</sup> All sought that the use of instrumental music be

a matter to be regulated by sessions and congregations. The result was a foregone conclusion, and only three speakers - all of them experienced fundamental prohibitionists - spoke against the overtures. Members subjected that persistent organ opponent, John Parker of Sunderland, to noisy inattention and ridicule, when he was saying things which only fourteen years earlier would have been listened to with approval. The successful motion, which granted the prayer of the overtures, was proposed by Professor Calderwood, who had seconded the motion for continuing the ban five years earlier. On a show of hands, it was carried by "an immense majority", the counter-motions receiving "but a very few votes each". The successful motion began:

"That this Synod decline to pronounce a judgment upon the use of instrumental music in public worship, yet do not longer make uniformity of practice in this matter a rule of the Church...".

So the matter was at last settled to the satisfaction of the organ party. But the minister of Hutchesontown Church, Glasgow, J.S. Taylor, a veteran anti-organ pamphleteer,<sup>72</sup> resigned his charge in protest. "I feel myself under the painful necessity of leaving the U.P. Church", he said in his letter to Cairns, the moderator. He sent a copy of his letter of resignation to the Scotsman<sup>73</sup> and was rewarded by being wittily but tastelessly ridiculed in the correspondence column.<sup>74</sup> Taylor declined to meet and discuss the matter with a committee from the Presbytery of Glasgow,<sup>75</sup> and continued until 1880 to minister to a few of his people who shared his view.<sup>76</sup>

At a later session of the 1872 Synod,<sup>77</sup> an Edinburgh minister called Gemmell tried to reopen the organ question by asking that the decision be not regarded as final and that the question be sent down to the presbyteries. He was ruled out of order by the moderator, and when he later tried to get the Edinburgh presbytery to transmit an overture to the 1873 Synod he was defeated by 24 votes to 4.<sup>78</sup> The overture would in any case have come too late to be effective - the Claremont Street organ was by then back in use,<sup>79</sup> and other U.P. churches had introduced instruments. One of these, in a preaching station at Norton

Place, Edinburgh, gave Gemmell a further chance to air his dissatisfaction, for the instrument had been installed before the worshippers were formed into a congregation. At the Edinburgh presbytery<sup>80</sup> in November 1872, he asked by whose authority this had been done. By 18 votes to 17, the presbytery ruled that "the question be not put", and Gemmell appealed to the Synod. The Synod committee which considered his appeal unanimously recommended that it be dismissed, and nobody at the 1873 Synod joined Gemmell in his dissent.<sup>81</sup> In the U.P. Church, the organ question had been laid to rest, and the church courts had no wish to revive it.

It is difficult to establish the rate at which instrumental music was adopted in the U.P. churches; by the late seventies the purchase of a harmonium by a city church went almost unnoticed outside the congregation. A claim made in 1883 that the rate had been one organ per year<sup>82</sup> is a gross underestimate; fifty-nine U.P. Churches are definitely known to have adopted instrumental music by the end of that year. Nevertheless, there does not appear to have been any great urgency, and the introduction of an instrument would often be associated with some other event such as the resignation of the precentor or the erection of a new church building. Newington U.P. Church, Edinburgh,<sup>83</sup> is probably typical of the better-off city churches. There, the first suggestion of an organ was made in June 1880, but it was not until the end of 1882, when the precentor resigned as a consequence of leaving the city, that the matter was taken up seriously. A special congregational meeting in December decided by a majority vote to have an organ. The anti-organ minority accepted defeat gracefully, and the enthusiasm of the organ party was such that the total cost of the organ and the necessary structural alterations (over a thousand pounds) was subscribed before the organ came into use in October 1883.

The first organ (as distinct from harmonium) in any Edinburgh U.P. church was installed in 1874, and another followed in 1875.<sup>84</sup> By the end of 1883 there were instruments in at least seventeen U.P. churches in Glasgow and

seven in Edinburgh. Five of Dundee's ten U.P. churches had instruments by 1883, but it appears that there were few if any instruments in the country town U.P. churches around Dundee.<sup>85</sup> This is not to say, however, that instruments were to be found mainly in the cities. As in the Established Church, their use was soon widespread, as is evident from the adoption of harmoniums in U.P. churches at Oban (1874), Kirkwall (1880), Lerwick (1882) and Portree (1882).

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Small 1904, ii, p.720.
2. Marshall 1830, p.58.
3. Lee 1938, pp.102-3. Ironically, it was in this session house, with the organ in full view, that the U.P. Presbytery of Glasgow reached its decisions against the use of the Claremont Street organ (Organ Question 1858, p.8). The Greyfriars organ was removed "to clear space" in 1859 (Lee 1938, p.103).
4. I am grateful to Mr. J.A. Mackenzie for bringing this organ to my notice.
5. *Glasgow Courier*, 17 Oct 1850.
6. *Glasgow Chronicle*, 9 Oct 1850.
7. Editorials in *Glasgow Chronicle*, 16 Oct 1850 and 23 Oct 1850.
8. *Glasgow Saturday Post*, 19 Oct 1850.
9. Anderson's letter, dated 10 Dec 1855, is reproduced in the preface of Anderson 1856.
10. *U.P. Magazine*, March 1856, p.131.
11. Incidentally, the proposer of the motion to decline moderation was J.S. Taylor who in 1872 resigned his charge in protest against the sanctioning of organs (*U.P. Magazine*, April 1856, p.179, and *infra*).
12. *U.P. Magazine*, April 1856, p.179.
13. *U.P. Magazine*, May 1856, pp.222-3.
14. Russel 1856, pp.3-4.
15. Candlish 1856, published in Edinburgh and London. See chapter 7, *supra*. The Liverpool and Glasgow controversies were taking place at the same time.
16. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1856, pp.277-281; *Witness*, 7 May 1856.
17. *supra*, ch. 7.
18. Elvin 1968, p.13
19. A photograph of the organ appears as plate 4 of Elvin 1968, and a reproduction of the letter-head can be seen in Elvin 1976, at p.91.
20. Russell 1896, p.27.
21. This and the succeeding two paragraphs are based on the *U.P. Magazine*, March 1858, pp. 129-131.
22. Drummond 1975 (p.188) wrongly states that the organ

- was "erected as an integral part of the building" in 1855.
23. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1858, p.268.
  24. *ibid.*, May 1858, pp.229-230.
  25. *ibid.*, June 1858, p.267.
  26. *infra*.
  27. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1858, pp. 267-274; *Organ Question* 1858, pp.1-64.
  28. MacEwen 1877, pp.xxii-xxix.
  29. *Organ Question* 1858 contains the full text of McEwen's speech to the congregation (pp.65-68), and the resolutions formally recorded by a congregational meeting (pp.69-70). Though the congregation resolved to obey the Synod decision, the resolutions were far from respectful to the Synod.
  30. Drysdale 1889, p.608.
  31. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1867, p.256.
  32. *ibid.*, March 1866, pp.135-6; *Glasgow Herald*, 17 Jan 1866.
  33. *Watchword*, June 1866, p.88.
  34. *U.P. Magazine*, Nov. 1866, p.517.
  35. *Watchword*, Dec 1866, p.282; *Choir*, 17 Nov 1866.
  36. *Scotsman*, 6 Mar 1867
  37. *U.P. Magazine*, May 1867, p.232.
  38. *ibid.*, pp. 230-1
  39. *ibid.*, May 1858, pp.220-1.
  40. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1858, p.287.
  41. *supra*, ch. 7.
  42. Drummond 1975, p.319.
  43. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1858, p.267.
  44. *Greenock Advertiser*, 9 Apr 1867.
  45. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 21 Jan 1865.
  46. *Alloa Advertiser*, 22 Apr.1865.
  47. *Scotsman*, 3 March 1866.
  48. *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, 13 Nov 1869.
  49. *Watchword*, Sept 1866, p.192.
  50. *Greenock Advertiser*, 22 Oct 1867.
  51. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 30 July 1869.
  52. Eadie 1862.
  53. *infra*, ch. 9.
  54. *supra*, ch. 6.
  55. Elvin 1976, p.120.
  56. *Scotsman*, 18 May 1872.
  57. *Choir*, 15 June 1867, pp.383-5; *U.P. Magazine*, June 1867, pp.256-260.
  58. *Greenock Advertiser*, editorial, 16 May 1867.
  59. *Glasgow Herald*, 17 Jan 1866.
  60. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 13 Oct 1866.
  61. *Watchword*, May 1867, p.53.
  62. *ibid.*, Sept 1867, p.198.
  63. *U.P. Magazine*, Oct 1866, p.462.
  64. G., 1866.
  65. *Watchword*, Dec 1866, p.274.
  66. *Scotsman*, 18 May 1872; *Choir*, 25 May 1872, pp.319, 324-5; 1 June 1872, pp.336-8.
  67. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1872, pp.272-4.
  68. *Ayr Observer*, 25 July 1871.
  69. Cutting from an unidentified newspaper, in the congregational papers at U.R.C. Library, London.
  70. *U.P. Magazine*, March 1872, p.134; Apr 1872, p.180; May 1872, pp.225, 230.

71. *Scotsman*, 18 May 1872.
72. Taylor, n.d.
73. *Scotsman*, 21 May 1872.
74. *Scotsman*, 23 May 1872.
75. *U.P. Magazine*, Sept 1872, p.418.
76. Small 1904, ii, p.51.
77. *Scotsman*, 22 May 1872.
78. *Weekly Review*, 9 Nov 1872.
79. Small 1904, ii, p.93.
80. *Weekly Review*, 9 Nov 1872.
81. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1873, pp.273-4.
82. *Proc & Deb* 1883, p.121.
83. *Newington* 1898, p.92.
84. Stewart 1975, p.6.
85. *Dundee* 1883.



## 9. THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

### 9.1. Innovation generally.

"Throughout the generations since Westminster, Scottish worship has been characterised by well-nigh constant growth and change".<sup>1</sup> From the eighteen-fifties "the tempo of change grew perceptibly faster, and the controversies occasioned by it infinitely more intense".<sup>2</sup> Attitudes to the bible, the Westminster Confession, and social problems, as well as the conduct of worship, were revolutionised. "Victorian Scotland was to be the scene of many church debates, but none touched the ordinary church member so closely as those on forms of worship".<sup>3</sup>

A number of influences prepared the minds of Victorian presbyterians for worship reform.<sup>4</sup> Not least of these was the defection of members of the higher classes to the Episcopal Church. In 1848 the Duke of Argyll expressed concern about this "extensive alienation" of "numerous families of Scotland".<sup>5</sup> These people had gone "without any previous conversion to the church principles of the Prelatic Priesthood"; they had, he said, been attracted only by the form of worship. A number of later worship reformers, notably Lee<sup>6</sup> and Bisset,<sup>7</sup> agreed with him. According to the Duke, the major deficiency of Scottish presbyterian worship was the prayers of some of its ministers:<sup>8</sup>

"A partial use of liturgical forms of prayer ... would alone, we think, have been of immense value in engaging the affections, and preventing the straying of its members."

It was on this aspect of worship that the attention of the advocates and opponents of worship reform was initially concentrated. The first half of the century saw the publication of collections of prayers and other material for use in presbyterian worship.<sup>9</sup> In the eighteen-fifties "a great number of publications" appeared,<sup>10</sup> and increasing interest was to lead to the formation of the Church Service Society in 1865. In 1857, Robert Lee went beyond incorporation of published material into the normal prayers of the service; he revised the

order of service, issued his service book to his congregation, and asked them to join in responses. Not all his opponents disapproved of the use of printed prayers or even of a service book; what some objected to was the use of a book prepared by an individual minister without authority from the Church.<sup>11</sup>

The Duke of Argyll was not the first to favour a partial liturgy; John Cumming, for instance, had in 1840 stated his preference for this kind of worship.<sup>12</sup> Similar views were expressed by a number of writers in the fifties, and John Robertson felt able to state these views in a sermon delivered on an occasion attended by much publicity in Glasgow Cathedral in 1862.<sup>13</sup> There was never widespread support in the Church of Scotland for a fully liturgical service, but many ministers during the remainder of the century favoured a judicious blend of liturgical and extempore prayer.

When Lee's case reached the General Assembly in 1859, he had been charged with a number of innovations, but the only one which the Assembly condemned was the use of his service book. By 1863 he had again started to use a printed service book. The Assembly's Committee on Innovations reported in 1864<sup>14</sup> that Old Greyfriars was the only church where a printed form of service was used and that in only two other churches in the country were prayers partially read from manuscript. Yet at that time a number of other innovations were transforming the worship of the Church of Scotland as well as that of other presbyterians.

Innovations which had made their appearance many years earlier were still being absorbed. Reading of sermons had begun to replace extempore preaching in the eighteenth century, but in the eighteen-sixties it was still some way from being universally accepted<sup>15</sup> and in 1870 it could still provoke heated argument.<sup>16</sup> Choirs had begun to appear in the mid eighteenth century but in the eighteen-seventies the praise in many churches was still being led by a precentor alone; by then choirs were the rule rather than the exception in the cities,<sup>17</sup> but in

some country districts the reverse was true.<sup>18</sup> Reading of substantial passages of scripture, with the abandonment of "lectures", was still in the process of reinstatement, and in 1864 some churches had not yet reinstated the Lord's Prayer in their services.<sup>19</sup> Changes of posture (standing to sing and sitting to pray, instead of the reverse) had been adopted by some Relief congregations before 1829.<sup>20</sup> In the Established Church, some congregations, particularly in Orkney,<sup>21</sup> had always stood when singing;<sup>22</sup> yet Marshall Lang was censured when the postures of his congregation were changed in 1856.<sup>23</sup> The Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1859 specifically excluded posture changes from its condemnation of Lee's innovations, and at the General Assemblies of 1863 to 1865 the matter of postures was several times stated to be of no importance. By 1864, forty or fifty congregations of the Established Church were standing during their praise,<sup>24</sup> and the practice spread rapidly despite occasional local opposition.<sup>25</sup>

While the Church was still absorbing these changes, further innovations appeared. It was not until 1861, when some U.P. congregations had been singing hymns for over sixty years, that the General Assembly of the Established Church approved a small collection. The Assembly's Innovations Committee reported in 1864 that only one church was using these hymns in Sunday worship,<sup>26</sup> but the number soon increased, and hymn-singing became popular, alike in town and country, after the approval of the *Scottish Hymnal* in 1870. By 1906 twenty times as many hymnals were being sold as metrical psalters.<sup>27</sup>

Two musical innovations have largely escaped the notice of later commentators. One of these was the singing of a short simple piece of music towards the end of the service. Very often it was a metrical version of the *gloria patri* and hence was called a "doxology", though this word appears to have been used at times, like the word "anthem", for dismissions, sanctuses and other short items of praise. Small collections of such items appear in hymn books of the earlier nineteenth century;<sup>28</sup> Relief churches were using them in public worship in the twen-

ties<sup>29</sup> as, it appears, was St. George's Parish Church, Edinburgh.<sup>30</sup> They were sometimes sung by choir alone, and sometimes the congregation was expected to join in the singing. As early as 1761 John Wesley was impressed by an "anthem" sung after the sermon at Monymusk Church,<sup>31</sup> but a century later the use of "doxologies" was still restricted to "a very few churches" of the establishment.<sup>32</sup> Out of fifty-seven Glasgow presbyterian churches surveyed in 1871, only four Established and four U.P. churches were reported to be singing anything other than psalms, paraphrases and hymns in Sunday morning worship.<sup>33</sup> The preface to the Church of Scotland's first anthem book, published in 1875,<sup>34</sup> stated that the use of anthems "and the other sacred compositions which for convenience we speak of under that general name" had been "exceptional hitherto"; prepared by a committee, the preface both stated the case for anthems being sung by choirs alone and recommended that they should be sung by congregations. Nearly all the book's items are short, homophonic and very simple - they are "congregational anthems" as used by English nonconformists.<sup>35</sup> But, in the absence of well-attended congregational practices, it was unrealistic to expect ordinary churchgoers to take part,<sup>36</sup> and by the end of the century an "anthem" usually meant an item of praise sung by the choir.<sup>37</sup>

The other innovation that appears to have escaped later notice is the introduction of chanting, which we can date confidently at about 1860.<sup>38</sup> By the seventies, chanting was to be found in all the three main presbyterian denominations and among the independents and the methodists. The practice was mainly confined to the cities and the larger towns.<sup>39</sup> It was particularly widespread in Glasgow, where, out of 67 churches (excluding episcopal and Roman) surveyed in 1871, as many as 23 were using chants.<sup>40</sup> The extent of the practice is surprising enough; what is amazing is that in many cases chants were used for metrical psalms and even for hymns. The 1872 music edition of the *Scottish Hymnal* includes several "metrical chants" intended for particular hymns, but the words of these hymns are not pointed. An example

of a hymn pointed for chanting can be found in an edition of Carnie's *Northern Psalter* published around 1880. The objective of chanting must surely have been to escape the doggerel of many of the metrical psalms by singing instead a prose version; yet only 6 of the 23 Glasgow churches using chants in 1871 were chanting prose psalms.<sup>41</sup> (The proportion may not be typical, for in 1873 only one Edinburgh church was chanting metrical psalms.)<sup>42</sup> Apparently chanting of metrical psalms was not unknown in England at the time;<sup>43</sup> but contemporaries found the practice as puzzling as we do today. "We can account for the anomaly", said the *North British Daily Mail*, "only by supposing that it was first desired to pave the way for the introduction of the prose version".<sup>44</sup> By 1906, 125 congregations out of 1249 were chanting prose psalms and 101 were chanting metrical psalms. The Church of Scotland report from which these figures come also stated<sup>45</sup> that in some of these places chanting was used in the face of opposition. Chanting was rarely popular or successful in Scottish churches.<sup>46</sup>

The relevance of all these innovations to the organ question in the Church of Scotland is twofold. In the first place, they go some way to explaining the special opposition which organs aroused in some quarters - by the time organs appeared, the patience of the conservative-minded had been sorely tried. In the second place, some of these changes had come into the Church through the actions of individual congregations and without Assembly legislation, and all had been adopted by kirk sessions without reference to superior courts. Kirk sessions had traditionally had the oversight of worship in their own churches. The organ enthusiasts were naturally aggrieved when the Assembly of 1865 transferred the sessions' powers to the presbyteries.

It was implicitly recognised by the 1864 Assembly that all these changes in worship had gone beyond the point where they could be reversed, had there been any general desire to do so. Reading of printed prayers and the use of instrumental music, however, were confined to Old Greyfriars, and it was against these two innovations

that the conservatives made their stand.

## 9.2. The early days of the organ movement.

The little that has been written by historians about the introduction of organs into the Church of Scotland proves to be inaccurate and misleading. There is no need to detail the inaccuracies here, but it is worth noting that a common fault is underestimation of the strength of the movement. A number of writers<sup>47</sup> quote Boyd to the effect that in 1868 there were eight instruments installed in, or in process of erection for, Glasgow churches. These writers have failed to notice that the essay they cite, though anthologised in 1868, was written at the start of 1866;<sup>48</sup> this is significant, for it means that all of these first eight instruments were installed or ordered in a period of just over one year rather than three. To take another example, Drummond and Bulloch<sup>49</sup> imply that no instruments were installed between 1876 and 1881, a period during which instruments were actually entering the churches at an unprecedented rate. The same kind of mistake is made in many histories of individual churches. For instance, the harmonium introduced at Canongate Church, Edinburgh, in 1874 has been claimed as the third instrument in the Church of Scotland;<sup>50</sup> in fact, around ninety churches were by then using instruments. The number was over two hundred by 1883 when an organ was installed at Newhaven-on-Forth, yet it has been claimed<sup>51</sup> that the congregation was "one of the first in Scotland" to have an organ.

Contemporary accounts are sometimes no more reliable. "Organs are booming in some fifty or sixty churches in the establishment" said John Cunningham in March 1867,<sup>52</sup> but the *Scotsman* more than six years later said that there were only "ten Presbyterian Churches in Scotland furnished with organs".<sup>53</sup> Even if we assume that Cunningham was including harmoniums and the *Scotsman* was not, Cunningham's estimate needs to be divided by two and the *Scotsman*'s multiplied by at least four to reach the true numbers. With the exception of A.K.H. Boyd, nobody seems to have had much idea of the situation in Scotland

as a whole. Local newspapers of the period, however, give reliable information about the situation in their localities, and on that basis a national picture can be assembled.

Like the Church courts of the time, this chapter is concerned only with the use of instruments in what contemporaries called "public worship". Their use in church in connection with soirees, children's services, and Sunday evening "lectures" or "sermons" is not considered, though such use was often a precursor of use in public worship. Other occasional uses sometimes occurred. Marriage services in established churches were introduced from 1865 onwards,<sup>54</sup> and harmoniums were sometimes brought into church for use at these services.<sup>55</sup> At Kelso Parish Church in 1872, nobody objected to the introduction of a harmonium to accompany the singing at an interdenominational service of thanksgiving for the recovery from illness of the Prince of Wales.<sup>56</sup>

Apart from the accompaniment of a single psalm in St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in 1807, the first use of instrumental accompaniment in the public worship of a Church of Scotland congregation was at Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, in 1863. Though Robert Lee thus introduced the first instrument in the Church of Scotland, he was by no means the first in that Church to advocate or discuss the innovation, and he did so in an environment which was largely sympathetic. Instrumental accompaniment had been advocated by James Beattie as early as 1778.<sup>57</sup> In 1807 and 1808, Ritchie<sup>58</sup> and Fleming<sup>59</sup> had provided powerful statements of the arguments for instruments. Ritchie's congregation, admittedly far from typical, had been unanimously in favour. During the Glasgow debate a reference was made to an earlier unsuccessful project to introduce an organ in an Aberdeen church, but Thom, in his 1811 "History of Aberdeen", does not mention this, though he refers to the Glasgow case. His view of the situation<sup>60</sup> was that

"the more rational part of the presbyterians would have no objections to see organs in their churches; but the ignorant, who are numerous and bigotted, would think the introduction of organs an approach to Popery, which they are taught to consider as the

worst of all religious establishments".

George F. Graham, writing in 1816, attacked a wide-spread prejudice against instrumental music, even in the secular sphere, and advocated the use of church organs.<sup>61</sup> Wade, however, believed in 1822 that the Church might be ready for the change and that it was prevented by fear of a repetition of the events of 1807-8.<sup>62</sup> "I have felt my devotions often chilled by the miserable music in some of our churches" said Cumming in his 1840 preface:<sup>63</sup>

"It would be a vast advantage if organs were generally used. In fact, an instrument of some kind, and of sufficient power, is almost essential to correct psalmody".

Similar views seem to have been held by many during the forties and fifties. For example, the minister of Paisley High Church later claimed to have advocated the use of organs about 1847,<sup>64</sup> and John Cunningham of Crieff did so in a lecture in 1854.<sup>65</sup> Dalyell in 1849, in the aftermath of the Disruption, thought it better to yield to unreasonable prejudice than to risk bitter disagreement, and he doubted whether organs would ever be used in the Established Church.<sup>66</sup> Seven years later, Boyd reckoned on waiting about a hundred years:<sup>67</sup>

"The great mass of educated Scotch people is fast becoming extricated from the vulgar prejudice against the organ. In every circle of polished society, the wish may be heard for its introduction".

But, he went on,

"it will take another century of railway communication and intercourse with England to rub off the horror of Prelacy and all its belongings which exists among the humbler classes - at least in country places ... [The organ] will be introduced first in the churches in the fashionable parts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, next in country parishes where the squire has been educated at Oxford, and ultimately, we doubt not, it will excite as little wonder as it does in England now. The tide is flowing surely. But we shall not live to see that time".

Nine years later, Boyd was eating his words. Things had happened, he said, much faster than he had dared to hope. And, as we shall see, he was proved wrong not only in his time-scale but also in his forecast of the pattern of introduction, his distinction between urban and rural parishes, and his opinion of the attitudes of different social classes.



Other Church of Scotland organ propaganda came in lectures by John Cumming in 1850 and 1859,<sup>68</sup> in a paper of 1862 attributed to R.H. Story,<sup>69</sup> and in a pamphlet by Sprott in 1863,<sup>70</sup> though Sprott believed that the time was not yet ripe. On the occasion of the re-opening of Glasgow Cathedral after its renovation, in June 1862, its respected minister John Robertson preached a sermon in which he said:<sup>71</sup>

"With regard to church music, everyone knows that the question is coming to be more and more entertained every day, whether it would not be an improvement to make use of the help of instruments ... And I do not hesitate to say in public, what I have often said, and heard many of my brethren say, in private, that there appears to be no reason why such congregations as may wish it should not be permitted to employ this help to the voice. The matter is not so important as to be worth division in congregations; but should any congregation desire it, with a near approach to unanimity, it seems only consistent with a reasonable liberty that they should be allowed to gratify their wish".

This sermon came less than a fortnight after James Bisset's revolutionary moderatorial address<sup>72</sup> at the General Assembly, which had included the absence of instrumental music as one of the shortcomings of Scots Presbyterian worship.

Occasional incidental statements suggest that a number of congregations were awaiting their chance. For instance, the minister of Abernyte said in 1865 that members of his church had asked him "several years ago" to allow them to use a harmonium in the services.<sup>73</sup> In the same year, the minister of Dundee East said that "for a long time past there has been a desire in the East Church to have an organ" but that nothing positive had been done until after General Assembly deliverance of 1864.<sup>74</sup>

Thus when Lee introduced the harmonium at Old Greyfriars in 1863 he had behind him a solid body of opinion. Characteristically, he chose to bring in the harmonium at a service attended by the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh.<sup>75</sup> His congregation wholeheartedly supported him, and the trouble which might have been expected from other quarters did not materialise, possibly because

Lee's innovations were by then so notorious that this was seen as just a small addition to the peculiarities of worship at Old Greyfriars. Yet Leishman was later to point out<sup>76</sup> that the harmonium was the only one of Lee's innovations which could not be justified by reference to some earlier period in the reformed Church of Scotland.

Just six weeks later, Lee's example was unwisely followed by the inexperienced young minister of Inch, near Stranraer, John McCalman.<sup>77</sup> Without the authority of his kirk session, McCalman introduced the harmonium at a service at which he preached on the organ question and declared his intention to continue with the harmonium until stopped by a higher authority.<sup>78</sup> But McCalman was not a professor and royal chaplain, nor was the congregation of Inch that of Old Greyfriars. Several members of the Inch congregation rose and left the church as soon as the harmonium started to play.<sup>79</sup> Instead of waiting for censure, McCalman took the initiative by proposing at the Presbytery of Stranraer a motion "that instrumental music is neither opposed to the purity of worship nor against the law of the Church". He treated the presbytery to a long speech, which was followed by "a profound silence". No seconder came forward, and the motion fell, to the delight and loud applause of a large audience.<sup>80</sup>

After only two Sundays, McCalman's own kirk session forbade the continued use of the harmonium at morning services, but allowed him to use it at the evening services.<sup>81</sup> These services were popular,<sup>82</sup> but they did not last longer than ten weeks. On the petition of four Inch elders, the presbytery appointed a committee which succeeded in persuading McCalman to remove the harmonium from the church.<sup>83</sup> Following the Inch case, nobody else dared to introduce instrumental music until the end of the following year, but the impression is very much that some congregations were straining at the leash.

Meanwhile the harmonium at Old Greyfriars continued in use. Clearly with Lee in mind, the 1863 General Assembly appointed a committee to report on innovations in worship and to make recommendations on possible legisla-

tion.<sup>84</sup> Before the committee reported to the 1864 Assembly, a new period of paper war was heralded by three pamphlets. One, by George Smith of the Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh, demonstrates the errors and strategy of the ultra-conservative. It urged that the Assembly deal firmly once and for all with Lee. Smith was an old man, out of touch with the age. He believed that, if the members of the Church were polled, there would be a majority of at least ten to one against the innovations, that "particularly in the west and in the south, there are strong objections - it may be said an insuperable repugnance - to instrumental music and reading prayers" and that further "feebleness" on the Assembly's part would lead inevitably to a major secession.<sup>85</sup> In the same year, Lee published his comprehensive defence of his position,<sup>86</sup> and Robert Young of Teviothead a long and less than convincing treatise<sup>87</sup> showing that innovations in worship would lead to episcopacy and ultimately to Rome.

The committee's report<sup>88</sup> to the 1864 Assembly surveyed the conduct of worship throughout the country and concluded that no legislation was necessary. It became clear from the report that in practice the question was narrowed to two innovations only - reading of prayers and the use of instrumental music. Only Old Greyfriars was using printed forms of prayer and only Old Greyfriars was using instrumental music. In the 1864 Assembly, a motion explicitly prohibiting both of these innovations was withdrawn through lack of support, and a motion instructing the Presbytery of Edinburgh to proceed against Lee was defeated by a more general motion by which the Assembly expressed

"their determination to put in force the laws of the Church in respect to any innovation whereby the harmony of particular congregations,<sup>89</sup> or the peace of the Church in general, is disturbed".

Lee had won one round of his fight.

The first church to profit from the new situation was the Tron Church, Glasgow,<sup>90</sup> where a harmonium was gifted to the session for use in the services. Bearing in mind the Assembly's provision about the harmony of congregations, the session decided to test the people's response

by means of voting papers. Out of a congregation of 1400, only 89 voted against the harmonium. On Sunday 11 December, at the first service in which it was used (together with the newly formed choir), more than 1400 people crowded into the church.

Meanwhile, the managers of a church being completed in the Glasgow suburb of Anderston had decided to place an organ in the new church. Congregational harmony was not a problem, for the congregation had not yet been formed. The advertisements which appeared in December for sittings in the new church intimated: "Applicants will please observe that there is to be an Organ in this Church".<sup>91</sup> The first use of the organ in public worship was on Sunday 15 January 1865, when the preacher was Norman Macleod.<sup>92</sup>

Two harmoniums and one organ, therefore, had now been taken into regular use. And by this time organ movements were afoot at Crieff, Dundee East, Kilmarnock St. Mar-nock, Ayr Old, Ayr New, Dundonald, Duns, Greenock Middle, and Pollokshaws. By May, further organ proposals had been made, or were being followed up, at Dumbarton, Auchingramont, Skelmorlie, Paisley Middle, Paisley St. George, Glasgow St. Andrew, Lerwick, Paisley South, Glasgow Park, and Dumfries St. Mary.

Only four of these churches had installed instruments by the time the 1865 Assembly met in May. These were Dundonald and Skelmorlie (organs) and Pollokshaws and Paisley South (harmoniums). The Skelmorlie organ had not been used before the Assembly met. The others had been taken into use quietly, though at Dundonald an unscheduled recital was given on a Friday evening, at a few hours' notice, to a well-filled church.<sup>93</sup>

Five of the organ projects listed above disappeared to re-emerge several years later.<sup>94</sup> At Lerwick,<sup>95</sup> the session rejected the congregation's memorial asking for a harmonium, pending the result of the General Assembly's deliberations (for by this time several overtures had been transmitted on the subject of instrumental music);

but nothing more happened there for six years.

The remaining churches proceeded with their projects, though, like Lerwick, at least two of them - Ayr New and Greenock Middle - delayed taking definite steps until the 1865 Assembly should give a ruling, and Auchingramont seems to have done the same. Other churches appear to have taken the opposite view and acted quickly to forestall a possible ban. This was probably the thinking behind the formal announcement to Dundee Presbytery in February that the East Church was to have an organ,<sup>96</sup> and behind the decision at Park Church, Glasgow, in April to "take immediate measures" to obtain an organ, though the money to buy it had not at that stage been subscribed.<sup>97</sup> Almost indecent haste was shown at the end of April at St. Mary's, Dumfries, where a congregational meeting rejected a proposal to use voting cards, took a vote on the spot, and resolved to use the harmonium immediately.<sup>98</sup> (For some reason, this resolution was not carried out). At Duns, a congregational meeting on 1 March unanimously resolved to have an organ "without delay";<sup>99</sup> by the time the Assembly rose, just three months later, the organ had been ordered from Conacher of Huddersfield, built, and set up in the church.<sup>100</sup>

One feature of the year of freedom between the Assemblies of 1864 and 1865 amazed even the organ enthusiasts, and that was the weight of support which instrumental music had among ordinary church-goers. A number of the congregations were described as "unanimous" or "practically unanimous". Formal calls for objections produced few responses, and, in churches using voting papers, there was nowhere anything approaching a majority against the organ. Indeed, during this period the highest proportion of the poll achieved by the organ opponents is represented by 71 out of 332 non-neutral votes cast at the New Church, Ayr. The myth of popular opposition was firmly laid to rest. From 1865 onwards the only issue was the protection of conscientious minorities.

It also became clear that, though seven churches had adopted instrumental music and another fifteen had taken

some steps towards it, there had been no similar opening of the flood-gates in liturgical worship. When the General Assembly debated "innovations" in 1865 and 1866, the members were talking about instrumental music throughout the Church and about reading of prayers in Old Greyfriars.

Lee was not keeping a low profile. Immediately after the 1864 Assembly, he announced plans to replace the harmonium at Old Greyfriars by an organ, and £250 (of the £400 which it cost) was raised within a fortnight.<sup>101</sup> Many clergy, several magistrates, and the Lord Provost attended the opening of the new organ on 22 April 1865,<sup>102</sup> just a month before the Assembly was due to consider instrumental music. It is typical of Lee that he then arranged recitals on the new organ on the opening day of the Established and Free Church Assemblies, "in order to afford the members attending both Assemblies an opportunity of hearing this very fine instrument". The attendances were "fair", though, said the Scotsman, "it would have been desirable to have seen a larger number of those present for whose benefit they [the recitals] were intended".<sup>103</sup>

Intensification of the interest in organs is evident from the correspondence columns of Scottish newspapers, and it evoked comments from the English musical press, which resuscitated earlier heavy humour about bagpipes.<sup>104</sup> Dr. Hill, who had been convenor of the Assembly's innovations committee of 1863-4, now in retirement, wrote a long letter attacking the use of organs in the Church of Scotland which was published in several newspapers.<sup>105</sup> Four anti-organ pamphlets appeared between the 1864 and 1865 Assemblies. "Instrumental music is unpresbyterian in itself",<sup>106</sup> asserted A.T. Niven, the convenor of the Assembly's psalmody committee, in a short pamphlet published in November 1864. The remaining pamphlets likewise reflected alarm at the sudden flowering of the organ movement in the Established Church. Robert Williamson of Kingarth produced a new edition of a 1713 pamphlet and, at the expense of an anonymous Free Church donor, supplied copies to all ministers of the Esta-

blished, Free, and U.P. Churches and to the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in England.<sup>107</sup> Two other pamphlets came from Free Church sources - an updated version of his 1857 pamphlet by Bannatyne,<sup>108</sup> and 700 lines of anti-organ verse from another minister in the north-east.<sup>109</sup>

### 9.3. The 1865 Act and its effects.

By May 1865, innovations had been discussed in presbyteries up and down the country. One synod and six presbyteries overtured the General Assembly for legislation on the subject. Examination of these overtures<sup>110</sup> confirms the shift of emphasis to instrumental music. While four of the overtures specifically mention the spread of instrumental music and another is clearly referring to it, only one overture mentions "liturgical practices in prayer".

After a long debate, and despite outstanding speeches from Lee, Macleod and Tulloch, the 1865 Assembly<sup>111</sup> eventually carried Pirie's motion by 33 votes. The essential part of the deliverance, which came to be known as the Pirie Act, was:<sup>112</sup>

"...the General Assembly, while recommending the utmost tenderness to the feelings of unanimous congregations as to matters of form, do hereby declare and enact that arrangements with regard to public worship and all other religious services and ecclesiastical arrangements of any kind in parishes or congregations are to be regulated by the Presbyteries of the bounds, subject always to the ordinary right of appeal ... And the General Assembly strictly prohibit all ministers and office-bearers from assuming independent jurisdiction in such matters..."

Pirie's success may have been partly due to a well-timed hint, at the end of his closing speech, that ministers would do well to ally themselves with presbyteries rather than risk being ruled by the laymen of their sessions; and it is interesting that the elders' votes were marginally against Pirie while the votes of the clergy were about three to two in his favour. The effect of the Act (misleadingly described as a Declaratory Act, presumably to avoid the need to proceed under the Barrier Act) was that powers which had manifestly been exercised for cen-

turies by kirk sessions were now vested in the presbyteries. The immediate effects in 1865 were that the arrangements of the Old Greyfriars services were now a matter for the Presbytery of Edinburgh and that any presbytery could forbid or sanction the use of instrumental music in a church. However, much of the muscle of the Act was removed by the reference to "the feelings of unanimous congregations" - the Old Greyfriars congregation was unanimous; also, any unanimous congregation could, it appeared, expect its presbytery to sanction the use of an organ.

The Pirie Act gave rise to much anger and much heated correspondence in the press. It was attacked by some English newspapers and journals<sup>113</sup> and by extremists of both kinds. The ultra-conservative were unhappy that the Assembly had once again failed to condemn the innovations for, as Lee observed in the debate, the Act would merely make the presbyteries parties to the innovations. This view was forcefully expressed in a pamphlet by Alexander Hill, who urged presbyteries to refuse every application for read prayers or instrumental music and to overture the 1866 Assembly for explicit prohibition.<sup>114</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, Bisset saw the 1865 Act as "a serious error", and an infringement of the constitutional rights of sessions and people; the further strengthening of "these parasitical plants", the superior courts, was reminiscent of the authoritarianism of Rome.<sup>115</sup> He also presented again some of the standard arguments for the use of instrumental music.<sup>116</sup>

Organs were the topic of the day. Pro-organ pamphlets appeared from episcopal<sup>117</sup> and congregational<sup>118</sup> sources and the organ question was widely discussed in newspapers and magazines. There was a growing desire for organs in the U.P. Church, a desire which was hampered by the negotiations for union with the Free Church.<sup>119</sup> As it happened, Begg was moderator of the Free Church Assembly in 1865, and his closing address<sup>120</sup> attacked the use of instrumental music and the permissive and weak attitude of the Established Assembly. In 1866 he produced his major anti-organ book,<sup>121</sup> which received widespread attention



and ridicule.

Following the 1865 Act, the presbyteries were soon in action. The organ at Duns had just missed the boat, and the kirk session applied to the Presbytery of Dunse for sanction to use it. This was granted unanimously on 6 June.<sup>122</sup> On the same day the Presbytery of Greenock had two cases to consider. Walter Boyd, minister of Skelmorlie and brother of A.K.H. Boyd, intimated that the organ in his church had been erected before the 1865 Act; the only member of the congregation who had not been in favour had said that he would not press his objection. Instead of simply accepting the intimation, the presbytery treated it as a petition under the new legislation and sent Boyd off to "ascertain authoritatively" the state of opinion in his congregation.<sup>123</sup> This he did by intimating to his people that papers for and against the organ would lie in the vestry for three days; the result was that 224 members signed in favour and only two members of one family, both summer visitors, signed against. The presbytery granted the prayer of the "petition" at its next meeting.<sup>124</sup>

The other case which came before the Presbytery of Greenock on 6 June was that of the Middle Church, Greenock, where in April voting papers had shown a 372 to 59 vote for the organ. The session had respectfully decided not to put the vote into effect unless and until the Assembly permitted the use of organs.<sup>125</sup> They soon regretted the delay, for, though the state of the vote had become 416 to 49, the presbytery by a single vote declined to grant its sanction. Nearly half the congregation of 900 had not voted, and the session was instructed to ascertain "whether the congregation is or is not unanimous".<sup>126</sup> A pulpit intimation was made asking for objections to the organ, and precisely 49 objections were lodged. Virtually none of these came from active church workers and only eight of the objectors lived in the parish; but the presbytery once again declined its sanction.<sup>127</sup> Thus began a year and a half of acrimony involving also the town council and the synod.<sup>128</sup>

The 1865 Act was responsible for the discord at Greenock. There was no hint that the objectors were actively opposed to the organ - they had been asked to state their opinions and they had done so. At no stage did they participate in the quarrels which followed, which were entirely between the majority of the congregation and the presbytery. Had the presbytery never been involved, the likelihood is that the organ would have been introduced peacefully with the acquiescence of the minority.

Acrimony arose also from the needless involvement of the Presbytery of Dundee with the harmonium at Abernyte. In 1864 the villagers, by a house-to-house collection, bought a harmonium for the church. At first it was used only on weekdays, but by June 1865 the congregation was pressing for its Sunday use. Having called for objections and received none, the minister agreed to "experimental" use. A newspaper report of the Sunday services alerted the presbytery, which called him to task for his breach of the 1865 Act, and there were indecorous scenes at the presbytery meeting.<sup>129</sup> He returned at the next meeting with a petition, signed by virtually every adult inhabitant of Abernyte, seeking permission to continue using the harmonium on Sundays. After further wrangling in the presbytery, permission was granted.<sup>130</sup>

Following their intimation to the presbytery in February 1865, the people of Dundee East, having placed an order for their organ, were possibly under no obligation to apply for sanction. But when they did so in October the presbytery was pleased by the respect shown, accepted the deputation's assurance that the congregation was "unanimous", and sanctioned the organ.<sup>131</sup> Had the presbytery behaved in the same way as the Presbytery of Greenock, the Dundee case too could have caused trouble. The Dundee minister had said in February that the organ would "not give rise to the slightest dissension. Indeed, I would rather have fears on the other side, that dissension would arise if the organ were not introduced".<sup>132</sup>

It was difficult for the presbyteries. The first

recorded comment on the 1865 Act, echoed many times at presbytery meetings, was an expression of doubt "whether that deliverance was constitutional or even intelligible".<sup>133</sup> Many members of presbyteries quite clearly had no taste for interfering in the affairs of other congregations; others took their responsibility seriously, but were not always sure how it should be exercised; a few others simply dissented, on the ground of their ordination vows, from any deliverance which sanctioned the use of instrumental music. The response to any particular application depended on the balance of these attitudes among the members present at a presbytery meeting.

From the start, though, the general view of presbyteries was that a congregation which was unanimous in desiring an organ or harmonium should be allowed to have one. This was inferred from the observation that the 1865 Assembly had neither condemned instrumental music nor taken any action with respect to churches which had already introduced it. Some presbytery members interpreted "unanimity" literally - everyone must vote in favour of the change - but most took the view that a unanimous congregation was one in which no discord would be caused by the introduction of an instrument. But how was the presbytery to judge? In the cases of Duns and Dundee, the presbyteries were happy to accept an assurance from the minister or a congregational deputation; so was the Presbytery of Hamilton in the case of Auchingramont Church, though a few members there would have preferred delaying the sanction to allow objectors to come forward.<sup>134</sup>

A delay of a month was quite reasonably stipulated by the Presbytery of Perth in the case of Stanley Church, whose deputation reported that the "unanimous" decision had been taken at a congregational meeting only a few days earlier.<sup>135</sup> No objectors came forward during the month, and sanction was granted.<sup>136</sup> At the Presbytery of Cupar, a deputation from St. Michael's Church stated that there was not a single dissenting voice in the church; the presbytery did not enquire how this fact had been established and granted its sanction unanimously except for one minister who objected to organs under any cir-

The Presbytery of Glasgow, also, had its "fundamentalist" objector, Dr. James Smith of Cathcart, and only on one occasion was he joined by anyone else in his opposition to sanctioning an instrument. This presbytery received eight applications under the Act, far more than any other presbytery. It dealt with them in a relaxed and sometimes jocular manner, never challenging the statements presented to it and always granting its sanction immediately. Charteris, presenting the petition from Park Church,<sup>138</sup> said he "was glad that in doing so they came before the Presbytery Glasgow" and Robert Lee, in the 1866 Assembly debate,<sup>139</sup> observed that "in the Presbytery of Glasgow ... they allowed the use of organs at once". This was in marked contrast to the Presbytery of Greenock.

The Presbytery of Auchterarder had the most difficult case. Voting papers at Crieff had resulted in a 300 to 72 vote for an organ.<sup>140</sup> However, before the presbytery met, it received a petition against the organ, signed by 158 people claiming to be communicants. John Cunningham, the Crieff minister, asserted that many of the petitioners had not been in the church for years and that most of the 72 who had voted against the organ would accede to the will of the majority. After a long debate, the case was adjourned for a month,<sup>141</sup> during which time a counter-petition in favour of the organ, signed by 502 members and adherents, was presented. After a six-hour meeting, the presbytery by seven votes to four declined to grant its sanction.<sup>142</sup> Reasons of dissent were lodged, feelings ran high, and later events gave the Crieff case the status of a *cause celebre*.<sup>143</sup> As in the Greenock case, subsequent events at Crieff indicate that, had the presbytery not been involved, the organ would have been installed and the disagreement quietly forgotten.

It came to be expected that, where a congregational vote was taken on instrumental music, there would be a sizeable majority in favour. Where voters were given three options (for, against, neutral), there was only one

case in the early years in which the "for" votes did not constitute an absolute majority.<sup>144</sup> It is symptomatic of the support for instrumental music that a sixty-five per cent vote in its favour was a disappointment for the organ party at the New Church, Ayr, and resulted in the congregation appointing a new precentor instead of buying an organ.<sup>145</sup>

It had been widely forecast<sup>146</sup> that instruments would first appear in the fashionable churches in Edinburgh and Glasgow and would slowly spread to the country as rural prejudice was overcome; indeed, Pirie had opined that they would be restricted entirely to the large cities.<sup>147</sup> But, in the event, the most interesting feature of the churches which had adopted instruments by the time of the 1866 Assembly is their diversity. Of the eighteen instruments in use, exactly half were in the two main cities, but Edinburgh had only one (Old Greyfriars) to Glasgow's eight (St. Andrew's; Anderston; the Tron; the chapel at Bellahouston; the newly-built Maxwell Chapel; Pollokshaws; Kingston; and St. Mary's, Partick). The churches outside Glasgow and Edinburgh comprised: a major civic church with a very populous parish (Dundee East), a *quoad sacra* town church (Paisley South), the recently-built second parish church of Hamilton (Auchingramont), a village church at the centre of a large parish (Dundonald), the smallest village church in the Presbytery of Dundee (Abernyte), the parish churches of two eastern county towns (Duns, Cupar) and of a small watering-place on the Clyde coast (Skelmorlie), and a proprietary chapel in a Perthshire village (Stanley).

The ministers of these churches were as diverse as the churches themselves, including humble parish ministers as well as the respected and the controversial. The organ movement in the Established Church was from the start a universal phenomenon, not restricted to fashionable city churches or to a particular shade of theological opinion.

#### 9.4. The 1866 Act and its effects.

General dissatisfaction with the 1865 Act led to no fewer than 23 overtures to the 1866 Assembly.<sup>148</sup> Some sought repeal, some clarification, and some modification. Additionally there were several overtures calling for the suppression of innovations.<sup>149</sup> In another long debate, Pirie argued that the 1865 Act had been effective in preventing new innovations, though he had to admit that it had provided machinery for the spread of instrumental music. Lee pointed out that presbyteries were not acting in a uniform way and that, though presbyteries had now become involved in the spread of instruments, kirk sessions were still taking their own decisions about changes of posture and other matters. Lee's motion for simple recall of the 1865 Act lost by 207 votes to 94 to Pirie's motion, so that the 1866 Act declared:<sup>150</sup>

"...that the right and duty of maintaining and enforcing the observance of the existing laws and usages of the Church in particular congregations within their bounds in matters connected with the performance of public worship and the administration of ordinances, belong to and are incumbent upon the Presbyteries of the Church, subject always to the review of the superior Church courts; and that, while needless interference with the government of particular kirks is always to be avoided, it is, nevertheless, the duty of the Presbyteries, when by any legal and constitutional means the alleged existence or proposed introduction of any innovation or novel practice in the performance of worship or administration of ordinances in any congregation come to their knowledge, to take cognisance of the same, and after such inquiry as the circumstances of the case seem to call for, or without inquiry, if none appears requisite, either to enjoin the discontinuance, or prohibit the introduction, of such innovation or novel practice, as being unfit, from any cause, to be used in the worship of God, either in general or in the particular kirks, or to find that no case has been stated to them calling for their interference; or to pronounce such other deliverance in the said matter as in their judgment seems warranted by the circumstances of the case, and the laws and usages of the Church...."

This passage is worth quoting in full, for it gave rise to difficulties. On the obvious interpretation, it gave presbyteries little more power than they had had before the 1865 Act. Kirk session decisions had always been subject to appeal to presbyteries, and it had always been

open to members of a congregation to address a petition directly to the presbytery. The reference to "any legal and constitutional means" does not seem to have enlarged presbyteries' powers of intervention, an impression confirmed by the reference to "needless interference". Lee's mockery had had its effect, for presbyteries were now expected to "find that no case has been stated to them calling for their interference", instead of granting their "sanction".<sup>151</sup> It is difficult to disagree with those who saw the 1866 Act as a face-saving way of annulling the 1865 Act.

The 1866 Act itself, however, claimed to provide "a more full and explicit declaration of the law", as the 1865 Act had "been misunderstood in some quarters". It recalled the earlier Act, but its purpose was "to carry out more effectually the purposes truly contemplated in the same".<sup>152</sup> On this ground it was argued that the Act merely gave detailed instructions as to how presbyteries were to exercise their powers. The object of the 1866 Act, said a member of the Synod of Dumfries,<sup>153</sup> was "to explain a former Act, but ... was the more obscure of the two". It was claimed to be now *ultra vires* of a presbytery to sanction an innovation.

Differences of interpretation were of little practical importance except in one respect. The 1865 Act had prohibited ministers and office-bearers from "assuming independent jurisdiction"; on the other hand, the 1866 Act discouraged "needless interference with the government of particular kirks" and seemed to envisage situations in which innovations introduced by sessions would give no cause for presbyterial interference. Was it, then, still necessary for a kirk to apply to its presbytery before adopting instrumental music?

Given the uncertainty, most kirks took the view that it was better to bring their organ proposals to the knowledge of their presbyteries at an early stage rather than risk trouble after expense had been incurred. Strangely enough, kirks continued to change the form of their worship in various other ways without reference to

their presbyteries, but right through the eighteenth-seventies some presbyteries were asked to pronounce on proposals for instrumental music. Worship at the East Church, Perth, was reported to have been transformed by a series of changes in the space of eighteen months; but, though certain members disliked all the changes, they petitioned the presbytery only about the introduction of a harmonium.<sup>154</sup> The peculiar position of instrumental music was often commented upon in debates of the period.

But it made little difference. After the traumatic Crieff case, presbyteries learned not to interfere with the obvious desires of congregations. Most presbyteries were probably relieved as sessions increasingly introduced instruments on their own authority. Of the 36 congregations known to have decided on instrumental music between the 1866 Act and the end of 1871, 24 made application to their presbyteries, another 4 may have done so, and the remaining 8 did not. But, of 19 churches adopting instruments in 1875, only 2 seem to have applied to their presbyteries. After the Cramond case, churches in the bounds of the Presbytery of Edinburgh never applied to the presbytery; everyone knew that to do so would be to invite Ranald Macpherson to cause trouble. Some presbyteries discouraged applications.<sup>155</sup> And the Presbytery of Greenock so changed its attitude in thirteen years that, when the minister of Langbank announced to it in 1878 that his congregation had unanimously decided to adopt instrumental music, he was congratulated on the decision.<sup>156</sup>

In the late sixties and the early seventies, however, members of several presbyteries regarded application to the presbytery as being necessary; they became irate when sessions introduced instruments of their own accord.<sup>157</sup> On the other hand, "experimental" use of a harmonium at Dallas for many months in 1870 went unchallenged by the Presbytery of Forres,<sup>158</sup> and the same presbytery had no objection to a similar experiment at Kinloss in 1871 before formal consent was sought.<sup>159</sup> Also in 1871, the minister of Abbotshall aroused no displeasure when he told the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy that the announcement he was



making of his church's plan for instrumental music was unnecessary; it was made only out of respect for the presbytery and because his congregation had asked him to make it.<sup>160</sup>

In 1871 a case which could have settled the question came before the General Assembly. The congregation of Eyemouth was unanimous in its desire to have an organ, and it went ahead and obtained one in April 1870. All went well until near the end of the year, when a resiting of the organ involved minor alterations which had to be sanctioned by the heritors. The heritors refused to allow the changes unless the presbytery's sanction was obtained for the organ. When applied to, the Presbytery of Chirnside ruled that there was no cause for its interference and added that, under the 1866 Act, "the present application was quite unnecessary." One member, William Dobie of Ladykirk, appealed to the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale. The synod unanimously dismissed the appeal and, since only eight of the twenty-three members present believed that application should have been made to the presbytery, confirmed *in toto* the presbytery's judgement.<sup>161</sup> Dobie appealed to the Assembly. He claimed to be dispassionate on the organ question, his only motive being to obtain a definitive ruling on the right of churches to introduce instrumental music on their own authority. He wrote to the *Scotsman*<sup>162</sup> and was accused of "cant and humbug".<sup>163</sup>

When the case came before the Assembly of 1871,<sup>164</sup> Pirie explained his interpretation of his own 1866 Act.<sup>165</sup> Presbyteries, he said, were not to seek out cases of innovation. "The whole bearing of the Act of 1866 was to this effect", he said, "that if the Presbyteries had a case submitted to them, especially on the subject of instrumental music, they had authority to prohibit its use, but not to allow it". The Eyemouth heritors were therefore misguided in requiring presbyterial "sanction" - in this respect the presbytery had acted correctly, and "he trusted that Presbyteries would understand ... that, when they gave their sanction to the introduction of instrumental music, it was just as good as so much waste paper". The implication seemed to be that there was nothing

to prevent a church adopting instrumental music without applying to its presbytery. Pirie also quite irrelevantly spoke at length against instrumental music generally, in a tirade of which even James Begg would have been proud. He made the astounding statement that "it never entered into the mind of a single individual in the Assembly of 1866 that instrumental music in public worship was consistent with the laws, usages and principles of the Church", and he recommended that the Assembly should forbid it "as soon as possible". According to a die-hard few, instrumental music had always been illegal and, after Pirie's speech, Ranald Macpherson moved that, on this ground alone, the synod decision should be reversed. He attracted only thirteen votes. The Assembly finally decided by a large majority to "affirm the judgement of the Synod, except in so far as it finds that the application to the Presbytery was unnecessary", but it was explained by Campbell Swinton, the proposer of the motion, that this judgement "did not say that the application was necessary". So the Assembly once again gave out an uncertain sound.

The inevitable newspaper correspondence followed Pirie's speech, and there was now a new question - what had the Eyemouth case decided, if anything? Whatever the arguments, there was a clear decline in the proportion of cases brought before the presbyteries after the Eyemouth case, and from then onwards, presbytery involvement was the exception rather than the rule.

Pirie's remarks on the power of presbyteries in relation to organs had their effect. Previously, procedures had been diverse. In most cases "permission" or "sanction" had been sought, and in a number of cases that was what the presbytery granted, though most presbyteries responded by deciding that there was no case for their interference. In four cases, an "announcement" or "intimation" had been made to the presbytery. But after the Eyemouth case it was almost invariable that the minister of the church concerned would intimate the wish of his congregation and explain briefly why no discord would result; the presbytery would then nearly always conclude

that there was no reason for its interference. The Presbytery of Elgin, however, having been asked to "sanction" a harmonium at Lhanbryd, decided in November 1871 to grant its sanction rather than making the usual pronouncement - its action, a member said, was "more gracious" though it might be "not strictly legal".<sup>166</sup>

And, in truth, it made no difference. No presbytery ever in the end forbade the use of an instrument,<sup>167</sup> though approval was sometimes denied for a few weeks or months. After 1866, all but one of the cases which dragged on for a year or longer were initiated by minority complaints that presbyteries had *permitted* the use of instruments. Congregations and sessions seem to have been in no doubt that they would ultimately achieve their objective; some spent substantial sums on instruments and engaged professional organists while their cases were still unresolved.<sup>168</sup>

Apart from the resentment sometimes felt at presbytery interference, delay and publicity were the only major effects of presbytery involvement. It may be that sessions were less likely to foist organs on unwilling congregations when their decisions were subject to presbytery scrutiny; but even if there was no formal application or intimation, a session was always aware that any serious discord would result in a petition to the presbytery. There is no evidence that trouble was more likely to ensue when the decision was taken by the session alone without reference to the presbytery; if anything, the reverse was true. Sessions did not want discord in their congregations, and they were in a better position to assess a situation than were the presbyteries.

#### 9.5. Presbytery procedures.

We have seen how some presbyteries in the early years were over-zealous in carrying out their duty. None exceeded the Presbytery of Dunbar. It rejected an application from the small church of Belhaven because the church had not funds to purchase or maintain a harmonium or to pay an organist. On receiving a later petition stating

that these matters were now taken care of and showing indisputable unanimity, it then appointed a committee to investigate further. Only on receiving the committee's report did it decide there was no case for interference.<sup>169</sup>

Other presbyteries at least confined themselves to the question of congregational harmony, but the methods they adopted in reaching their decisions were far from uniform. The Presbytery of Glasgow never investigated any case, always accepting the assurance of the minister or congregational deputation. It cheerfully accepted the announcement that at Brownfield Church in 1871 a "small minority of 46" opposed the proposal but would accede to the will of the majority.<sup>170</sup> At the other extreme, the Presbytery of Ayr in 1867 received a petition from all but 7 members of Fullarton Church and was told that these 7 would not oppose the majority; the presbytery appointed a committee, which later confirmed that this was indeed the case.<sup>171</sup> In 1870, the Presbytery of Dalkeith appointed a committee to investigate the situation at Inveresk Church, where only 3 persons from a communion roll of 665 were said to oppose the organ; even with the committee's confirmation of the facts, the presbytery sanctioned the organ by only 8 votes to 5.<sup>172</sup> Two members of the Presbytery of Linlithgow continued to be obstructive in the 1871 case of the harmonium at Ecclesmachan<sup>173</sup> after confirmation by an unnecessarily appointed committee that there was no opposition at all in the parish, but they received no support from the other presbytery members.

Sometimes a congregation's decision to have instrumental music was taken at a poorly-attended meeting. Most presbyteries reasonably expressed concern when this happened, but here again their practices were far from uniform. The Presbytery of Elgin in 1871 forbade the use of the Lhanbryd harmonium until a chance to object had been given to members who had not been at the meeting; when no objectors came forward, the presbytery granted its sanction.<sup>174</sup> In 1867 the Presbytery of Dumbarton, under similar circumstances, immediately allowed the use of the Craigrownie harmonium, though several presbytery members

were unhappy about it.<sup>175</sup> But the Presbytery of Paisley in 1871 raised no objection to the plan for an organ at Paisley Abbey though only 127 of the Abbey's large congregation had voted.<sup>176</sup>

Presbyteries were wary of taking any action on instruments in churches over which they did not exercise full control. The church of Stanley was provided by the local mill-owner, and that at Lugar by the Eglinton Iron Company. Services at Lugar had been held in a school-room with harmonium accompaniment, but in 1867 the company built a church for its workers. The church was "not intended in the meantime to be handed over to the Presbytery", but the presbytery's "support and countenance" were sought in a communication which also announced that the church would contain an organ. After discussion, the presbytery decided to reply that the new church had its support, but "without any allusion to the organ".<sup>177</sup>

After the 1866 Act, presbyteries did not interest themselves in instruments in completely new churches, for these churches had initially no congregations to be canvassed. It also appears that, when new church buildings, with organs, were erected for existing congregations, even the congregations themselves were sometimes not consulted about the organs. Possibly it would have been considered churlish to object to an organ when it came as part of a generous enterprise, such as the Marquis of Lothian's provision of a fine new parish church for Jedburgh in 1875. Some of the new churches provided by the Baird family came complete with organs, and nobody seems to have objected. In 1878 Boyd said: "In the west of Scotland, the organ is now just as understood a part of the equipment of a newly-built church as the pulpit and the Holy Communion table".<sup>178</sup>

Inevitably, presbyteries sometimes made errors of judgement. As we have seen, they caused unnecessary trouble to some substantially unanimous congregations. They also occasionally erred in the other direction. In 1873 the Presbytery of Deer was told by the kirk session of St. Fergus that only two members of the congregation ob-

jected to the proposed use of a harmonium.<sup>179</sup> The presbytery found no case for interference, but the harmonium later gave rise to a great deal of argument in the parish.<sup>180</sup> In 1866 the Presbytery of Meigle had to adjudicate on the Coupar Angus harmonium. The kirk session said there were only four objectors, and the minister said that the congregation favoured the harmonium; but there was also a petition with 141 signatures against it. The presbytery bungled its inquiry, concluded that there were "only" 42 genuine objections, and ruled that there was no case for interference.<sup>181</sup> The use of the harmonium then led to a further petition, and an appeal against the presbytery's decision was sustained by the Synod of Angus and Mearns by a single vote.<sup>182</sup> Not until nine years later did the congregation again try to introduce an instrument.

Usually an instrumental music proposal came before a presbytery as a result of a petition for sanction or of formal announcement from the session or minister. But a presbytery could also become involved as a result of an appeal or a petition by members of a congregation against a decision to adopt an instrument. Only one presbytery, it appears, had to deal with an appeal against a session's refusal of an instrument.<sup>183</sup>

#### 9.6. Petitions and appeals.

Anti-organ petitions raised problems for presbyteries. Their assertions always conflicted with those presented by the sessions, and the most obvious inconsistency was in the number of objectors. Typically, the session would present a statement of the number of persons voting against, or stating objections to, the instrument; from the other side the presbytery would receive a later petition bearing perhaps up to ten times as many names as the number of objectors given by the session.<sup>184</sup> Where did all these new objectors come from?

The petitioners always explained the increase in numbers by claiming that the original method of ascertaining the congregation's wishes had been defective -

inadequate notice had been given of the meeting or of the arrangements for lodging objections; the voting cards had not been properly distributed; the meeting had been irregularly conducted; the voters had believed they were voting for experimental, rather than permanent, use of an instrument; and, in one instance where a door-to-door survey of members had been used, it was claimed that threats had been uttered by the young men who carried out the survey.<sup>185</sup> At Coupar Angus, the petitioners appear to have been in the right, and the case is the only one in which the petitioners were successful, winning narrowly on appeal to the synod.<sup>186</sup> But in most other cases the petitioners' allegations seem to have been unfounded.

The provenance of the new objectors is suggested by events in the U.P. churches which were also adopting instrumental music in the seventies. There we find only one case of a petition to a presbytery, and that was from members of an unusual congregation.<sup>187</sup> More significantly, there is in that case no suggestion that the petitioners included any but the original objectors. Those who were not on the membership roll of a U.P. church claimed no part in it, but a parish church in some sense belonged to the local community, including those who were not regular worshippers. As Gladstone said,<sup>188</sup>

"it is the nature of an Established Church to have a large body of adherents who look at the institution very much in connection with its temporal expediency".

It was to these people, and to members who had not communicated or entered the church for several years, that the organ opponents turned when they lost the battle among the committed church members. These people naturally had not heard, or been interested in, the pulpit intimations of meetings and arrangements for the lodging of objections, for they took no part in church life. The petition would be taken round from house to house ("hawked around the town") and, as Cunningham remarked,<sup>189</sup> "people had a wonderful facility for signing petitions"; this was demonstrated by the readiness with which many petitioners, when challenged, changed their minds. Others, it was sometimes alleged, used the organ

petition to settle old scores with the church. In every case, except that of Coupar Angus, it was claimed that the signatories of the petition included very few, if any, active church members, and that the small minority of active members who did oppose the organ were, unlike the petitioners, willing to accede to the wish of the majority; the trouble was coming from outside. These allegations were never answered by the petitioners, and there were a number of cases, notably that of Blairgowrie,<sup>190</sup> where they were largely substantiated.

When a vote, or a call for objections, was organised by a kirk session, the session had a duty to conduct the proceedings properly and to verify that only qualified persons participated. Lacking the session's knowledge of the people and without access to the voting papers or the communion roll, organ opponents could not easily challenge a session's findings. But the situation worked to the advantage of petition organisers. They could not check that all the petitioners were members or adherents, even had they wished to do so. Unvalidated petitions were sent direct to higher courts and were sometimes accepted as evidence of congregational discord despite the protests of sessions.

Nearly every anti-organ petition was challenged as being grossly irregular. The same allegations, never adequately answered, are to be found everywhere: many "signatures" obviously written in the same hand; unauthenticated signatures by mark; the inclusion of children and members of other churches or other denominations; names of people whom nobody could identify or who were said to have been miles away from the parish (even, in one case, in America) at the time of alleged signing; and the names of those who later claimed that they had never signed or authorised the use of their names. All these allegations were made against a petition at Crieff, yet the presbytery refused to investigate them. The scandalous truth that presbytery members had themselves been behind the petition was dramatically established the following year.<sup>191</sup>



An effective way of discrediting a petition was to organise a counter-petition which would put it in perspective. This was done most effectively at Elgin at a time when an anti-organ petition by 85 people had been taken seriously by the General Assembly; the congregation took the matter out of the session's hands and obtained 1964 *bona fide* signatures for a counter-petition.<sup>192</sup> And, after an anti-organ petition at Inverbrothock had been "hawked around the town" for some time and obtained 29 names, the church's organ committee, in a three-hour session one evening, obtained 700 names in favour.<sup>193</sup> Counter-petitions were raised also at Crieff and at Cra-  
mond.<sup>194</sup>

Except at Coupar Angus, these anti-organ petitions never in the end achieved the objective of preventing the use of instrumental music in the churches concerned. They did, however, cause trouble in presbyteries and higher courts, especially when these courts contained naive or prejudiced members. The publicity given to some of the cases also fostered an image of Scots presbyterianism which was quite unjustified.

When a presbytery failed to satisfy the petitioners, an appeal would sometimes be taken to the local synod, and some cases reached the General Assembly. The Assembly, having no time for detailed examination of the facts and lacking local knowledge, would usually refer the case back to a lower court for further investigation, though it did also forbid the use of the instruments at Crieff and Perth. In relation to appeals generally, another contentious issue arose - if a presbytery permitted the use of an instrument, could the instrument be used while the presbytery's ruling was under appeal? The organ opponents usually claimed that it should not and that they were supported by the law and practice of the Church. But the 1865 Act had specified, with the object of nipping innovations in the bud, that a presbytery's ruling must be observed unless and until finally reversed by a higher court. An unforeseen effect was that, where a presbytery had ruled that there was no case for interference, the instrument could be introduced, or its use continued.

Certainly, where a presbytery ruled against an instrument, it was generally expected that it should not be used even if an appeal was pending. The organ opponents wanted to have it both ways, but they succeeded only at Coupar Angus - under pressure from a further petition, the Presbytery of Meigle, though it had found in favour of the harmonium, forbade its use while the appeal was outstanding.<sup>195</sup> But even the persistence of Ranald Macpherson failed to silence the Cramond harmonium during the appeals he instigated.

Innovations in non-essential aspects of worship have always been introduced by kirk sessions. It has been pointed out<sup>196</sup> that the Church of Scotland's attitude has traditionally been that the higher courts should interfere only when the peace of a congregation, or of the Church generally, is disturbed. To some extent, even the 1865 Act recognised this principle, with its reference to "tenderness to the feelings of unanimous congregations". The same principle was widely, and usually wisely, applied by presbyteries and synods to instrumental music after the 1866 Act. These courts had long experience and knowledge of the people and clergy in their bounds and could judge whether an appeal or petition truly reflected a substantial body of discordant opinion in a congregation. But a few members of these courts might be misled or might have objections in principle to the use of instrumental music; and it was always open to these members to appeal to the General Assembly. In four of the five notable cases which reached the Assembly (three of them more than once), the lower courts repeatedly decided that there was no case for interference, and they were vindicated by later events. However, appeals to the General Assembly kept these cases alive because the Assembly had no local knowledge and, if there appeared to be any doubt at all, it referred the case back to a subordinate court for further inquiry and action. The action taken by the subordinate court could then be appealed to the following year's Assembly, and so on. In this way Ranald Macpherson kept the Cramond case going for three years, and three Perthshire village ministers did the same in rela-

tion to Perth East. A leading article in the *Perthshire Constitutional*,<sup>197</sup> following the 1874 Assembly, typifies a general exasperation with these tactics:

"The groanings, it is well known, do not come from either the congregation of Cramond or that of the East Church of Perth - not even from any one solitary discontented member of either congregation. The congregations are going on quietly, contentedly and harmoniously. The groaning comes from without... The Rev. RANALD and our own trio in the north have utterly, as is quite apparent, wearied out the patience of the inferior Courts, all the members of which know, as a matter of fact, that the people of Cramond and the people of the East Church are substantially unanimous in their desire to have instrumental music, and that it is only in the house of the Rev. RANALD, in the manse of Little Dunkeld, and in the other two manses to which we have referred, that the slightest annoyance is caused by the mode of worship practised in these two churches.... The inferior Court knew the circumstances. It is otherwise with the Assembly. Each year's Assembly is composed of new members to some extent, and when the Rev. RANALD, or our own hardly less distinguished trio appear at the bar, a great many who have no means of knowing better are under the impression that the rev. gentlemen are expressing the sentiments and advocating the cause of hundreds and hundreds of zealous adherents of the Church of Scotland who are about, in bitter regret, to lift their psalmbooks and walk out of the Church of their Fathers because of this kist of whistles".

In the same way, the Assembly became the unwitting accomplice of the Presbytery of Auchterarder in its attempt to deprive the congregation in Crieff of its organ, and the Assembly's overruling of presbytery and synod in the Blairgowrie case proved to be misguided. All these congregations were increasing in numbers and prosperity. If their peace was being disturbed, it was not by those who introduced organs but by outsiders who incited small minorities to oppose the wills of almost entire congregations. Presbyteries (except Auchterarder) saw this clearly enough; so did synods. The General Assembly did not; while trying to promote congregational peace, the Assembly became for a time an agent in its disturbance.

This state of affairs came to an end with the Elgin case<sup>198</sup> at the 1876 Assembly, when, perhaps significantly, Pirie was not involved. After the 1875 Assembly had overruled presbytery and synod at the instance of two neighbouring ministers and one objector from the congre-

gation, the angry congregation at Elgin carefully organised a petition in favour of instrumental music. It was signed by 1964 people, and against this number only 64 objectors could be found. When the same three parties once more carried their appeals to the Assembly in 1876, the Assembly members showed in no uncertain manner that they had no sympathy with the appellants. A.T. Niven was shouted down, and Wallace of Old Greyfriars was applauded when he said that small minorities should look to their duty as well as to their rights. The appeals were dismissed by 146 votes to 14. The significance of the Elgin case seems to have been recognised by an anti-organ minority at Lanark Parish Church, where there was much unpleasantness in 1884; after their petition was unanimously rejected by the presbytery following two stormy meetings of inquiry, they proceeded no further.<sup>199</sup>

David Johnston was not so easily discouraged. By the eighties he was almost unique among Church of Scotland clergy in continuing to oppose instrumental music on scriptural and historical grounds. "A host in himself", he was undaunted by the lack of support he experienced in the Assembly, where, over the years, his earnest and lengthy speeches had become a familiar ingredient of organ cases. In 1882 a further chance came his way in his own Orcadian presbytery, when the congregation on Hoy was presented with a harmonium and made the mistake of applying to the Presbytery of Cairston for permission to use it. Johnston succeeded in persuading a small attendance of presbytery members to reject the application on the ground that the use of instrumental music was illegal in the Church of Scotland. Presented with a petition signed by every member of the Hoy congregation, the presbytery at its next meeting reversed its decision.<sup>200</sup> Johnston correctly pointed out that this could not legally be done and took an appeal to the General Assembly. The 1882 Assembly reluctantly sustained the appeal but was unanimous in including in its judgement a clause which seemed to be to the effect that the rights of the Hoy congregation under the 1866 Act should be unaffected by the proceedings.<sup>201</sup> The presbytery was thus enabled to allow the use

of the harmonium, and Johnston's subsequent appeals to the Synod of Orkney<sup>202</sup> and the 1883 Assembly<sup>203</sup> were unavailing.

This was a time when the organ question had again gained some prominence due to the deliberations going on in the Free Church. A group of people, headed by one Major Baillie, tried to put the clock back in the Established Church with a petition asking the Assembly to prohibit the use of instruments in church services. The Committee on Bills declined to transmit the petition and, against a counter-motion by Johnston, the 1883 Assembly upheld the committee's decision by a large majority.<sup>204</sup>

In 1890 several hundred instruments were in regular use in the Church of Scotland, and instruments were no novelty even in Ross-shire.<sup>205</sup> In January that year, the minister of Tain Parish Church had an organ put up in the church, and its use at Sunday evening lectures proved very popular.<sup>206</sup> An earlier proposal for the use of an organ in the regular services had been rejected by the presbytery because 33 of the 500-strong congregation had objected; the minister cheerfully admitted that the object of the evening use was to persuade the minority to change their minds.<sup>207</sup> (In this object he was successful and he obtained the presbytery's approval in December).<sup>208</sup> When a petition against this evening use was presented to the presbytery, the presbytery not only dismissed the petition but also declined to include in its ruling a prohibition against using the organ in the normal services.<sup>209</sup> The petitioners' appeal to the synod was dismissed.<sup>210</sup> The Tain case was a last dying echo of the shouting which had taken place earlier elsewhere - the petition was organised by a non-member (aided, it was claimed, by Free Church parties) and had been hawked round the town; allegedly the 66 names it bore included those of non-attenders, minors and Free Church members.<sup>211</sup>

Lanark, Hoy and Tain were only three of the 800 or 900 churches of the establishment which adopted instrumental music in the last two decades of the century. At

Lanark and Tain the anti-organ minorities were small, and at Hoy the only opposition came from a minister of another parish. It is difficult to find any other cases of trouble during this period, though the installation of an instrument occasionally resulted in newspaper correspondence which revived the old scriptural and historical arguments, and from which it is clear that those who opposed the use of organs were regarded as old-fashioned or eccentric.

#### 9.7. The progress of the movement

We have seen that, by the time of the 1866 Assembly, there were 18 instruments in use. By the end of 1867 the number had increased to at least 31, in places ranging from Dumfries in the south-west to Stonehaven in the north-east. Very few instruments were installed during 1868 and 1869; perhaps the early rush had been by congregations which had been awaiting their opportunity, and perhaps the demand was already largely satisfied. But the short lull proved deceptive - by the end of 1871, at least 58 churches had instruments. Five of these were north of Aberdeen and in 1871 there was more activity in the east than in the west. By the end of 1872, the movement had spread into the covenanting lands of Galloway. From 1872 onwards there was a marked increase in the number of churches adopting instruments and in those replacing their harmoniums by organs. It is likely that the freedom given to U.P. congregations in that year convinced some waverers and also raised a fear of falling behind the competition. From 1873 instruments found their way into more Edinburgh churches, following the lead given by the High Kirk. Conservative Aberdeen capitulated with its first two organs in 1875, one of them preceded by a harmonium in 1874. During 1874 the total number of instruments passed the hundred mark, and the annual rate of installation was increasing. In 1875, the first Orkney instrument appeared, though there had been an organ in Shetland since 1871. The area which had by far the most instruments was that covered by the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, where there were at least 55 instruments by the summer of 1876,<sup>212</sup> though at that time there were none at

all in the counties of Caithness, Sutherland and Ross.<sup>213</sup> The churches having instruments continued to be diverse in type and geographically widespread. It was not the *Glasgow Herald* but the *Montrose Standard*<sup>214</sup> which said approvingly in 1877: "instrumental music in connection with public worship has become almost a necessity of the age".

The Begg party in the Free Church looked on in dismay as week after week further congregations of the Established and U.P. Churches adopted instruments. Begg produced several pamphlets in the seventies including two popular tracts, one selling at a penny a copy and the other at 2/6d per hundred. As the General Assembly of the Established Church showed repeatedly that its only concern with instrumental music was that it should not cause discord in congregations, the very few members (notably Pirie, Niven, and Macrae of Hawick) who opposed organs on principle were forced into an alliance with Begg's Free Church party. This alliance was known as the Association for Defending the Purity of Worship, and most of its propaganda was directed against instrumental music. It was launched in 1875, supported by a pamphlet by Begg.<sup>215</sup> With the object of stirring up public opinion, the Association formed branches in various towns. An Edinburgh meeting led to hostile editorials and letters in the *Courant*,<sup>216</sup> and both that paper and the *Scotsman* heartily attacked Begg's pamphlet.<sup>217</sup> Another branch, in Perth, was supported only by the hysterical *Perthshire Courier*,<sup>218</sup> a paper pledged to uphold Scottish Reformation principles. The most surprising name in the Association's membership was that of James Cochrane who had been one of the organ pioneers but who now vigorously condemned the "brainless innovators".<sup>219</sup> Boyd did not mince his words about this Association - "The defence of the faith is undertaken by some individuals with all the arts of lying and slandering"; the known members of the Association were "not strong enough either intellectually or morally" to "turn the tide which is now running in Scotland".<sup>220</sup> The Association had no significant impact.

Another despairing attack on organs in the Church of

Scotland was equally short-lived and even more fanatical. It came from an Edinburgh-based body called the U.K. Anti-Papal League, run by one James Johnstone. Members of the League were posted on Sundays at the doors of churches known to be using instruments, where they distributed turgid and barely literate tracts.<sup>221</sup> The League did not merit serious notice - when it launched a personal attack on Boyd, he could afford to reply in a single flippant sentence.<sup>222</sup>

In a period of forty years, 1106 out of 1249 Church of Scotland congregations adopted instrumental music.<sup>223</sup> The organ movement was supported by the vast majority of clergy and laity. The mistaken impression that things were otherwise owes much to the late acceptance of organs in the Free Church, to the publicity given to a few cases in the church courts, and to the assiduity with which a few opponents publicised their opinions. The court cases and the more extreme pamphlets were newsworthy and amusing and they were reported in the English press, more particularly in the musical press. After a musical journal had commented on Scottish opposition to organs,<sup>224</sup> offended Scottish readers wrote to it pointing out that organs were to be found in most districts of Scotland and that many of them would be coveted by English organists.<sup>225</sup>

Many congregations adopted instruments without the slightest sign of disagreement. Where votes were taken, there was nearly always a very large majority in favour. In only one Established church was there a majority against; this was in 1877 at the New Church, Ardossan,<sup>226</sup> and it is likely that some local factor was responsible, for the neighbouring congregation of West Kilbride had, in deference to the wishes of a minority, discarded instrumental music after experimental use in 1873.<sup>227</sup>

The organ movement was a movement of the people, though it had the support of most of the clergy. This fact was often pointed out by pamphleteers and by speakers in Church debates. Almost as a matter of routine, the minister would tell the presbytery, or state at the open-



ing of the organ, that the project had been originated and carried through by the congregation, and that he had not personally initiated or promoted it. (Robert Lee, John Macleod and a few others were obvious exceptions). But sympathetic ministers were often asked by members of their congregations to preach on the organ question, and the sermons must have acted as local propaganda. It would have been foolish for a minister to try to force instrumental music on an unwilling congregation or for a congregation to proceed in the face of the minister's opposition.

A striking aspect of the presbyterian churches is the mutual respect and cooperation which usually existed between a minister and his people. The arguments and pronouncements about reading of prayers which went on at the General Assembly are in marked contrast to how things could happen at parish level. At a soiree of Inverbrothock Church in 1874 the popular minister, C.C. Macdonald, disarmingly asked his congregation whether they would mind if he read his prayers from manuscript in future; in the years he had been with them, he said, his prayers had not been extemporary but had been committed to memory in the manse study every week.<sup>228</sup> A.K.H. Boyd, since the eighteen-fifties one of the most prominent and outspoken supporters of the organ movement, had no instrument in his own church until 1874;<sup>229</sup> he would not, he said, introduce any innovation which would give pain to even a small part of his congregation.<sup>230</sup> On the other hand, a few ministers, by the force of their personalities, led their congregations into changes in worship which were challenged later when the minister left. The congregation at Duns said that they had accepted the innovations made by John Macleod because of their personal respect for him; it was only after he left the parish in 1875 that they raised their well-known petition.<sup>231</sup> But it is significant that the Duns congregation, while rejecting the more unusual innovations, retained the organ; indeed, after the church was burned down in 1879, they furnished the rebuilt church with a larger instrument and made a great event of its inauguration in 1881.<sup>232</sup> The

Church had been subject to pressure for changes in worship, but "the laity created this pressure and they decided where it should stop".<sup>233</sup>

Congregations were willing to respect the wishes of conservative, as well as innovative, clergy. In England, Alexander Munro was one of the major organ opponents in the Presbyterian Church, but his own church three years after his death became the first presbyterian church in the Manchester area to decide to adopt an organ.<sup>234</sup> In Scotland, old Dr. Muir of St. Stephen's, Edinburgh, regarded those who introduced instrumental music and other innovations as being agents of the devil;<sup>235</sup> he died in 1869, and eleven years later St. Stephen's had one of the finest organs in Edinburgh.<sup>236</sup> When the laird of Elchies offered to supply a harmonium to Dallas Church, it was accepted gratefully and unanimously by the congregation;<sup>237</sup> his offer to do the same for Aberlour Church was refused because Dr. Sellar, the minister there, was opposed to instrumental music.<sup>238</sup> It is unlikely that the congregation at Aberlour was very different from those at Dallas and some other villages in the district which were adopting harmoniums at the time, but the Aberlour people went along with their minister's decision. At Forgue, too, a gift of an organ was rejected because of the minister's preference; but, as soon as a new minister came, it was eagerly accepted.<sup>239</sup>

The active members of a congregation respected each other as well as their minister. Rarely was an attempt made to introduce an instrument when a minority of a reasonable size opposed it. And, when it was known that a large majority favoured the change, the minority almost invariably saw it as their duty to fall in with the wishes of the majority, even to the extent sometimes of contributing to the organ fund. There was trouble only in a small number of churches, and it was usually caused by a handful of individuals who gained what little support they could from outside the active congregation and from conservative clergy in the church courts.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Cheyne 1967, p.80.
2. Cheyne 1983, p.4.
3. Drummond 1975, p.194.
4. Cheyne 1983, pp.89-92.
5. Argyll 1848, p.303.
6. Lee 1864, chs.5, 6.
7. Moderator's speech, 1862 (Edinburgh Courant, Supplement, 4 June 1862).
8. Argyll 1848, p.303.
9. Listed and discussed by Lamb 1958.
10. Lamb 1958, p.178.
11. e.g. Smith 1857; see also Professor Stevenson's remarks at the 1864 Assembly (Aberdeen Journal, 1 June 1864).
12. Cumming 1840, p.v.
13. Robertson 1867, pp.204-6.
14. Copies of the Innovations Committee report are elusive, but the report was reproduced in full in many newspapers (e.g. Aberdeen Journal, 1 June 1864).
15. Ross 1972, pp.57-8.
16. e.g. Airdrie Advertiser, April and May 1870.
17. In Glasgow, only 9 out of 73 churches, of all denominations, surveyed in 1871 had no choir. All but two of the Established churches in the survey had choirs. (N.B. Daily Mail, 3 Apr 1871).
18. In 1875-6 there were choirs in three of the eight parish churches around Crieff and also in three of the eight dissenting churches (excluding Episcopal and Roman chapels) in the same district. (Macara 1881, pp.273-7)
19. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
20. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, pp.3, 4.
21. Bisset 1866, p.2; Proc & Deb 1882, p.211.
22. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
23. Kerr 1909, pp.89-90.
24. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
25. e.g. at Alloway in 1864 (Daily Review, 25 June 1864) and Cupar in 1873 (Edinburgh Courant, throughout May 1873).
26. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
27. Church of Scotland 1906, p.6.
28. e.g. two of the earliest books - the Relief book and Ralph Wardlaw's book for the independents - contain respectively five and seven doxologies; the first U.P. hymn book (1851) contains twenty-three, of which most are items other than *gloriae patri*.
29. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, p.4.
30. R.A. Smith's *Sacred Harmony* of about 1825 includes "Sanctuses, Doxologies, Thanksgivings, etc., sung in St. George's Church, Edinburgh".
31. Patrick 1949, pp.160-1.
32. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
33. Psalmody in Glasgow - N.B. Daily Mail, 25 Mar to 24 July 1871.
34. Book of Anthems 1875.
35. For a discussion of the English nonconformist anthem, see Rainbow 1981, pp.156-163.
36. At the East Church, Aberdeen, in 1864 there were "two new anthems every Sunday, as well as other new

- tunes, and the congregation know neither the words nor the music", complained a correspondent to the *Aberdeen Journal* (30 Nov 1864), who asked that the same anthem be repeated for a few weeks so that the congregation could learn to sing it.
37. The trend can be seen by comparing the 1875 book with *The Scottish Anthem Book* of 1891 - the latter contains a very much higher proportion of complex items with independent organ accompaniment.
  38. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 24 Apr 1871, says the practice was introduced to Glasgow "ten or twelve years ago". The first Congregational church to introduce it, Lindsay Alexander's in Edinburgh, did so in 1861 (*Dunfermline Press*, 14 Mar 1861; *Greenock Advertiser*, 31 Oct 1861).
  39. Accounts of chanting as part of the normal services can be found in papers of the sixties and seventies in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leith, Portobello, Dundee, Broughty Ferry, Elgin, Dumfries and Newton Stewart.
  40. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 24 Apr 1871.
  41. *ibid.*
  42. *Psalmody*, April 1873, p.43.
  43. *ibid.*
  44. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 24 Apr 1871.
  45. Church of Scotland 1906, p.14.
  46. e.g. *Aberdeen Journal*, 30 Nov 1864; *Daily Review*, 27/29 Dec 1866; *N.B. Daily Mail*, 24 Apr 1871; Pirie 1871, pp.11,12; Sands 1927, p.78; Wright 1932, p.78.
  47. The most recent are Ross 1972 (p.56) and Murray 1984 (p.90).
  48. Boyd 1868, p.172. And in an essay published in October 1865, Boyd had given the number as "seven or eight" (Boyd 1865, p.522).
  49. Drummond 1975, p.189. The error arises from a misreading of the "Duns" entry in Thornsby 1912. A statement referring to the church's first organ in 1865 is misunderstood as a reference to its second.
  50. Wright 1958, p.118.
  51. Burnett 1936, p.15.
  52. *Crieff Journal*, 9 Mar 1867.
  53. *Scotsman*, 7 Nov 1873.
  54. Church marriages took place at Inveresk in February 1865 (*Scotsman*, 1 Mar 1865), at Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, in December of that year (Drummond 1975, p.195), at St. George's, Edinburgh, in April 1867 (*Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 12 Apr 1867), and apparently in other places around that time (letter in *Courant*, 15 Apr 1867).
  55. e.g. at St. Paul's, Perth in 1871 (*Perthshire Constitutional*, 16 Aug 1871) and at Dalreoch in 1879 (*Dumbarton Herald*, 30 July 1879).
  56. *Kelso Courier*, 1 Mar 1872.
  57. Beattie 1778, p.31.
  58. Porteous 1808, pp.61-94.
  59. Fleming 1808a and 1808b.
  60. Thom 1811, ii, pp.106-7.
  61. Graham 1816, pp.4-10.
  62. Wade 1822, p.265.
  63. Cumming 1840, pp. xviii-xix.
  64. *Dumfries and Galloway Herald*, 7 Dec 1866.
  65. Macara 1881, p.279.

66. Dalyell 1849, pp.135-7.
67. Boyd 1856, pp.667-8.
68. Cumming 1850, pp.21-23; Cumming 1859, pp.437-9.
69. Story 1862, p.199.
70. Sprott 1863, pp.13-14.
71. Robertson 1867, pp.202-3.
72. *Edinburgh Courant*, supplement, 4 June 1862.
73. *Dundee Courier*, 7 Sept 1865.
74. *Dundee Courier*, 2 Feb 1865.
75. *Witness*, 23 Mar 1863.
76. Leishman 1891, p.423.
77. At the time, McCalman had been at Inch for less than a year. He had been ordained to the parish of Inverbrothock, one of Lee's own former charges, in May 1861 but his ministry there lasted only 13 months before he moved to Inch. (Scott 1915)
78. *Galloway Advertiser*, 7 May 1863.
79. *ibid.* This was probably a planned protest rather than a spontaneous reaction, for McCalman's intention had been publicised beforehand and had attracted a number of strangers to the church.
80. *Galloway Advertiser*, 21 May 1863.
81. *ibid.*
82. McCalman was not without supporters (e.g. correspondence in *Galloway Advertiser*), and in these evening services at least one nearby minister was willing to participate. A select choir from Stranraer led the praise, and a large number of people attended from Stranraer and the surrounding district. (*Galloway Advertiser*, 25 June 1863).
83. *Galloway Advertiser*, 30 July 1863; 6 Aug 1863.
84. A.G.A. 1863, pp.57-8. After some debate, and on dubious technical grounds, a proposal that Lee be a member of the committee was defeated by Pirie and his allies (*Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 29 May 1863).
85. Smith 1863, pp.10,12.
86. Lee 1864.
87. Young 1864.
88. Report of Innovations Committee, *ut supra*.
89. A.G.A. 1864, pp.52-3.
90. *Glasgow Herald*, 12 Dec 1864; *Daily Review*, 13 Dec 1864.
91. e.g. *Glasgow Herald*, 28 Dec 1864.
92. *Glasgow Herald*, 16 Jan 1865.
93. *Ayr Observer*, 7 Feb 1865.
94. Nothing further was heard of the organ movements in Dumbarton and Ayr Old churches for ten years or more. The organ proposal at Kilmarnock did not resurface for seven years, probably because attention was diverted by the minister's quarrels with his precentor and with his session over other matters. In Paisley, despite a very strong feeling in favour of organs at St. George's and the Middle Church, these churches did not acquire organs until 1874 and 1875 respectively. Alexander Bryson, minister of the Middle Church, was a prominent organ apologist in 1865, when he gave a series of Sunday evening lectures on worship in Scotland, with a harmonium accompanying the psalms; and voting cards returned by his congregation showed that they were "practically unanimous" in their desire for an organ. It is not clear why

- the project was abandoned.
95. Stobie 1946, pp.9-10.
  96. *Dundee Courier*, 2 Feb 1865.
  97. This appears to be what happened, though reports (e.g. *Scotsman* 19 Apr 1865) are ambiguous. The "immediate measures" may have been just the fund-raising, but the activity here was more leisurely after the Assembly had met.
  98. *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, 25 Apr 1865.
  99. *Scotsman*, 3 Mar. 1865.
  100. *Berwick Warder*, 9 June 1865.
  101. *Story* 1870, ii, p.77.
  102. *Scotsman*, 24 Apr 1865.
  103. *Scotsman*, 19 May 1865.
  104. *Orchestra*, 11 Feb 1865.
  105. e.g. *Glasgow Herald*, 11 Jan 1865.
  106. Niven 1864, p.8.
  107. Williamson 1865, p.1.
  108. Bannatyne, 1865.
  109. Allan 1865.
  110. *Scotsman*, 24 May 1865.
  111. *ibid.*, and *Scotsman*, 25 May 1865.
  112. A.G.A. 1865, pp.27-8.
  113. e.g. On 2 June 1865, the *Scotsman* was able to quote an extensive condemnation of the Act from the *Leeds Mercury*. "Musico-Theological Superstitions" was the title of a long leading article in the *Musical Standard* on 17 June which attacked the "total blindness" of Pirie's "prejudice".
  114. Hill 1865, pp.27-8.
  115. Bisset 1866, pp. 8-14.
  116. *ibid.*, pp. 18-26.
  117. Ramsay 1865.
  118. Batchelor 1866.
  119. *supra*, ch.8.
  120. *Scotsman*, 31 May 1865; *Proc & Deb* 1865, pp.278-297.
  121. Begg 1866.
  122. *Berwick Warder*, 9 June 1865.
  123. *Greenock Advertiser*, 8 June 1865.
  124. *Greenock Advertiser*, 22 June 1865.
  125. *Greenock Advertiser*, 8 June 1865.
  126. *ibid.*
  127. *Greenock Advertiser*, 22 June 1865.
  128. Due to the persistence of two presbytery members, the congregation did not finally win its case until October 1866. The organ was opened in March 1867. The story can be followed in the *Greenock Advertiser*, Jan 1865 to April 1867.
  129. *Dundee Courier*, 6 July 1865.
  130. *Dundee Courier*, 7 Sept 1865.
  131. *Dundee Courier*, 5 Oct 1865.
  132. *Dundee Courier*, 2 Feb 1865.
  133. *Greenock Advertiser*, 8 June 1865.
  134. *Lennox Herald*, 24 June 1865.
  135. *Perthshire Advertiser*, 1 Feb 1866.
  136. *Perthshire Advertiser*, 1 Mar 1866.
  137. *Fife Herald*, 8 Feb 1866, 29 Mar 1866.
  138. *Glasgow Herald*, 5 Oct 1865.
  139. *Daily Review*, 1 June 1866.
  140. *Crieff Journal*, 21 Oct 1865.
  141. *Crieff Journal*, 11 Nov 1865.

142. *Crieff Journal*, 9 Dec 1865.
143. The Crieff case was the most dramatic of them all. The bizarre story can be followed in the columns of the *Crieff Journal* and the *Strathearn Herald*, which took opposite sides, from December 1864 to July 1868. See also Porteous 1912, pp.131-7.
144. This was in July 1865 at Linlithgow, where the vote was 300 for, 279 against, and 71 neutral (*Greenock Advertiser*, 25 July 1865). The project was of course abandoned, as was one in November 1866 at Selkirk, where the vote was 272-198-3. (*Southern Reporter*, 22 Nov 1866).
145. Here the vote was 261-71-100 in January 1865 (*Kilmarnock Standard* 21 Jan 1865) and the project was delayed until after the 1865 Assembly. It was abandoned after a 218-89-30 vote in October (*Greenock Advertiser*, 17 Oct 1865). The unusual feature of a swing away from the organ at Ayr may have been due to the presence in the congregation of Alexander Hill who had recently retired from his chair at Glasgow and was devoting some energy to campaigning against instrumental music.
146. e.g. Boyd 1856, p.668.
147. *Scotsman*, 1 June 1865.
148. *Daily Review*, 1 June 1866; A.G.A. 1866, pp.53-4.
149. To the dismay of the conservatives, the Assembly declined to discuss these latter overtures, and thus declined to condemn either particular innovations or innovations in general. (*ibid.*)
150. A.G.A. 1866, p.28.
151. Presumably, though, a presbytery could still decide that "the laws and usage of the Church" justified the granting of sanction.
152. A.G.A. 1866, p.28.
153. *Dumfries and Galloway Herald*, 19 Apr 1867.
154. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 5 Feb 1872.
155. The presbytery of Irvine, approached by the session of Kilwinning in 1876, declared that it had nothing to do with the matter "unless an appearance were made on behalf of objecting members" (*Irvine Times*, 9 Sept 1876). The Presbytery of Nairn told the session of Auldearn in 1877 that it "could not interfere unless a complaint were laid before it" (*Elgin Courant*, 23 Mar 1877).
156. *Greenock Advertiser*, 4 Oct 1878.
157. In 1868, Inverbrothock Church applied to the Presbytery of Arbroath for sanction to instal an organ, having already for some weeks been using a harmonium. Several presbytery members were upset that the harmonium had been introduced before they were consulted. The same members were again displeased in 1870 when the churches at Auchmithie and Guthrie both announced that their harmoniums had already been in use for a week or two. In 1871 the Presbytery of Lerwick "intended to take some steps" because its consent had not been sought to the organ at Lerwick Parish Church. The Presbytery of Perth in 1872 spent much time discussing the action of the session at Perth East in introducing a harmonium without first consulting the presbytery. The same question caused disagreement in the Presbytery of Elgin, and even in

- the General Assembly, as late as 1875. (*Arbroath Guide*, 8 Feb 1868, 7 May 1870, 5 Nov 1870; *Elgin Courant*, 15 Sept 1871; *Perthshire Constitutional*, 5 Feb 1872; *Elgin Courant*, 28 May 1875).
158. *Elgin Courant*, 16 Dec 1870.
  159. *Elgin Courant*, 24 Mar 1871.
  160. *Fife Free Press*, 7 Oct 1871.
  161. *Berwick Advertiser*, 14 Apr 1871.
  162. *Scotsman*, 15 Apr 1871.
  163. *Berwickshire News*, 18 Apr 1871.
  164. *Berwick Advertiser*, 2 June 1871; A.G.A. 1871, pp.59-60.
  165. Published as a pamphlet: Pirie 1871.
  166. *Elgin Courant*, 17 Nov 1871. Five years later a motion to do the same at Dundee Presbytery was defeated. (*Dundee Advertiser*, 2 Nov 1876).
  167. An exception may be the case of Kirn in 1869 (*Greenock Advertiser*, 22 Apr 1869); it is not clear whether the presbytery's refusal there was a final decision. Use of the Coupar Angus harmonium was forbidden by the synod. (The story, involving session and presbytery blunders and much acrimony, can be followed in the *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, Sept 1866 to May 1867).
  168. The session of Greenock Middle Church appointed an organist while the case was still under appeal to the synod (*Greenock Advertiser*, 2 Oct 1866); the organ had been ordered months before. The Blairgowrie organ was installed while a petition against it was before the presbytery (*Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 5/20 Sept 1873). When the Assembly prohibited the use of instrumental music at Perth East, the session did not cancel its order for an organ; indeed, it went ahead and negotiated with the town council for a suitable site in the church while a further appeal to the Assembly was outstanding (*Perthshire Constitutional*, May 1873 to June 1874). A professional musician was appointed organist at Elgin over a year before the case was finally decided (*Elgin Courier*, 9 Apr 1875). But caution prevailed at Inverbrothock, where the psalmody committee was restrained from buying an organ before the presbytery's ruling had been obtained (*Arbroath Guide*, 29 Feb 1868).
  169. *Haddingtonshire Courier*, 5/17 May 1867.
  170. *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, 7 May 1870.
  171. *Ayr Observer*, 9 July 1867; *Ayr Advertiser*, 3 Oct 1867.
  172. *Weekly Review*, 8 Oct 1870, 10 Dec 1870.
  173. *Falkirk Herald*, 18 May 1871. It was appropriate that Ecclesmachan was the first church in its district to have an instrument. Henry Liston had developed an enharmonic organ earlier in the century while minister there; and Dr. John Smith, another earlier minister, had been an advocate of worship reform.
  174. *Elgin Courant*, 6/20 Oct 1871.
  175. *Dumbarton Herald*, 28 Mar 1867.
  176. *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, 2/9 Dec 1871.
  177. *Ayr Observer*, 9 July 1867.
  178. *Dundee Advertiser*, 29 Apr 1878. The general purport of Boyd's statement is true, but it needs to be qualified by noting that a number of these churches had



harmoniums rather than organs. Even where it had neither, a new church might have an empty organ gallery for future use, as at Flowerhill, Airdrie (*Airdrie Advertiser*, 26 June 1875, 3 July 1875). Similar provision had been made as early as 1866 at Greyfriars, Dumfries, and in 1867 in the new church which the Earl of Aberdeen built for the parish of Methlic (*Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 29 Apr 1867).

179. *Peterhead Sentinel*, 2 Apr 1873.
180. *Peterhead Sentinel / Buchan Observer*, Aug to Nov 1873.
181. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 6 Oct 1866, 8/22 Dec 1866.
182. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 27 Apr 1867.
183. In 1879 the English-speaking part of the congregation at Portree Church was "almost unanimous" in desiring a harmonium, but the session had refused to sanction its use. After "an animated discussion", the Presbytery of Skye simply remitted the case back to the session (*Inverness Courier*, 3 Apr 1879).
184. At Crieff 72 people returned voting cards against the organ but the petition to the presbytery was signed by 158 (*Crieff Journal*, 9 Dec 1865). At Coupar Angus only one person objected at the congregational meeting, but he later presented a petition with 141 signatures (*Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 6 Oct 1866). The meeting at Cramond produced 11 opponents, but a later petition had 105 signatures (*Weekly Review*, 27 Apr 1872). At Inverbrothock "one or two" members objected only on the ground of expense, yet afterwards 29 people petitioned the presbytery on much wider grounds (*Arbroath Guide*, 7 Mar 1868). At Blairgowrie no objections at all were made in 1871 when a harmonium was taken into use, nor in 1873 when a congregational meeting decided to replace it by an organ; but in the autumn of the latter year an anti-organ petition by 103 people was presented to the presbytery (*Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 4 Oct 1873). The same kind of thing happened in every other place where a petition was raised - at Inch, 24 objectors became 83 (*Galloway Advertiser*, 3 Dec 1874); at Ladhope, 16 became 155 (*Border Advertiser*, 21 Oct 1874); and at Lanark 22 became more than 200 (*Lanarkshire Examiner*, 22 Mar 1884).
185. At Ladhope (*Border Advertiser*, 21 Oct 1874).
186. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 27 Apr 1867.
187. *Greenock Advertiser*, 22 Oct 1874; Stevens 1972, pp.8-9. Wemyss Bay U.P. Church was U.P. only by the chance of having chosen a U.P. minister; it had previously been a preaching station run by a joint committee of the Free and U.P. Churches, and it might equally well have become a Free church (Stevens 1972).
188. Quoted by Drummond 1975, p.338.
189. *Crieff Journal*, 1 June 1867.
190. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 7 Sept 1874.
191. A number of presbytery members conspired to encourage a Crieff elder to get up the petition. In a civil court action, one of these ministers was forced to admit that he had himself drafted the petition. (*Crieff Journal*, 9 Nov 1867).
192. *Elgin Courant*, 21 Sept/8 Oct 1875, and during the

- following months.
193. *Arbroath Guide*, 7 Mar 1868.
  194. The first anti-organ petition at Crieff, signed by 158 people, was answered by a counter-petition signed by 502. The initial petition in favour of the Cramond harmonium came from 424 members to the kirk session; when an anti-organ petition from 105 people was sent to the presbytery, a further pro-organ petition raised the number in favour to 560. (*Crieff Journal*, 9 Dec 1865; *Weekly Review*, 18 May 1872).
  195. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 16 Feb 1867.
  196. *Lamb* 1955.
  197. 27 May 1874.
  198. In 1871 the Elgin congregation had voted 930-60 in favour of instrumental music, but the wish of the majority was frustrated for five years due to the persistence of one member and two nearby village ministers.
  199. *Lanarkshire Examiner*, 22/29 Mar, 26 Apr, 1884.
  200. *Orcadian*, 1 Apr 1882.
  201. *Orcadian*, 10 June 1882.
  202. *Orcadian*, 16 Sept 1882.
  203. *Orcadian*, 9 June 1883; A.G.A. 1883, pp.66-7.
  204. A.G.A. 1883, pp.46-7; *Orcadian* 2 June 1883.
  205. The *Ross-shire Journal* in 1890 refers quite incidentally to instruments in Established churches at Kincardine (Ross) (30 May), Strathpeffer (4 July), Rosskeen (28 Feb) and Beaully (16 May) as well as Tain U.P. Church (7 Nov).
  206. *Ross-shire Journal*, 28 Feb 1890.
  207. *Ross-shire Journal*, 18 Apr 1890.
  208. Macnaughton 1915, p.437.
  209. *Ross-shire Journal*, 28 Feb 1890.
  210. *Ross-shire Journal*, 18 Apr 1890.
  211. *Ross-shire Journal*, 28 Feb, 18 Apr 1890.
  212. Boyd 1876, p.57.
  213. *Choir*, 29 July 1876, p.480.
  214. 5 Oct 1877.
  215. Begg 1875.
  216. *Edinburgh Courant* throughout Nov and Dec 1875. A further meeting in May 1876 was widely reported and amused the London musical press (*Choir*, 27 May 1876, pp.339-40).
  217. *Edinburgh Courant*, 18 Nov 1875. The *Scotsman* was in turn attacked by the *Perthshire Courier* (23 Nov 1875).
  218. 14 Sept 1875, etc.
  219. Author of many publications, Cochrane had been Chalmers's private secretary before the Disruption, and since then had held the first charge at Cupar. He had been one of the earliest ministers to have an organ in his church, and had spoken in favour of organs several times in the Assembly, most notably in the Crieff case in 1867. But in his later years he became well known nationally for his eccentricity. He engaged in a long battle with his colleague in 1873 over postures, he discontinued the use of hymns and doxologies in his church, and he attributed the bad harvest of 1876 to divine retribution for Sunday harvesting. His claim in 1875 that he had agreed to the organ at Cupar to please influential members of his

- congregation and against his own judgement (*Edinburgh Courant*, 15 Nov 1875) contrasts strongly with what he said when the organ was installed in 1866. (*Fife Herald*, 3 May 1866).
220. Boyd 1876, pp.60, 59.
  221. Johnstone 1879b, p.2. Copies of an earlier pamphlet (Johnstone 1879a) had been distributed to all protestant ministers in Scotland, except episcopalians.
  222. *U.K. Anti-Papal League Magazine*, May 1878, p.482.
  223. Church of Scotland 1906, p.10. By 1904, fourteen of the fifteen churches in the Presbytery of Turriff were using instrumental music (McWilliam 1904).
  224. *Musical Standard*, 24 Nov 1883.
  225. *Musical Standard*, 1 Dec 1883.
  226. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 15 Dec 1877. There may also have been a majority against the proposal at Junction Road U.P., Leith, in 1876 (*Arbroath Guide*, 10 June 1876).
  227. *Ayrshire Weekly News*, 25 Oct 1873. There was one other case in which a harmonium was withdrawn after experimental use, and again it was out of respect for a minority; this was at Kirkmabreck in 1873 (*Galloway Gazette*, 8 Mar 1873; *Ayr Advertiser*, 13 Mar 1873).
  228. *Arbroath Guide*, 24 Jan 1874.
  229. *St. Andrews Citizen*, 28 Mar 1874. And this was only in the smaller of the two churches of his parish. The main parish church still had no instrument in 1882 due to the opposition of three or four members (Boyd 1892, ii, p.167).
  230. Boyd 1869, p.104.
  231. Murray 1984, pp.84-5, A similar situation arose at Whitburn in 1876 (*West Lothian Courier*, 29 Apr 1876).
  232. Nearly a whole large page of the *Berwick Journal*, 26 Jan 1881, is devoted to a description of the new organ and its opening.
  233. Drummond 1975, p.200.
  234. Congregational papers in U.R.C. library, London; *Glasgow Herald*, 18 Apr 1872.
  235. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 28 Dec 1865. Nevertheless, the presence of a choir in Muir's own church had earlier given offence to a highland minister (Boyd 1892, i, p.165).
  236. Sands 1927, pp.78, 126-7.
  237. *Elgin Courant*, 16 Dec 1870, 6 Jan 1871.
  238. *Elgin Courant*, 23 Dec 1870. During Sellar's absence from his parish, a joker misled newspapers in Aberdeen and Elgin into printing an announcement that a harmonium was to be installed at Aberlour. On his return Sellar wrote forcefully to these papers, referring to the story as "an unwarrantable reflection on the minister and people of Aberlour and quite untrue" (*Elgin Courant*, 3 Feb 1871).
  239. *Huntly Express*, 31 Aug 1872.

## 10. THE FREE CHURCH, AND EVENTS AFTER 1883.

### 10.1. Music in the Free Church.

From the start, the Free Church was concerned about its music. In 1844 its General Assembly appointed a committee to encourage and supervise the improvement of psalmody, and for the rest of the century the Free Church played its part in the general development of vocal music in Scotland. In some districts it took the lead, its congregations appointing precentors at salaries which attracted good professional musicians who enriched the musical life of their areas. It emphasised the precentor's role as a teacher - more than any other denomination, it subscribed to the ideal that every member of a congregation should learn to sing and to read musical notation. Aided by its bureaucratic organisation, it administered a scheme for certification of precentors and it provided grants for the musical training of precentors and congregations and for the purchase of music books. In a number of places, classes and lectures on psalmody were organised by local Free Church musical associations.

Initially choirs were frowned on<sup>1</sup> as leading to vicarious praise. But some city congregations which had known good choirs before the Disruption continued the tradition. Candlish's congregation unconvincingly defended itself on the grounds that the men and women who "took a more prominent part in leading the congregation in seats surrounding the pulpit" were very different from "a hired band" and that there was "no tendency to give rise to the abuses to which choirs are exposed"; the arrangement was in any case intended as a temporary expedient until the musical education of the congregation was more advanced.<sup>2</sup> As some had expected,<sup>3</sup> however, musical education of congregations was doomed to failure, and by the mid-sixties even Begg defended choirs:<sup>4</sup>

"If the members of the choir are unobjectionable in character and are not aliens, but simply members of the congregation, it is obvious that no new principle is involved".

Entirely voluntary choirs were the rule for many years in

the Free Church - even in Glasgow not a single Free church choir of those surveyed in 1871 included any paid singers.<sup>5</sup> By that time, choirs were equally widely accepted in both Free and Established churches; seventeen out of nineteen Glasgow Free churches had choirs, exactly the same proportion as in the Established churches surveyed there.<sup>6</sup> In the rural district of Strathearn, Perthshire, in 1875, too, the proportion of churches having choirs - just under half - was the same in both denominations.<sup>7</sup>

The Free Church had more than its share of the conservative-minded. For some of these, it was almost an article of faith that the form of worship which had developed by 1843 was invariable in all time coming. In all the innovations of the second half of the century, the Established Church took the lead, and each innovation was characterised by its Free Church opponents as further evidence of the unsoundness of the establishment. But many Free Church people were not averse to change, and successive innovations found their way into some Free churches before they had been widely accepted in the Established Church.

The use of chants is a case in point. In 1871 there was very little chanting in Established churches outside the cities, but by then at least two Glasgow Free congregations had followed the prevailing Glasgow fashion,<sup>8</sup> and chanting had found its way into some Free churches elsewhere. At Broughty Ferry in 1869 some people walked out of a Free church morning service when chanting was introduced; in the afternoon they attended another Free church in the district and were horrified to discover that, as well as chanting, the congregation there stood up to do so.<sup>9</sup>

While the vast majority of Established congregations were still standing to pray and sitting to sing, several Free congregations had already followed a minority of Established churches in reversing these postures.<sup>10</sup> At the Glasgow Free presbytery in 1865, Gibson argued at length against the new postures.<sup>11</sup> As late as 1875 a Helensburgh

session overruled the minister's recommendation of posture changes,<sup>12</sup> and in 1877 an attempt to introduce the new postures at the Free High Church, Inverness, led to complaints which eventually reached the General Assembly.<sup>13</sup> But these were exceptions; many instances of posture changes in Free congregations can be found in the newspapers of the seventies. Acceptance of the practice of standing to sing owed much to the general desire to improve congregational psalmody.

Two musical innovations aroused considerable opposition in the Free Church - hymns and organs. In 1853 the Free Presbytery of Hamilton decided to overture the General Assembly for publication of a collection of hymns for use in public worship.<sup>14</sup> The overture was attacked in a pamphlet said to be by Gibson,<sup>15</sup> and fierce controversy on the hymn question raged until the Assembly sanctioned a collection in 1872. Gibson was only one of those who, along with Begg, held that the scripture-based objection to hymns was the same as the objection to organs. He argued, moreover, that hymns were the more dangerous of the two innovations, since they could contain "dangerous, sectarian and heretical instruction"; if hymns were admitted into public worship, there could no longer be any consistent objection on principle to organs.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, another eleven years were to pass before Free Church congregations were allowed to use organs.

## 10.2. The Organ Movement in the Free Church.

By 1852, T.L. Hatley had done some good work with psalmody classes in Edinburgh, and some churches in the cities had improved their singing, but in the country as a whole little progress had been made. In 1855, increasing concern led to a meeting during the General Assembly to discuss means of improvement.<sup>17</sup> In the same year a Free Church committee in Aberdeen was given the task of forming a psalmody association.<sup>18</sup> William Anderson, a prominent Free Church precentor there, claimed that the difficulties had

"led many, I am glad to say, to the consideration of instrumental support in our churches ... Our greatest

professional singers feel that their powers are put to the severest test when they are left to sing without the efficient and much needed assistance of any instrument; what therefore may be expected in our case?"<sup>19</sup>

Some people in the Free Church, but not many, seem to have shared his opinion.<sup>20</sup>

We have already seen how, in the mid-fifties, events in Scotland and England and further afield were a matter of concern to the Free Church organ opponents; how Candlish, on his own initiative, threatened the English presbyterians with a severance of their special relationship with the Free Church should they permit the use of organs; and how that threat was confirmed by the General Assembly in 1858. But it is perhaps significant that, though only eight members of the Assembly dissented from the 1858 deliverance, no vote was taken. The overture had come from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, which included many of the most powerful Free Church clergy, and the motion for its transmission had succeeded by only twenty votes to eight. Guthrie and Blaikie were both absent from the meeting and later expressed their opposition to the overture.<sup>21</sup>

The principal organ opponents - Candlish, Begg and Gibson - believed that the use of instrumental music was against scriptural and presbyterian principles. They could see that, if other presbyterians adopted organs, a demand for them in the Free Church would be inevitable. All three reacted publicly when the Established Church failed to take any action against instrumental music in 1865. Begg condemned this permissiveness in his moderatorial address - the departure from purity of worship, he said, was "a natural result of giving up high principles in the Established Church at the time of the Disruption".<sup>22</sup> Gibson proposed in the Presbytery of Glasgow an overture that the Free Church Assembly take steps to instruct the people against innovations; he was defeated on the ground that the Assembly had already condemned innovations in 1863 and that nothing had occurred in the Free Church which called for any additional action.<sup>23</sup> Candlish, in his principal's address which opened the session

of the Free Church College,

"expressed regret that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had, in May last, passed an Act which he thought had given an impulse to the movement in favour of instrumental music that could not now be arrested".<sup>24</sup>

Unlike the other two, Candlish was an astute politician. He was aware of the strength of pro-organ opinion in the U.P. Church, with which he hoped to see the Free Church united, and he could see the inevitability of ultimate defeat on the organ question. From this time on, he remained silent on the issue, except when forced to concede in 1870 that he no longer regarded the use of organs in England as a reason for abandoning mutual eligibility with the English presbyterians.<sup>25</sup>

Candlish may have genuinely changed his mind, or he may have been influenced by political expediency, or he may simply have accepted the inevitable. None of these courses was open to a man of Begg's temperament. Begg saw successive changes in theology and worship as abandonment of principle and as further steps towards the Roman church whose practices he had for years attacked as editor of *The Bulwark*. He found his allies in the highlands, and by threats of secession and legal action he succeeded in destroying the plans for union with the U.P. Church. We have already seen how the organ question became entangled with the union question, and how the U.P. Church, ready for instrumental music in the mid-sixties, delayed its approval until the union negotiations finally failed.<sup>26</sup> But what of opinions in the Free Church itself?

It would be wrong to equate Free Church thinking on the organ question with that of Begg. In 1865 Donald Fraser, a popular Free Church minister from Inverness and later a well-known London preacher, delivered a lecture in Edinburgh. He answered forcefully Begg's arguments against the use of organs, concluding:<sup>27</sup>

"The exaggerated and untenable objections made to instrumental music not by the ignorant merely, but by men in good position in the Church, who beat the alarm against everything that savours of taste and refinement, are fitted to provoke a really dangerous agitation. Such agitation I wish to avoid, being quite content without an instrument, and counting it



very inexpedient to disturb the mind of the Church on the question. But all the more do I see it of great moment ... to beware of exaggerations and extreme positions for or against instruments; above all not to try to settle such a question by unworthy appeals to prejudice, and to the notions of the most uncultivated and rude of the people ... Such a style of dealing with such questions, with the attempt to raise a panic in feeble minds, is an egregious mistake - if it be not a species of insult to our common sense".

The same dislike of Begg's extreme position and mode of expression is to be found in reviews of his major pamphlet,<sup>28</sup> published in the following year. Free Church men were not inclined to discuss the organ question. As the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* put it:<sup>29</sup>

The call to arms has been sounded, not by a zealot for change, but by a stout defender of the *status quo*. Dr. Begg deprecates an organ movement, and he begins an organ controversy. He dreads a hostile invasion, and he equips an armed expedition ... A challenge thus boldly given ... can scarcely fail, we fear, to be ere long taken up by some like eager and better furnished combatant on the other side".

But, though responses came from several quarters, only one challenge seems to have come from a Free Church source. In a delicately-written little pamphlet,<sup>30</sup> "A Free Church Minister" (John Mackenzie) limited himself to the issue of scriptural authority. The pamphlet was brushed aside with a few sarcastic words by Begg's anti-union *Watchword*.<sup>31</sup>

The lack of response in the Free Church itself indicates not so much agreement with Begg's views, as the need at the time to placate Begg and his anti-union party, and also a recognition that the mind of the Church was not yet ready for acceptance of organs (a recognition which probably also accounts for Mackenzie's limiting himself to the scriptural aspects). Rainy's pro-union periodical, *The Presbyterian*, always took the line that the organ question was of little importance, and that it would be expedient to retain the *status quo*, but it never allowed itself to be led into commenting on the subjects of legality and scriptural justification. A long *Presbyterian* editorial in 1868<sup>32</sup> dealt with ritualism and the organ, concluding that though organs might not lead to ritualism, there was no harm in Free churchmen being more careful than they need be.

Gibson's attack on organs and other innovations in his 1869 pamphlet<sup>33</sup> likewise failed to stir up organ controversy in the Free Church. And there was little reaction when Thomas Guthrie, one of the revered Disruption fathers, dismissed the anti-organ arguments of Begg and Gibson as "sheer ignorance and folly".<sup>34</sup> During the seventies, Begg published two tracts and two more substantial pamphlets, all aimed against the organ-using Church of Scotland. In 1875 a few dissidents from that Church joined Begg and some clerical and lay supporters to form the Association for Defending the Purity of Worship.<sup>35</sup>

In the other denominations, Begg's anti-organ tirades were frequently attacked, not least in sermons and speeches at the opening of new organs. In the Free Church they were met with near-silence. Guthrie was the only man of substance who responded, and that in a purely dismissive way. Few outside the highlands saw the use of organs as sinful. Indeed, there must have been many in the Free Church who favoured congregational freedom to use organs - by 1883 they were a majority in the General Assembly - yet right through the seventies they refused to be provoked into arguing with Begg. They were aware that the fragile bonds which held the Free Church together would be strained, perhaps to breaking-point, by an organ controversy which might even surpass in bitterness those which were currently going on in Ireland and Canada. When the silence was finally broken in the debates of the early eighties, many of those who spoke in favour of congregational freedom said that they were doing so because they now judged the time to be ripe. The minister of one congregation which petitioned the 1882 Assembly for permission to use an organ claimed that the petition would have been presented much earlier had it not been that

"influence was brought to bear on the congregation to refrain from pressing on this matter until the Church could be at leisure from other great questions to take it up and do justice to it".<sup>36</sup>

"If the truth were known", said Orrock Johnston in 1883,<sup>37</sup>

"some of those who were blamed for agitating it [the

organ question] should rather receive credit for having used their influence to keep it back so long as it was safe or prudent to do so".

There was less restraint on the other side. Like the Church of Scotland and the U.P. Church before it, the Free Church inconsistently tolerated the use of instruments in its churches abroad while they were still prohibited in Scotland. In 1878 J.M. Connell, minister of the West Free Church, Thurso, remarked in a letter to the *Daily Review* that, when he had ministered to the Florence congregation, the harmonium there "did not seem to jar on the ears of anyone". He immediately came under attack from James Johnstone of the Anti-papal League.<sup>38</sup> A Caithness elder brought the matter to the presbytery's attention, and Connell was taken to task.<sup>39</sup> The Free Presbytery of Caithness was all but unanimous that the use of organs was "sinful". How, asked Connell, could they possibly say that the Church of Scotland and the U.P. Church were full of sinners? - it was "a scandal to our Christian charity to hold such a theory". But this was Begg country, and the presbytery concluded

"That the presbytery would regret if any member of this Church should publicly countenance the introduction of instrumental music into the worship of the Church of Christ, and express a hope that all office-bearers will abstain from so doing".

This was a far cry from the situation in the lowlands, where friendly relations often existed between Free congregations and other presbyterians. One Free congregation in Glasgow worshipped annually with a nearby U.P. congregation on summer holiday Sundays; the joint congregation used the U.P. church organ with no interference from the Free presbytery.<sup>40</sup> More than any other presbyterians, the Free Church welcomed Moody and Sankey with their harmonium, and its city congregations were using harmoniums at weekday meetings of every kind and at "mission services" on Sunday evenings.

It made little sense to ordinary worshippers that organs were forbidden only on Sundays, and then only at certain hours. They saw their friends using them freely - in Leith, for example, instruments were being used by

1878 in the ordinary Sunday worship of every Christian denomination except the Free Church.<sup>41</sup> In 1880, presbyterian churches alone accounted for some two hundred of the instruments then in regular Sunday morning use in Scotland. It was difficult to maintain that organs were unpresbyterian when the Church of Scotland, the U.P. Church, and other presbyterians throughout the world were using them; it was equally difficult to say that organs were unscriptural and associated with prelacy and popery when they were being used in presbyterian, independent, methodist and baptist churches in Scotland as well as in most reformed churches in other lands. Yet this is what Begg and a Free Church minority did, to the disquiet of their opponents. At the 1883 Assembly, a minister said that "the young men and young women of this Free Church were not stupid". He

"pointed to the danger and bad effect on young people of statements that instrumental music in worship was unscriptural. When an ambassador for Christ mixed wood, hay and stubble with the fine gold of the Gospel, and when that rubbish was found out and cast away, there was a danger that the fine gold might be cast away with it. The blood of a soul might lie at the door of a minister who taught for doctrines the commandments of men".<sup>42</sup>

Speaker after speaker in the organ debates of 1882 and 1883 testified to the fact that many parents were finding it impossible to persuade their children to remain in the Free Church. According to the *Times* in 1883,<sup>43</sup> the Established and U.P. Churches had been attaining greater popularity

"especially with the younger members of the community, many of whom, though belonging to the Free Church, are said to be wandering into rival churches for the sake of the music and the aesthetic excitement which can be enjoyed there. The leaders of the Free Church have for some time been keenly alive to the disadvantage under which they laboured".

The same circumstance prompted Ross Taylor of Glasgow, the Free Church moderator of 1884, to say in 1882:<sup>44</sup>

"It was all very easy and very well for brethren from the Highlands and elsewhere, who were not at all influenced by these currents of public feeling, to say that they abominated organs, and that they would have nothing to do with them, but he was sure of this, that if some of these brethren were in the position of some of them, and if they knew the strength of

feeling that existed in regard to this matter, they would abate the vehemence of their tone very considerably."

As in other presbyterian denominations, the organ question was forced to the attention of the Church courts by a congregation taking the law into its own hands. Free St. Luke's, Broughty Ferry, was a relatively new church which had grown fast and contributed large amounts to the schemes of the Church.<sup>45</sup> In 1880 its kirk session unanimously decided to introduce a harmonium into the services; the congregation when consulted had no objection, and the harmonium was taken into use.<sup>46</sup> A meeting of the Presbytery of Dundee in February 1881 forbade its further use.<sup>47</sup> The session was not cited to appear at the bar of the presbytery and the session had no opportunity of stating its case. On this ground, the minister of St. Luke's appealed to the Synod of Angus and Mearns which, by a single vote, did to the presbytery just what the presbytery had done to the session. Giving the presbytery no opportunity to be heard, the synod simply ordered it to take up the case again, but this time citing parties.<sup>48</sup> Members of the synod minority dissented and complained to the General Assembly of 1881. On Begg's motion, the Assembly sustained the dissent and complaint and upheld the presbytery's judgement.<sup>49</sup>

The Broughty Ferry case thus came before the Assembly for a decision on procedure, and not on instrumental music. Begg's reasoning did not please some Assembly members - the alternative (and more correct) course of action would have been to remit the case back to the synod, but, Begg argued,<sup>50</sup>

"they should all hold to the former worship of the Church and should there and then put an end to the debate ... If they sent the case to the Synod, they hung up the case for twelve months and encouraged discussion where no discussion was necessary ... He hoped that this question of the harmonium would be silenced that day for all time; but if it must be renewed, the Assembly should give no encouragement to the discussion".

Rainy, on the other hand, while condemning the action of the Broughty Ferry session, hinted in his usual roundabout way that the organ question should perhaps be the

subject of overtures to the Assembly, but "he hoped men would not raise the question without seriously considering whether it was desirable so soon and so early to stir this question".<sup>51</sup>

Some, however, regarded discussion as long overdue, and Rainy's suggestion was taken up. Two Glasgow churches (Free College and Westbourne) had been waiting for some time, and they overtured the 1882 Assembly for leave to use instruments. The question was discussed in presbyteries and synods, and seven of these also overtured the Assembly. Two overtures from the north (the Synod of Glenelg and the Presbytery of Dornoch) were predictably opposed to the introduction of instruments; the Synod of Glenelg even hinted at secession, asking the Assembly

"to adopt means to prevent an innovation which will certainly destroy the present uniformity of worship, and ultimately rend the Church".<sup>52</sup>

The five remaining overtures were in favour of congregational freedom, and they demonstrated that John Buchan's father<sup>53</sup> and others were mistaken in their claim that the desire for such freedom was confined to Glasgow, a city of "ecclesiastical snobbery". The Glasgow overture was, in fact, transmitted by a smaller percentage of votes than any of the others:<sup>54</sup>

	Vote for transmission	Percentage of total votes
Presbytery of Dunfermline	13- 0	100
Presbytery of Kirkcaldy	14- 8	64
Synod of Aberdeen	24-14	63
Synod of Fife	16-10	62
Presbytery of Glasgow	58-41	59

In some other presbyteries, proposals to transmit similar overtures were narrowly defeated, sometimes by a single vote.<sup>55</sup>

Debate in the presbyteries and synods, and in the 1882 Assembly, followed familiar patterns, the only major difference from earlier debates in other denominations being an emphasis on the estrangement of the young, to-

gether with an explicit awareness of falling behind the competition. Only 120 members of the Assembly supported Begg's motion for continued prohibition; after it had been excluded, 202 voted for immediate granting of liberty, but were defeated by the 263 who favoured the appointment of a committee to report particularly on the consistency between congregational liberty and "the principles of the divine Word and Standards of the Church". Begg refused to act on the committee,<sup>56</sup> and he and fourteen others entered their dissent.<sup>57</sup>

Feelings ran high in the north, and for months the organ question monopolised the correspondence columns of the *Caithness Courier*. In October, Begg tried to persuade the Presbytery of Edinburgh to overture the Assembly against instrumental music; opposed by Rainy, he lost by a ratio of about two to one, and the defeat led a highlander in Edinburgh to write home that thirty-one members of the Edinburgh presbytery were "wandering after the whoredom of Rome".<sup>58</sup> Begg published his presbytery speech in pamphlet form,<sup>59</sup> his concluding argument being based on an alleged association between instrumental music and immorality and the contrast between the moral Scottish highlander and the degenerate Italian. The Association for Defending the Purity of Worship set about organising a nation-wide anti-organ petition, which was expected to get 200,000 signatures.<sup>60</sup> In the event, 75,000 signatures were obtained, allegedly by dubious methods,<sup>61</sup> and the petition was said to be disapproved of even by the majority of the northern clergy.<sup>62</sup> These northerners preferred to use constitutional methods and they were responsible for most of the twenty-five anti-organ overtures and the congregational petitions presented to the 1883 Assembly.

Begg complained that the committee appointed by the 1882 Assembly was "virtually a sham and a pretence" and that its "leading men clearly intimated that they went into the Committee with their minds made up".<sup>63</sup> In fact, the 35-man committee seems to have been representative of the Assembly as a whole. Its report<sup>64</sup> ran to thirty pages, twenty of which consisted of reasons of dissent by various of its members from its conclusions. The report

reads like a series of pamphlets or a debate report. Its conclusions, each reached by a small majority, were that there was no scriptural, constitutional or legal objection to instrumental music and that it would be expedient to grant liberty to congregations to use instruments.

When the report came before the 1883 Assembly, much was made of the committee's failure to attain anything like unanimity. Sir Henry Moncrieff moved that, in view of the diversity of opinion in the committee and in the Assembly, the report be published for the information of the Church at large and "that the Assembly, in the meantime, take no further action". Begg and his followers, knowing that this was the best they could hope for, ranged themselves behind Moncrieff's motion. A suggestion that the Barrier Act be invoked had little support - the anti-organ party was outnumbered in the presbyteries, while the pro-freedom party was going for immediate victory. In his motion, Moncrieff referred to "the great importance of the subject"; Rainy took the opposite view. He himself had no wish for organs; he had always, he said, deprecated agitation on such a minor question, but, now that it was squarely before the Assembly, liberty should be granted. To postpone the decision would be to increase the agitation and to give the matter an importance it did not merit.

Whatever Rainy might say about "not looking for any particular good by the introduction of instrumental music", many other speakers made it clear that they were voting with him because they saw the use of organs as a means of stopping the flow of members to rival denominations. As the *Times* had observed:<sup>65</sup>

"This may be stigmatized as adopting a carnal policy in things sacred; but a church, especially a voluntary church, cannot afford to disregard its prosperity in things temporal".

Rainy's motion, that

"the General Assembly find that there is nothing in the Word of God, or in the constitution and laws of this Church, to preclude the use of instrumental music in public worship as an aid to vocal praise",

was carried by 390 votes to 259. Free Church congregations now had liberty to introduce instruments.



It is not easy to assess what might have been the effect in the highlands had Begg not died soon after. The northerners had already been forced to tolerate the use of hymns and other innovations in other parts of the country. Leaderless now, they continued in the old ways, disapproving of what was happening elsewhere and less able to make their voice heard. Begg's anti-organ mantle fell on the inadequate shoulders of T.A.G. Balfour, an Edinburgh elder and a distinguished medical man. "Dr Begg is dead, but the Lord liveth", he proclaimed in 1884,<sup>66</sup> "and it is in His glorious Name that we would display our banners". He published the texts of his lengthy Begg-like speeches in the Edinburgh presbytery in 1882 (where he had seconded Begg's unsuccessful motion) and in the 1884 Assembly. He may have been the "friend in Edinburgh"<sup>67</sup> who supplied the text of the identically-worded highland petitions to that Assembly, seeking a recall of the 1883 Act; at any rate, he acted as spokesman for the petitioners. Dr. Adam, who had been convenor of the committee, referred to

"the desire among ministers, office-bearers and the people that they should turn away as far as possible from causes of contention and devote themselves to the great work to which they had been called as servants of Christ".

His motion, that "the Assembly ... see no reason for reopening the question" was carried by the vote of three-quarters of the Assembly.<sup>68</sup> In 1885 another attempt to have the Act rescinded was made by the Synod of Ross, the Presbytery of Tain, and 161 people from the Synod of Glenelg. Secession was again threatened. Again Balfour acted as spokesman, and again nearly three-quarters of the Assembly voted for a motion that the Assembly "see no cause to reopen the question".<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile, instruments had appeared in a few churches. By May 1884, "one or two" had been introduced,<sup>70</sup> and, towards the end of that year a Free Church professor was ordained at a service in Glasgow at which organ voluntaries were played.<sup>71</sup> Free College Church and Westbourne Free Church got their organs in 1884, and in 1885 Kelvinside Free Church bought a harmonium, replaced the following year by a large Willis organ at a cost of

£1250, including alterations to accommodate it. The early instruments were not confined to Glasgow. The second pipe organ installed in a Free church was at Elgin South in 1884,<sup>72</sup> and in 1886 St. Ninian's, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, introduced a reed organ.<sup>73</sup> In 1885 one James Cochrane offered to present an American organ to the first Free church in the Presbytery of Selkirk that would use it in public worship. The offer was eagerly accepted by the congregation at Ladhope, only four members dissenting.<sup>74</sup> By 1890 there were also instruments in at least three other Glasgow Free churches, and pipe organs in Free churches in Aberdeen, Paisley and Greenock. The first pipe organ in an Edinburgh Free church was installed in 1889.<sup>75</sup> Undoubtedly, Free churches in other places also were installing instruments, but it is difficult to determine how widely the new freedom was exercised.

Many congregations, of course, simply could not afford the expense. But these were the very congregations which were experiencing increasing difficulty in finding precentors. Moreover, by the late eighties, even the poorest congregation usually had some member who could play a harmonium well enough to accompany psalms and hymns. But how were they to pay for their harmoniums?

The General Assembly's Psalmody Committee (renamed the Praise Committee in 1884) administered grants for the purchase of music books and for the training of precentors, choirs and congregations. Many had seen these grants as a means of enabling the Church to resist the demand for organs. But in 1889 the Committee reported that it had been approached for grants to help purchase musical instruments for use in Sunday worship, "from quarters where it has been found very difficult to procure capable precentors". The committee was unanimous in regarding such grants as a legitimate use of its funds, and "by a large majority" the 1889 Assembly gave its approval.<sup>76</sup> Payment of the grants was conditional on the congregation having already raised most of the money and on the committee having been consulted on the choice of instrument. About a dozen applications had been received

when the scheme came into effect in 1890. The committee reported in 1891 that the first year of the scheme had resulted in improvements in the praise of several congregations and had enabled one congregation, previously silent from want of a precentor, to resume its singing. The committee had by then shown its business sense by negotiating with music-sellers in various towns for discounts as high as 33 per cent on instruments purchased by Free Church congregations. In 1892 the committee produced a brief list of approved reed organ manufacturers, and in 1893 it extended the grant scheme to include small pipe organs costing between £150 and £200. Gradually, administering grants for instruments became a very important activity of the committee; in 1898 grants for music books and teaching were discontinued, and all the available funds went on instrument grants. So the Free Church, for eleven years the only major denomination to resist organs, became in the end the only one to use its central funds to assist in their purchase.

Over 150 churches received grants between 1890 and 1900. Detailed lists appeared in the committee's annual reports from 1893 on. The lists include city, town and rural churches, and they show that during the whole period the demand was spread across the country from Galloway and the borders to Orkney and Shetland. The churches which received grants were almost certainly a minority of those where instruments were adopted, and it is likely that there were several hundred Free churches using instruments by the end of the century. None of these, however, appear to have been in the western isles or the mainland area north and west of the Great Glen,<sup>77</sup> where staunch opposition remained right up to the parting of the ways in 1900.

### 10.3. Later events

The Free Church debate of the early eighties reawakened public interest in the organ question. It encouraged the few remaining dissidents in the Church of Scotland and the U.P. Church to try to reopen the debate in their own denominations. We have seen how the attempt of Major

Baillie and others found little sympathy in the Established Assembly of 1883.<sup>78</sup> Story described Baillie's petition as "most disrespectful in language".<sup>79</sup> The same criticism could not be made of James Mackenzie, an Edinburgh elder who made a similar attempt at the U.P. Synod in 1882. Yet Mackenzie failed even more miserably. His overture called on the Synod to consider rescinding the 1872 Act, but nobody could be found to second his motion, and not a single member opposed the decision that "the Synod do not see cause to reconsider the question".<sup>80</sup>

One group within the Free Church who may have been saddened by the 1883 Act were the former Reformed Presbyterians who had united with the Free Church in 1876. The Reformed Presbyterians were ultra-conservative, and those of them who stayed out of the 1876 union probably felt some degree of vindication when they saw what was happening in the Free Church. At the 1882 Synod of the continuing Reformed Presbyterians, speakers complained that instrumental music had been introduced "in an unconstitutional manner" in other presbyterian denominations and that innovations hindered reunion.<sup>81</sup> The Synod adopted a resolution of James Kerr, an anti-organ pamphleteer, which declared that there was

"no warrant in the Scriptures for such innovations as uninspired hymns, instrumental music in worship, sitting at prayer, and reading set forms of prayer".<sup>82</sup>

But the major effect of the 1883 Act on presbyterians outside the Free Church may have been the removal of any lingering suspicion that organs were sinful, unconstitutional or illegal. It had been shown that the majority in Begg's own Church disagreed with him, and now every major Christian denomination in Scotland permitted instrumental music. This may have been partly responsible for the large increase in the number of instruments adopted annually in the Established and U.P. Churches in the eighties; however, it is just as likely that the increase was the natural continuation of a trend which had begun in the early seventies.

In 1902, when a vast majority of Church of Scotland congregations were using instrumental music, the opening

praise at General Assembly meetings was still led by a precentor, though the Assembly services in St. Giles had been accompanied by an instrument for more than twenty-five years. Installation of an organ in the Assembly Hall led some members to overture the 1902 Assembly for its use at Assembly meetings.<sup>83</sup> The proposal was opposed by, of all people, Sprott and Story.<sup>84</sup> Sprott pointed out that this was "the first attempt formally to sanction the use of instrumental music in the Church of Scotland" and that it was "a relief to the consciences" of many that organs had been allowed and ignored but not "sanctioned". Seconding Sprott, Story referred to the offence which would be given to highland members. He then, to "loud applause", referred to many changes which had occurred in the conduct of Assembly meetings, and characterised the precentor as a reminder of days that were gone. "Leave us something unchanged", he pleaded, echoing an attitude with which he had had little patience forty years before. Sprott's motion was carried by an "overwhelming majority". The psalm appointed for the Assembly's opening praise that day - Psalm 150 - had been hastily replaced by another "having no direct bearing on one of the controversial subjects of the day".

The continuing Free Church, of course, opposed the use of organs. In 1904, in response to overtures, a committee was appointed to consider public worship. On the recommendation of that committee, the 1905 Assembly resolved

"to reaffirm the Disruption position ... and enjoin all congregations to adhere to purity of worship, as that was understood and practised at that period".

It also recalled the former Free Church's resolutions on hymns and repealed the 1883 Act which sanctioned the use of instrumental music.<sup>85</sup> The 1908 Assembly ordered the removal of an organ, which had apparently been installed before the union, in the Elder Memorial Church, Leith. The Free Church agreed that the organ could become the property of the U.F. Church ("which, unlike other property, it [the U.F. Church] got with their heartiest goodwill") if the latter would pay the expenses of its removal.<sup>86</sup> The organ was removed in May 1909, but the

congregation continued to be at loggerheads with its presbytery until, in October, it unanimously decided to seek admission into the Church of Scotland.<sup>87</sup> Amid angry scenes at the presbytery in November, the congregation formally withdrew from the Free Church, and the Free Church's law agent next day demanded the keys of the building.<sup>88</sup> The following Sunday the congregation worshipped in South Leith Parish Church hall, singing hymns to the accompaniment of an American organ.<sup>89</sup> The organ and the use of hymns had been the main causes of the dispute.<sup>90</sup> In U.F. churches with a Free Church history there were still minorities who were not happy. In 1909 a U.F. minister at Kingussie congratulated some of his congregation who had "sunk their own personal feelings for the good of the larger number and especially of the young" in agreeing to have an organ.<sup>91</sup>

In the early years of the twentieth century, organs advanced apace. Grants from the Carnegie Trust helped 3,500 congregations in Britain, including over a thousand in Scotland, to instal organs. As the Trust committee itself latterly acknowledged,<sup>92</sup> the Carnegie grants sometimes resulted in the presence of large organs in churches which could not afford their maintenance or the salary of a qualified organist. This criticism was made by many, including the precentors' chronicler Duncan Fraser,<sup>93</sup> who took a surprisingly balanced view of organs. He spoke of congregations which

"by a spirit of ostentation and rivalry have lost the benefit of a medium which by judicious forethought might have proved a real aid to devotion. An instrument fit for a cathedral placed in a small church is a violation of the laws both of taste and of acoustics".

The same point had been made as early as 1891 by H.J. Wotherspoon:<sup>94</sup>

"We Scots are always in extremes; we begin with Anthems before we have learned to say Amen; one day we will have no organ on any terms, and the next we build a chancel to our preaching place and fill it with an organ - we have paid hundreds of pounds for it and we mean to have the worth of our money - so the piece of machinery is set up, like a Dagon in the Sanctuary, that we may worship toward it, and a pulpit is bracketted above the keyboard..."

and by W.H. Macleod in 1895.<sup>95</sup> Critics around the turn of the century did not object to organs on principle, but they objected to their size and prominence and to their misuse. They did not object to anthems but to choirs monopolising the singing throughout the service.

According to Wotherspoon, congregations had "dropped out" of singing. Others<sup>96</sup> confirmed this statement. These men were talking about the richer churches which had good choirs; in many other churches musical instruments seem to have helped congregations to sing. Leishman said, also in 1891, that an organ or harmonium

"was found to be a steadier support to the singers' voices than the larynx of a precentor. The help of an instrument has been welcomed in town and country".<sup>97</sup>

Yet the introduction of an organ where a congregation was already singing well was not always a success, as even Lindsay Alexander seems to have acknowledged.<sup>98</sup>

What an organ undoubtedly did was to make it possible to introduce new tunes on a scale which, as Wotherspoon said,<sup>99</sup> would have been impossible for an unaided precentor. Congregations had previously had a small repertoire of well-known tunes and were now unrealistically expected to learn a multiplicity of new hymns. "In ten years", said Wotherspoon, though possibly not speaking of a majority of churches, "you will hardly hear four verses of a psalm on a Sunday morning, but hymn upon hymn until you are cloyed as with a diet of honey". Hely Hutchinson Almond, who claimed to have investigated "scores of cases in all parts of the country", reached the conclusions<sup>100</sup>

"first, that the heartiness of congregational singing is little affected by organs either way, and secondly that it is generally in inverse ratio to the excellence of the choir and the modern or fashionable character of the hymns and tunes ... Organists and choirs must be made to understand that their function is subordinate".

For better or worse, every major Scottish denomination entered the twentieth century with the organ firmly established as an accessory of worship.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. See, e.g., Farmer 1947, p.375.-
2. Scottish Psalmody, 1852, pp.21-2. The same vision of a future in which a musical "crutch" could be thrown away is to be found among English dissenters as a reason for using harmoniums rather than organs - see Burder 1860, p.84.
3. e.g. Cumming 1840, p.xviii; Anderson 1855 (quoted by Cromar 1856, pp.10-11).
4. Begg 1866, p.49.
5. N.B. Daily Mail, 16 Jan to 15 Apr 1871.
6. *ibid.*
7. Macara 1881, pp.273-9.
8. N.B. Daily Mail, 24 Apr 1871.
9. Perth Journal, 29 Apr 1869.
10. e.g. Greenock Free West Church, in 1864. (*Daily Review*, 28 Nov 1864).
11. N.B. Mail, 7 Dec 1865.
12. Perthshire Courier, 27 July 1875.
13. Elgin Courant, 5 June 1877.
14. Scottish Guardian, 25 Nov 1853.
15. Gibson 1854.
16. Gibson 1869, pp.103-4.
17. Aberdeen Journal, 6 June 1855.
18. Aberdeen Journal, 5 Sept 1855.
19. Anderson 1855, quoted by Cromar 1856, p.11.
20. Witness, 15 Mar 1856.
21. Smith 1885, ii, p.251.
22. Scotsman, 31 May 1865.
23. Greenock Advertiser, 21 Dec 1865.
24. Greenock Advertiser, 4 Nov 1865.
25. *supra*, ch. 7.
26. *supra*, ch. 8.
27. Greenock Advertiser, 23 Dec 1865.
28. Begg 1866. This pamphlet was published by the publisher McPhun, a circumstance which led Dwight's *Journal of Music* in the U.S. to regard it as an elaborate joke. (*Evening Citizen*, 15 Sept 1866).
29. Organ Question 1866, pp.613-4.
30. Mackenzie, J., 1866.
31. Watchword, Oct 1866, pp.221-2.
32. Presbyterian, 1 Oct 1868, pp.3-4.
33. Gibson 1869.
34. Guthrie 1871, p.637.
35. *supra*, ch. 9.
36. Proc & Deb 1882, p.199.
37. Proc & Deb 1883, p.129.
38. Scotsman, 1 Aug 1878.
39. Caithness Courier, 13 Dec 1878.
40. N.B. Daily Mail, 5 Jan 1882.
41. Dundee Advertiser, 30 Mar 1878.
42. Proc & Deb, 1883, pp.122-3.
43. Times, 9 May 1883.
44. Proc & Deb, 1882, p.203.
45. Dundee Advertiser, 26 Apr 1881.
46. Proc & Deb, 1881, p.236.
47. Dundee Advertiser, 10 Feb 1881.
48. Dundee Advertiser, 27 Apr 1881.
49. Proc & Deb 1881, pp.234-242, 251-2.
50. Proc & Deb 1881, p.241.



51. *ibid.*
52. Proc. & Deb. 1882, p.201.
53. *Fife Free Press*, 8 Apr 1882.
54. *Dunfermline Journal*, 8 Apr 1882; *Fife Free Press*, 8 Apr 1882; *Weekly News*, 15 Apr 1882; *Fife Free Press*, 15 Apr 1882; *N.B. Daily Mail*, 5 Jan 1882.
55. Proc & Deb 1882, p.202.
56. Smith 1885, ii, p.535.
57. Proc & Deb 1882, p.221.
58. *Caithness Courier*, 20 Oct 1882.
59. Begg 1882.
60. Proc & Deb 1883, p.131.
61. e.g. Proc & Deb 1883, pp.131, 133-4.
62. Proc & Deb 1883, p.134.
63. Begg 1882, p.2.
64. Proc & Deb 1883, Appendix 37.
65. *Times*, 9 May 1883.
66. Balfour 1884, p.21.
67. *ibid*, p.48.
68. Proc & Deb 1884, pp.113-130.
69. Proc & Deb 1885, pp.179-185.
70. Proc & Deb 1884, p.126.
71. Proc & Deb 1885, pp.179-180.
72. Elvin 1976, p.119; Proc & Deb 1885, p.181; Elgin 1901, p.14.
73. Baxter 1914, p.18.
74. Hall 1895, p.120.
75. Stewart 1975, p.6.
76. Proc & Deb 1889, pp.174-5.
77. The only known instrument even marginally within this district was a harmonium or American organ installed in the Free Church, Tobermory, in 1899 or 1900. (Praise Committee Report, 1900).
78. *supra*, ch. 9.
79. *Orcadian*, 2 June 1883.
80. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 17 May 1882.
81. *Caithness Courier*, 19 May 1882.
82. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 17 May 1882.
83. A.G.A. 1902, p.79.
84. *Scotsman*, 30 May 1902.
85. *Scotsman*, 26 May 1905.
86. *Glasgow Herald*, 21 May 1909.
87. *Leith Burghs Pilot*, 27 Oct 1909.
88. *Leith Burghs Pilot*, 17 Nov 1909.
89. *Leith Burghs Pilot*, 27 Nov 1909.
90. *Leith Burghs Pilot*, 20 Nov 1909.
91. *Inverness Courier*, 7 May 1909.
92. Carnegie 1915, p.407.
93. Fraser 1916, pp.168-9.
94. Wotherspoon 1891, p.38.
95. Macleod 1895.
96. Almond 1895, Nisbet 1895, Macleod 1895.
97. Leishman 1891, p.424.
98. Ross 1887, p.197. But cf. Escott 1960, p.160.
99. Wotherspoon 1891, pp.36-8. Too many new tunes were sometimes introduced even when there was no organ (e.g. Macara 1881, p.279).
100. Almond 1895, pp.208, 212. But at the same conference W.H. Macleod complained that choirs were criticised as entertainers rather than appreciated for the help they gave in worship. Other papers indicate the

aspirations of some of the "high church" party. J.M. Nisbet looked to a future when congregations would use plainsong and sing the Te Deum or the Benedictus every Sunday.

## 11. ASPECTS

This chapter is based on information which has been collected about the adoption of musical instruments by several hundred Scottish congregations. The amount of detail found varies from church to church. Sometimes there is merely one small but interesting piece of information; at the other extreme, there are many cases where detailed accounts of voting procedures, fund-raising efforts, and organ stop-lists can be found. It would be meaningless therefore to categorise the cases studied in terms of precise numbers in particular denominations or periods or geographical areas. The amount of information available reflects the attention which the instruments attracted at the time. The sample is thus heavily biased towards the period between 1850 and 1880 and towards the Established Church.

### 11.1. The relationship between organs and other innovations.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, theology, worship and church buildings all underwent sweeping changes. The use of organs in worship was naturally resisted most by those parties in the Churches which were also conservative in other respects. Where a rigid approach was taken to the Westminster Confession, organs were excluded. Begg saw organs as the second stage in a process of corruption - "first the hymns; second, the organs; and then liturgies".<sup>1</sup>

Though no case could be made for an association between organs and liturgies, organs and hymns were related by the aid which organs could give to congregations in learning new hymns. Among Scottish presbyterians and independents, hymns generally preceded organs. Virtually every U.P. congregation, it appears, was singing hymns before it acquired an organ; this was the result of a long hymn-singing tradition together with delayed sanction for the use of organs. The Established and Free Churches both accepted hymns officially before they al-

lowed the use of organs, but this does not mean that hymns always preceded organs in individual churches. In the Established Church, most congregations were singing at least one hymn per service by the mid-seventies, but in the mid-sixties, when organs started to appear, very few sang any hymns at all. Most of the instruments installed in Established churches up to the early seventies were initially used for the accompaniment of psalms and paraphrases only. In the Free Church, hymns were well established before organs were permitted; probably most Free congregations were singing hymns before they had organs.

Innovations in presbyterian worship, other than hymns and organs, were introduced by kirk sessions without general or particular sanction from higher church courts. Since those who wanted to use organs had to wait until the mind of their Church as a whole was ready, musical instruments came some time after other innovations in most "progressive" congregations. Thus a large number of those presbyterian congregations (especially in the U.P. and Free Churches) which adopted chanting and doxologies did so before they had instruments. Since the introduction of chanting in the presbyterian churches coincided with that of organs in the Established Church, many Established congregations introduced chanting after they had organs, and a few adopted the two innovations simultaneously.<sup>2</sup> In all denominations the introduction of doxologies or anthems seems to have been quite independent of whether or not the church concerned had an organ. Choirs generally preceded organs by several decades, but in some small churches the period was shorter. Those congregations which had no choirs (usually in small rural churches) often regarded organs or harmoniums as substitutes.

The change which most frequently coincided with the introduction of an instrument was rebuilding, refurbishing or redecoration of the church building. Often the alterations to the building (or some of them) were made in order to accommodate the organ. But in other cases necessary repairs, or the installation of such features

as stained glass windows or a platform pulpit,<sup>3</sup> would give rise to a suggestion that this would be a convenient time to obtain a musical instrument, especially if a single fund-raising effort could find the cost of both.

When John Macleod went to Govan, he introduced four innovations on a single Sunday - the Church Service Society's Book of Common Order, a change of postures, a choir, and a harmonium.<sup>4</sup> Various innovations, including the use of a harmonium, took place within a year of W.G.H. Carmichael's arrival at Perth East in 1871.<sup>5</sup> Ladhope Free Church introduced instrumental music, hymns and posture changes when the congregation moved into a new building in 1885.<sup>6</sup> Other ministers and sessions were more cautious. It was not uncommon, however, for posture changes to be introduced simultaneously with hymns or with instrumental music.<sup>7</sup> Posture changes provide an illustration of the fact that the order in which innovations were adopted varied widely among congregations. In forty or more Established churches new postures had been adopted before hymns or organs had made their appearance anywhere.<sup>8</sup> Yet at Cupar, where one of the earliest Church of Scotland organs was introduced in 1866, the congregation remained sitting to sing until 1873, when a change of postures was attempted but abandoned.<sup>9</sup> And at Minnigaff, Newton Stewart, hymns, anthems, chants and organ voluntaries were in use in 1873, but the congregation was still sitting while it sang.<sup>10</sup>

From its start, instrumental music was adopted in many churches which do not seem to have been ahead of their time with other innovations. This is particularly true of small rural churches, where the first Sunday use of an instrument often took place without the sermon on beauty in worship commonly given on such occasions, and the only objective was to help the congregations in their normal praise.

## 11.2. The influence of the clergy.

Churchgoers must have been influenced in their attitude to the organ movement by the support it had from immensely popular preachers like Norman Macleod, Thomas Guthrie, George Gilfillan and Lindsay Alexander, and from those popular clerical writers, A.K.H. Boyd and Edward Ramsay. (Ramsay, though an episcopalian, was widely read by those of all denominations, and he is the only Scottish episcopalian known to have published an organ pamphlet).

The nature of innovations and the speed with which they were introduced were, for the most part, controlled by the laity. The two Church of Scotland men named above - Macleod and Boyd - were several years behind the leaders in adopting instruments in their own churches. It was not predominantly in the churches of broad churchmen or of members of the Church Service Society or of rebellious young clergy that the early instruments were to be found. The ministers of the pioneering churches of the establishment were as diverse a group as one could expect to find. They included the distinguished and respected,<sup>11</sup> the controversial,<sup>12</sup> the notorious,<sup>13</sup> the eccentric and unusual,<sup>14</sup> and the otherwise unknown. Men of great energy and personality like Robert Lee, John Macleod and R.H. Story clearly took the initiative in innovating in their churches. But in most places, and particularly with instrumental music, the initiative came from congregations and sessions.

This statement, though, must be qualified by a few observations. A common theme of church music reformers was the musical ignorance and indifference of the clergy. Musical clergy, it seems, were thin on the ground. Yet quite a number of them occupied the pulpits of churches which pioneered the use of instruments. At one of the first Congregational churches to use an organ - Canmore Street, Dunfermline - the minister was also the choirmaster.<sup>15</sup> The fact that the first presbyterian instrument in the north was in the tiny and then remote village of Dallas was probably due to the musical enthusiasm of 60-

year-old John Macdonald who combined the duties of minister and organist.<sup>16</sup> The first instrument in Roxburghshire was at Maxton, whose minister, M.H.N. Graham "had fine musical gifts and composed several psalm tunes".<sup>17</sup> J.G. Beveridge of Inveresk Parish Church invited Robert Lee to preach on instrumental music there in 1865;<sup>18</sup> Beveridge was "an accomplished flute and violin player"<sup>19</sup> and in 1871 his church became the first Established church in the Lothians after Lee's to have a pipe organ. In Edinburgh itself, Church of Scotland congregations seem to have been reluctant to follow Lee's example, but the necessary impetus was supplied by the adoption of a harmonium in St. Giles Cathedral where the minister, David Arnot, was "an accomplished musician".<sup>20</sup> The minister of Elgin South, the second Free church to instal a pipe organ, was well known locally as a lecturer on music.<sup>21</sup>

A few family relationships too suggest influence by the clergy. A.K.H. Boyd's brother<sup>22</sup> and Norman Macleod's cousin<sup>23</sup> were among the first dozen clergy in the Church of Scotland whose congregations introduced instruments, and during the same year Macleod's brother Donald was minister of Linlithgow when a congregational vote on instrumental music was taken.<sup>24</sup> Less than a year before the introduction of the harmonium at Graham's church at Maxton, his brother's church at Nenthorn had become the first in the Presbytery of Kelso to use one; instruments were played for the first time in both churches by the ministers' sister.<sup>25</sup> The first instrument in the Presbytery of Brechin<sup>26</sup> was in the church of the son of Dr. Stevenson whose congregation at Coupar Angus had attempted to introduce the first in the Presbytery of Meigle less than two years earlier.

Some ministers seem at first sight to have carried the organ gospel with them when they moved to new churches. By the end of 1865 only eleven Established congregations were using instruments. A further thirteen were added in 1866 and, of these thirteen, two had new ministers who came from churches already using instruments,<sup>27</sup> and another had a minister who had been unashamedly encouraging an organ movement in his previous

church.<sup>28</sup> The odds against this kind of thing happening by chance are very long indeed. Donald McCorquodale was minister of Belhaven Church, Dunbar, when a harmonium was introduced in 1867; two years later his new congregation at Queen's Park, Glasgow, installed an organ. Quite a few like examples can be found in the seventies,<sup>29</sup> but with the increase in the number of instruments the odds had by then shortened considerably. All these cases, however, were almost certainly the natural result of congregations with an innovative approach calling ministers who had similar ideas.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, in an overwhelming majority of churches it was the congregations who pressed for instrumental music. But they did so only where they knew their ministers to be sympathetic, or at least not opposed to the idea.

### 11.3. How congregations decided to have instrumental music.

#### 11.3.1. Initiation.

Contemporary reports often stated that, long before an organ proposal was made in a church, a general feeling in favour of instrumental music existed there. This feeling was encouraged in many places by the presence in the church of a harmonium or American organ for use on occasions other than Sunday morning services. In some places, organ opponents alleged that an ultimate objective was its use in normal Sunday worship, an objective which was sometimes frankly acknowledged.

Certainly, when it came to voting, there was usually a large majority in favour. But how was an instrumental music project initiated? In 114 of the churches studied, some information is available. The initiative seems to have come from the kirk session in 9 of these churches and from the minister in another 9. In 38 churches the trigger was an offer by an individual or a group to provide an instrument, often, it seems, after consultation with the minister.<sup>31</sup> Sessions received instrumental music proposals in 4 cases from the choir which had been using



an instrument in its practices, in 2 cases from the church's psalmody or music committee, and in 2 cases from the managers.

In the remaining 50 of the 114 churches, the initiative came directly from the congregation. Often a petition (or memorial, or requisition) was prepared, signed sometimes by hundreds of the congregation, and presented to the session. In other places the proposal was made at a routine congregational meeting.<sup>32</sup> (In later years, the occasion for such a proposal was often the resignation of the precentor). Sometimes the procedure was less formal, perhaps best described as "spontaneous activity" of the congregation.<sup>33</sup> Whatever the procedure adopted, the outcome was usually, in presbyterian churches, a request to the kirk session or the minister to consider the proposal. But between 1865 and 1872, ten Established congregations seem to have petitioned their presbyteries for sanction without formally involving their sessions at all.<sup>34</sup> In these cases, a formal petition was usually presented, bearing the signatures of all the elders and nearly everyone in the congregation, and backed by a statement that the few who had not signed had indicated their intention to accede to the will of the majority.

Only four cases have been found of a kirk session rejecting an organ proposal without further action.<sup>35</sup> In three cases the session immediately gave its approval.<sup>36</sup> In all other cases, it took further steps to ascertain the views of the congregation as a whole, though occasionally an elder would resign in protest.<sup>37</sup> The definition of a "congregation" for this purpose is not always clear. Most sessions consulted "members and adherents" or "members and seat-holders", but some consulted only "members" or "communicants".

#### 11.3.2. Methods of consultation.

In 40 of the cases studied, the congregation was apparently consulted but the method of consultation is not specified. In 68 cases, voting papers were issued; in 40, a vote was taken at a special congregational meeting

called for the purpose; in 25, public intimation was made that objections should be lodged by a given date; in 8, the session (or, in two of these cases, the presbytery) invited opponents of the proposal to attend a meeting on a stated date; and in 2 cases the session organised a house-to-house survey. The same case is sometimes included in more than one of these figures, since occasionally more than one method was used.<sup>38</sup>

In 7 cases the congregations apparently were not consulted at all until after the instrument was in use, if even then. John Macleod ensured beforehand that the Govan harmonium had the formal support of his session,<sup>39</sup> but in three churches even the session was not previously formally consulted. At Leswalt in 1875, objections were called for (and none were received) more than four months after the harmonium was introduced.<sup>40</sup> At Evie, Orkney, in 1883, the minister previously sounded out some of his elders and members informally; several weeks after the harmonium was in use, the session approved it.<sup>41</sup> At Buccleuch Church, Edinburgh, the eccentric Finlay Matheson's elders and congregation were surprised one Sunday morning to hear the sound of a harmonium issuing from behind the pulpit.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, there are also 26 cases of new churches equipped with instruments. 16 of these were completely new, and the decision to use instrumental music was taken by the managers or those responsible for providing the building. The remaining 10 were new buildings for existing congregations which had not previously used instruments; in only three of these cases has a record been found of a decision by the congregation, and in another two the session seems to have taken the decision on its own.

Many a session obtained a harmonium for "experimental" use at afternoon or evening services before consulting the congregation on its morning use. Fifteen sessions went further by allowing the instrument to be used at all services for a trial period. The trial would typically last for from two weeks to two months, at the end

of which period objections to the continued use of the instrument would be called for or (in two cases) a vote would be taken. Naturally, such trials were usually made with small reed instruments, but in at least two places small pipe organs were used.<sup>43</sup>

### 11.3.3. Results of consultation.

In all, there are 183 cases in which something is known about the result of consulting a congregation. Where the method of consultation is not known, there were no objectors at all in 19 cases, 8 congregations were said to be almost unanimously in favour, 6 were described as "harmonious" or "favourable", and in 2 cases the congregations were said to have voted against the proposal.<sup>44</sup> (One of these last two cases may, however, have been a decision to respect the wish of a minority). Additionally there are 5 cases in which the number of people opposed to the proposal is given - the highest number is forty-six, all of whom said they would accept the majority decision.

But the remaining cases make it clear that such figures do not tell us much, for different methods of consultation produced markedly different results. In 5 of the 8 cases where a court is known to have arranged a meeting to be attended by objectors, no objectors appeared; in 1 case three appeared, and the remaining 2 were each attended by a single objector, one of them not a parishioner. Of 25 cases where a call was made for objections to be lodged, 9 produced no objections at all, 10 produced five or fewer objections, and 1 produced seven (though "the greater part of the objections could not be held to be altogether valid", according to the session),<sup>45</sup> but the troubled Lanark case produced twenty-two. (In 4 of the 25 cases the result is unknown). In all 33 cases the project went ahead.

Similarly, in all 40 cases where a special congregational meeting took the decision on instrumental music, the decision was favourable. In 18 of these cases, nobody voted against the proposal, in 3 cases the meeting was

nearly unanimous, in 5 cases it was "in favour". Of the 14 cases where precise numbers are given, one had twenty-six votes against the proposal, and another thirteen; nowhere else did the number of anti-organ votes exceed ten. Most of these meetings were attended by hundreds of people. At Guthrie, however, only eight people turned up; the official result was five to three in favour, but this was disputed in the presbytery.<sup>46</sup>

The picture is different in the 70 cases where results from voting papers or house-to-house canvasses are known. Here the opposition numbers were considerably higher, in 6 instances exceeding one hundred, and in 2 of these exceeding two hundred and fifty. In 10 of the 70 cases the session decided to reject the proposal, though in only 1 of these was there a majority against it.

The discrepancy is not surprising. A vote on paper was an expression of personal preference,<sup>47</sup> but any other statement of opposition amounted to a declaration that the voter's preference was being pursued against those of the majority and of influential church members. Meetings to decide about instrumental music were nearly always characterised by a general enthusiasm which would discourage all but the most resolute from even voting against the proposal. It is quite clear too that a call for objections was usually made only where a great majority of the congregation were known to be in favour of an instrument;<sup>48</sup> lodging an objection would amount to opposing the majority wish, and many people would also feel quite unable to sustain their objections when interviewed by the minister or the session.

Very few people voted against instrumental music on conscientious grounds. It was common for ministers or sessions to visit those who had voted against an instrument and to receive assurances from nearly all of them that its presence would make no difference to their relationship with the church. Members of the Synod of Dumfries were suspicious when told that, after visits by elders, fifty-eight of the sixty who had voted against the harmonium proposal at St. Mary's Church would not

pursue their opposition.<sup>49</sup> But this was typical of what happened in many churches and is unlikely to have been the result of undue coercion. Having stated their preference when asked to do so, most people accepted the majority decision. In 1883 the congregation of Elgin South Free Church voted 316 to 76 in favour of having an organ. The session decided not to proceed further but then received a deputation from those who had voted against, withdrawing their objections and saying that they had no wish to obstruct the majority.<sup>50</sup> At Perth East in 1871, 500 voted for the harmonium and 100 against.<sup>51</sup> When the result was known, 50 of the 100 maintained their opposition - allegedly "more the result of canvassing than of dispassionate opposition".<sup>52</sup> Only 10 of them signed a petition to the presbytery, and none went to support the petition at the presbytery meeting.<sup>53</sup> Despite the virtual absence of opposition in the congregation, the Perth case dragged on for three years in the church courts, kept alive by three Perthshire village ministers.

The few anti-organ militants in a congregation found that they could get very little support even from those who had voted with them. If they were in an Established church, they then went outside and drummed up what backing they could get from non-churchgoers, Free Church sympathisers, and conservative clergy of other parishes. As we have seen, this course of action was not open to objectors in other denominations; this is why Free Church fears of disputed organ cases coming frequently before their courts<sup>54</sup> proved to be unnecessary.

Voting figures have to be viewed with caution. At a meeting of the Crieff congregation in 1865 the majority for the organ proposal was 85-70, but the congregation pressed for the use of voting papers and eight months later the vote was 300-72.<sup>55</sup> More extreme is the case of Bellgrove U.P., Glasgow, where voting papers in September 1884 gave a favourable 151-66 vote; when the exercise was repeated a month later (the minister and elders having meantime "consulted" the minority and the neutrals), the vote was 372-24.<sup>56</sup> At the New Church, Ayr, in 1865, two paper votes were taken within a period of a few months,

and probably the influence of Professor Hill was the reason for the pro-organ majority being reduced from 261-71 to 281-89.<sup>57</sup> In other cases where details are available of two votes in the same church, the occasions are several years apart, and the second vote always shows a greatly increased majority in favour of the organ.<sup>58</sup>

Where voting papers were issued, a "very large majority" or a "large majority" was reported in 6 churches, a "favourable" vote in another 5, and "a small majority" in 1. In 3 cases, only the number of votes against is recorded - three in one church, six in another and thirty-three from a thousand-strong congregation in the other. In 53 other cases (a few being in the same church at different times), precise figures are available. In only one of these did the vote go against the organ; elsewhere pro-organ voters outnumbered anti-organ voters by anything from 1.1 to 1 up to over 100 to 1. In total, over these 53 cases, with over 21,000 non-neutral votes cast, the ratio was over 5 to 1.

Despite the qualifications which have been made earlier, this is an impressive indication of the support which church people gave to the introduction of instrumental music. Even more impressive is the smallness of the opposition, measured as a proportion of a congregation. Where voters were given the option of remaining neutral, the neutral vote never exceeded the pro-organ vote but it quite often exceeded the anti-organ vote; moreover, in some churches, half or more of those qualified to vote failed to do so. Both sides, of course, laid claim to the neutrals, but it was scarcely credible that people with conscientious objections had not voted. The real indication of the state of "neutral" opinion came in the four churches where petitions and counter-petitions were organised, for the object on both sides was to acquire as many signatures as possible. Three of these were churches where the innovation was hotly debated, yet the signatures on the pro-organ petitions outnumbered those on the anti-organ petitions by 3 to 1, 5 to 1, 24 to 1, and 28 to 1.

There does not appear to be any correlation between the degree of congregational support for organs and any other factor. Given the result of a vote or of a call for objections, it would be impossible even to make an informed guess at the denomination, the district or the decade from which the figures came. By and large, the question of instrumental music would be pursued in a church only when there was known to be already a large body of favourable opinion in the congregation. An organ came when a church was ready for it.

Only ten cases are known in which instrumental music was rejected after the congregation was consulted. In only one of these did the votes against the organ definitely outnumber those for it. When the pro-organ vote was over 3.5 to 1 the project nearly always went ahead, but it also did so in some places where the ratio was smaller. It would be naive to suppose that all votes were of equal weight, particularly in a voluntary church which might depend on a few wealthy members for its very existence.

The situation can be summarised quite simply. Where voting papers were used, anti-organ votes usually came from only a small proportion of a congregation, and only a handful, if any, maintained their opposition when the result of the vote was announced. Where a congregation was consulted by any other method, in only three or four cases did the size of the opposition exceed ten people.

#### 11.4. Cost and payment.

In 1778 James Beattie reckoned that fewer than sixty parishes would be able to afford the expense of an organ.<sup>59</sup> The art of unaccompanied praise should be cultivated, said a Church of Scotland writer in 1858, not because of any objection to organs, but because "there are thousands who, from poverty, cannot purchase them".<sup>60</sup> A newspaper correspondent calculated in 1865 that it would cost half a million pounds to equip every established church with an organ;<sup>61</sup> he seems to have been basing his figure on an average cost of £400 per church,

including small mission churches.

These men did not foresee or take into account an increasing ability and readiness of a large class of people to pay for music and, in particular, a large number of instruments gifted to churches. Most importantly, they did not foresee the impact of church harmoniums and American organs, which typically cost between £25 and £90 and required no changes to the church fabric. By the end of the century these reed instruments outnumbered pipe organs in the Established Church by about two to one.<sup>62</sup>

One congregation's organ could cost more than another's church. The Glasgow Cathedral organ of 1879 cost £3840,<sup>63</sup> and the enlarged organ at St. Giles, Edinburgh (1884) cost £4500.<sup>64</sup> At Fetteresso in 1876, George Baird of Urie paid about £2000 for the organ and the resulting rebuilding of the east end of the church.<sup>65</sup> In the eighties and nineties it was not unusual for a city church to pay a total of over £1000 for an organ and its accommodation. Excluding structural alterations, the prices paid for pipe organs in over a hundred Scottish churches of all denominations between 1860 and 1890 show an average in the sixties of around £350, in the seventies around £500, and in the eighties around £550. (The overall averages are likely to have been somewhat lower since information on small instruments is less readily available). Taking reed instruments into account, the average price of an instrument in the second half of the century was probably under £200.<sup>66</sup>

Where did congregations find the money? In many churches they did not have to, for the instrument came as a gift. It usually came from an individual, but sometimes from a small group of members. An offer sometimes followed a congregation's decision to obtain an instrument, and sometimes it acted as the stimulus to discussion. New churches built for the Church of Scotland by benefactors sometimes came complete with organs.

The donor of an instrument was usually a heritor or a proprietor or a wealthy member of the congregation. Heri-



tors were not always members of the Church of Scotland; nor were some other donors, who had no formal connection at all with the churches concerned.<sup>67</sup> In a few cases the gift came from the clergyman<sup>68</sup> or his family, and in others from people far away from the parish - the organ at Greyfriars, Dumfries (1873) came from R.N. Gordon of New York in memory of his mother,<sup>69</sup> and that at Augustine Congregational Church, Edinburgh (1863), from a London newspaper proprietor.<sup>70</sup> Some donors were evidently organ enthusiasts.<sup>71</sup>

Many reports relating to particular instruments say nothing about how they were obtained - it is unlikely that many of these were gifts. For 196 instruments, however - in churches of all denominations - information on the source of funding has been found. Of these, 95 (48 per cent) were gifts. Most of the remaining 101 were paid for primarily by general subscription or collection.<sup>72</sup>

In some places the money came in quickly. In a space of about two months in 1886, Kelvinside Free Church obtained subscriptions totalling £800;<sup>73</sup> at Inverbrothock (1868) all but £8 of the £120 required was raised in two evenings;<sup>74</sup> at Old Greyfriars (1864), £250 - more than half the cost of the organ - was raised in a fortnight.<sup>75</sup> There are many similar examples, but some churches overreached themselves. At Dowanhill U.P., Glasgow (1875-6), the music committee had £500 available when it raised the question of buying an organ, but the purchase of an instrument costing £975 left the church in debt for a time;<sup>76</sup> and it was not the only church to find itself in debt after installing an organ.<sup>77</sup> At Airdrie (1870-1), where the congregation had just paid for a new manse, it took some time to raise the cost of even a harmonium.

Fund-raising was often given impetus by large subscriptions from wealthy members,<sup>78</sup> but the bulk of the money in a great many cases seems to have come from less opulent members. Report after report stresses that contributions came from "all classes". At Cupar (1866), subscriptions ranged from £20 to 6d.<sup>79</sup> At Minnigaff (1872-3), they ranged from the Earl of Galloway's £25 to

several of 1/-; detailed subscription lists, published weekly,<sup>80</sup> show that the bulk of the £350 came from the smaller subscribers. In the dying days of patronage, the patron of Dalziel Church offered a vote in the election of the minister to everyone who contributed £10 or more to the funds of the church or to the organ fund.<sup>81</sup>

Like many other churches, Minnigaff received subscriptions from outside the parish, and even from America. Minnigaff also demonstrates the attachment which those of other denominations had to their parish church - subscribers included members of episcopal, U.P., Free, and Reformed Presbyterian churches.<sup>82</sup> At Lerwick (1871), "people of all denominations subscribed towards the cost" of the organ.<sup>83</sup> Other parish churches too had the benefit of contributions from outside their congregations; such phrases as "subscription has been general throughout the parish" frequently appear in contemporary reports, and addresses at organ openings sometimes included acknowledgements of help received from those of other denominations. Every householder in Speymouth (1871) except two contributed to the cost of the parish church harmonium.<sup>84</sup> It was not so easy in Glasgow. Attempts were made from time to time to raise money from the general public for an organ for Glasgow Cathedral. Despite the formation of an influential committee chaired by the Lord Provost,<sup>85</sup> nothing much was achieved, and the Cathedral finally got its organ in 1879 through the generosity of Dr. Burns's wife and her family.<sup>86</sup>

Some non-established churches also were helped by people of other churches, and this was not without eighteenth-century precedent.<sup>87</sup> "Friends of other denominations" contributed to the cost of the organ at Alexandria Independent Chapel (1864),<sup>88</sup> and the methodists of Dunbar (1865) had similar aid in buying a harmonium.<sup>89</sup>

Bazaars, popular by the seventies, seem to have been surprisingly little used as a means of raising money for church organs.<sup>90</sup> Some bazaars were grand events, lasting several days and including music recitals. They were held for a variety of causes including church building and

restoration; at least two large organs in public halls were paid for from the proceeds of bazaars.<sup>91</sup> Probably the biggest bazaar for a church organ was a three-day affair at Linlithgow which was largely responsible for increasing the organ fund from £290 to the required £800.<sup>92</sup> Organ funds were sometimes augmented also by weekday concerts or recitals, usually held in church.

Other methods of raising money are found in a few places. The £40 harmonium at Tomintoul (1877) was bought from the proceeds of lectures and singing-classes given by a school-master.<sup>93</sup> Repairs to Renfield Street U.P., Glasgow, and the installation of an organ (1878) were paid for by an £1800 bond on the church building.<sup>94</sup> At Allan Park U.P., Stirling (1872), the choir and the congregation each bore half the cost on the reasoning that the choir would use the harmonium at its practices.<sup>95</sup> Installation of the organ at Melville Parish Church, Montrose (1880) necessitated extensive rebuilding of one end of the church; when the church nearly exhausted its fabric fund by paying for these works, a neighbouring minister complained unsuccessfully to the synod - the presbytery, he claimed, had approved the church's use of a fund devoted to maintenance of the building for its "demolition" instead.<sup>96</sup>

Money could be raised by an opening recital (or a series of recitals) or by collections at the services at which an instrument was first used. Objections on principle to charging for admission to a church<sup>97</sup> were probably the reason for some churches granting free admission to opening recitals and taking a collection instead. Such collections could, as at St. Vigeans (1875), "contribute materially" to the organ fund. People who had contributed to the cost of an organ sometimes resented being asked to pay to hear it, as at Inverbrothock, where the attendance was small. The minister explained that "the charge which had been made for admission had been made entirely with the view of keeping out boys and persons who might be disposed to be noisy. It was found in Arbroath that a penny was not sufficient for this purpose, and it was now found that sixpence was above the mark".<sup>98</sup> Charges in

other places were far from nominal - the best seats at Paisley Abbey cost five shillings and the cheapest 1/6d, but "every available inch of space was taken up".<sup>99</sup> The charges for the opening concert at Greenock Middle Church, ranging from 3/6d to 1/-, were twice as much as those for a Shakespeare play at the Theatre Royal the same evening, and the church was crowded.<sup>100</sup>

Roman Catholics often opened their organs with special Sunday High Mass for which high admission charges were made - at St. Andrew's Cathedral Glasgow (1871), the best seats for mass cost ten shillings.<sup>101</sup> Protestant churches did not charge for admission to services, but a great deal of money could come from collections made on the first Sunday of an instrument's use. Collections of over £30 were not uncommon. The organ at Perth Middle Church (1887), costing £125, was almost completely paid for by collections on its opening Sunday,<sup>102</sup> and the collection of £120 formed a substantial part of the cost of the organ in Gilfillan's Dundee church (1876).<sup>103</sup> These were relatively small organs, and more expensive ones could attract even larger collections. Over half the cost of the organ at Eastwood (1874) was paid by the opening Sunday collections of £300.<sup>104</sup>

A church which installed a large organ was letting itself in for considerable expenses of maintenance, a blower (human or hydraulic), and an organist. The accounts of Free College Church, Glasgow, for the first full year after the installation of its organ show a total cost for organist's salary, tuning, water and sundry expenses of £122 while the proceeds of organ recitals came to only £15.<sup>105</sup> Some churches wisely established funds for the increased expenditure;<sup>106</sup> most, however, treated the recurrent costs associated with an organ as part of their general expenses.

### 11.5. Interdenominational Interest.

At a local level, cordial relations often existed between the clergy of rival denominations and between their congregations.<sup>107</sup> Lindsay Alexander, a congregational minister, had had Free Church sympathies,<sup>108</sup> but he was equally at home preaching in St. Giles Cathedral or conducting the private funeral service of his friend Dean Ramsay.<sup>109</sup> During church repairs a congregation would often worship in a building belonging to another denomination;<sup>110</sup> while the Free Church at Sorbie was closed for repairs in 1873, the Free and Established congregations worshipped together in the parish church, their ministers taking the services on alternate Sundays.<sup>111</sup> At least one Free Church session was not even averse to its building being used by an Established congregation whose own church was temporarily closed due to the erection of an organ.<sup>112</sup>

We have seen that members of other denominations frequently contributed to an organ fund or even gave an instrument to a church. Whether or not they had contributed, they attended in large numbers on the first Sunday of its use, especially in districts where instrumental music in worship was a novelty or where an organ was specially noteworthy. They came even when a humble harmonium was taken into use at a normal service conducted by the resident minister, but an added attraction in many places was a visiting preacher.

Those invited to preach on an organ's inaugural Sunday were often prominent clergymen and known organ sympathisers. Outside the Roman and Episcopal Churches, their denomination was irrelevant. At the opening of Eastwood Parish Church organ (1874) the preachers were Principal Caird, R.H. Story, and the U.P. organ pioneer Alexander McEwen.<sup>113</sup> Another U.P. organ sympathiser, Dr. Dobie of Shamrock Street, preached at Bellahouston Church (1874).<sup>114</sup> The preachers at the services which opened the new organ at St. Thomas's Wesleyan Church, Glasgow (1871) came from the U.P. Church and the Free Church.<sup>115</sup> At Trinity Congregational Church, Glasgow (1865), building

and organ came into use together with three services at which the preachers were Thomas Binney from the English congregationalists, Dr. McDuff from the Established Church, and John Cairns from the U.P. Church.<sup>116</sup> The three preachers at the inauguration of the organ in Queen's Park U.P. (1881) were from the Established, E.U., and Congregational Churches.<sup>117</sup> A spirit of local cooperation is shown by the inauguration of the organ at Helensburgh Congregational Church (1867) - the services were taken by the ministers of the church itself, the Parish Church, and the Free Church.<sup>118</sup>

Interdenominational involvement also had its unpleasant side. Free Church followers of Begg would sometimes write to local newspapers when a parish church installed an instrument. Occasionally, as at Inch (1863), a Free Church minister would join the fray.<sup>119</sup> Robert Shanks, minister of Buckie Free Church, not only wrote to the newspapers during the Elgin Parish Church dispute<sup>120</sup> but also published a pamphlet in the form of a letter to the Duke of Richmond when the latter gave an organ to Enzie Parish Church.<sup>121</sup> At Coupar Angus (1866) it was claimed that the "congregational" meeting which decided to introduce a harmonium had been infiltrated by members of other churches.<sup>122</sup> But this was unusual - the most frequent claim was that the various anti-organ petitions which were such a trouble to Established presbyteries included signatures of, or had even been organised by, people with Free Church connections. In the Blairgowrie case at least, the latter claim appears to have been justified.<sup>123</sup>

In the eighteen-fifties three Greenock U.P. churches and George Square Congregational Church ran a joint town mission, in connection with which a monthly prayer meeting was held in the four churches in rotation. After the Congregational Church acquired an organ in 1861, the three U.P. ministers withdrew from a prayer meeting because the organ was used; they had, they said, no personal objection, but the U.P. Synod had forbidden the use of organs. The congregationalists were adamant that the form of worship in their church should not be determined by

the U.P. Synod and they withdrew from participation in the mission.<sup>124</sup>

Professional organists knew few denominational bounds and chose their churches on the basis of salary, organ, and teaching opportunities. A.L. Peace acted as organist in churches of three different denominations in the course of his years in Glasgow.<sup>125</sup> He, Oakeley and others were happy to act as consultants or recitalists to churches of any denomination, and even organs in catholic churches were occasionally opened by organists of other denominations.<sup>126</sup> At what was probably a private opening recital in College Street U.P., Edinburgh, no fewer than four organists took part - one from the Established Church, one catholic, and two episcopalians.<sup>127</sup>

#### 11.6. Inauguration and use of instruments.

By mid-century, instrumental music was no novelty in the worship of catholics and episcopalians. A new organ in these denominations was usually either in a new church or a replacement for an existing instrument. Catholics usually opened new organs with a high mass - in the larger churches professional vocal soloists, and even an orchestra, were hired for the occasion; smaller churches sometimes had a visiting organist. Organs in episcopal churches were usually opened at a Sunday or weekday service, often with a well-known organist who sometimes brought members from his own church choir.<sup>128</sup> Before and after the service, the organ was shown off in voluntaries which could amount to short recitals.<sup>129</sup> Occasionally, as at Melrose (1872),<sup>130</sup> recitals of sacred music were given on the lines of those common in other denominations. The rest of this section is primarily concerned with these other denominations.

In January 1865 Norman Macleod preached at the public opening service in Anderston Church, Glasgow, which contained the Church of Scotland's first pipe organ. His sermon justified the use of organs, and he intended to give its text to the press. He was dissuaded by the church's minister, Marshall Lang; Lang had already had

trouble with innovations and did not want to court publicity, preferring to leave the organ to be its own advocate.<sup>131</sup> The same attitude probably accounts for an unusual absence of publicity attending the first use of a few other organs.<sup>132</sup>

But the opening of an organ was usually much publicised and frequently a great local event, particularly when it was in the parish church. The organ had been the main topic of conversation for a long time; when the day arrived, crowds might gather outside the church long before the doors were opened.<sup>133</sup> At Brechin (1878) they came from all around the district and numbers had to be turned away.<sup>134</sup> At Duns (1881) they travelled miles over roads almost blocked with snow and, even with extra seating brought into the church, many of the 1200 or 1300 had to stand throughout the performance.<sup>135</sup> "Hundreds were unable to find admission" at Greenock Congregational (1861).<sup>136</sup> At St. George's, Paisley (1874), 1800 were present.<sup>137</sup> Special trains were run for the openings of the parish church organs at Irvine, Wigtown and Penninghame. To meet the demand, at least seven churches put on two separate concerts or recitals.

More often than not, the opening of a pipe organ took the form of a concert of sacred music, with choir, soloists and, at Paisley Abbey (1874), an orchestra. In larger churches a visiting choir, often from the local choral union or musical association, took part; in smaller churches the church choir was augmented by members of other choirs or sang alone. Well-known vocal soloists travelled long distances to sing at organ openings. At Penninghame (1878), only about 300 people attended the concert because local amateurs, who had practised for weeks, were replaced at a late date by professionals from elsewhere.<sup>138</sup> These concerts typically began with everyone singing the Old Hundredth and, if the choir were capable, often ended with the Hallelujah Chorus. The programme between consisted mainly of oratorio items interspersed with organ solos.

Less frequently the opening took the form of a solo



recital on the new organ with a few psalms or hymns sung by the audience. As a taste for solo organ music developed, this form of opening became more common, though it was used even in the early years in small churches which lacked choral resources, but with a greater proportion of psalms and hymns.

In a sample of 130 pipe organs, 56 per cent were opened by a public concert or recital. A further 40 per cent were opened at a Sunday service, nearly half of them with a visiting organist, and many more with a visiting preacher.<sup>139</sup> Everywhere large congregations were reported, containing people from other churches and denominations. The crowds which attended opening concerts and recitals were as nothing compared with those attending on the first Sunday, even if there had been an earlier concert or recital - admission to services was free. Phrases like "crammed to overflowing" are common; at Jedburgh (1875) there were at least 1000 people at each service;<sup>140</sup> at Greenock Middle (1867) "the pressure was so great that one of the doors was broken".<sup>141</sup> Even a harmonium could attract large crowds on its first Sunday - there were more than 1400 people in Glasgow Tron in 1864,<sup>142</sup> and in the village of West Wemyss in 1875 "great numbers had to leave, unable to gain admission" when a harmonium was first used at an evening service.<sup>143</sup> Such incursions must have been resented by regular worshippers and probably account for the issue of admission tickets in a few places.<sup>144</sup>

Six, and possibly a few more, of the pipe organs in the sample were first used in "private recitals" or "trials", to which leading church members and leading subscribers were invited. A well-known organist would put the organ through its paces, sometimes with a choir to illustrate its use in accompaniment. At Cupar (1866) something like a private recital was achieved by the provision of two concerts, one in the afternoon, when the admission charge was 1/6d, and one in the evening, when the charge was 3d. At the former the audience was "highly respectable though not very numerous", and at the latter "the church was crowded in every corner"<sup>145</sup> - probably

what had been intended.

Harmoniums and American organs were normally taken into use on Sunday, though in at least three cases their use was inaugurated by a concert of sacred music<sup>146</sup> and in a few others they were introduced at some other week-night function.<sup>147</sup> Occasionally a visiting organist, and more frequently a visiting preacher, was present on the first Sunday, and the attendance was always very large in districts where instrumental music was still a novelty. The harmonium for Lhanbryd Church (1871) was publicly displayed in an Elgin shop before being taken to the church.<sup>148</sup>

The organist was the star performer at an organ's inauguration - sometimes, one suspects, even when the occasion was a service. Organists travelled a long way to open organs. A.L. Peace opened organs all over Scotland, and organists sometimes came from England for an opening.<sup>149</sup> Other organists - for instance, Henry Lambeth in the west, S.C. Hirst in Tayside, Henry Hartley in the Lothians, and "Herr Noa" around Elgin - performed at openings in more restricted areas. Some others seem to have confined their activity to churches of their own denominations.<sup>150</sup> A surprisingly high number of organs were played at their openings by the organ-builders.<sup>151</sup>

The large attendances which were common at organ openings were rarely, if ever, repeated when churches arranged later organ recitals. The sizes of audiences are not usually reported; when they are, they were "small" or "not large" nearly as often as "large" or "numerous". A.L. Peace's recitals at Trinity were unusual in retaining interest over the years. Elsewhere, people were not attracted in great numbers - T.A. Ewing's ambitious recitals at West Bridgend U.P., Dumbarton, were worthy of larger audiences, said the local paper,<sup>152</sup> but "musical tastes have not been accustomed to such performances". The most successful church recitals seem to have been those organised as annual church events with prominent performers; sometimes, rather than being solo recitals, they were incorporated in the churches' services of sa-

cred music which had been established in many places before organs arrived. Another annual congregational event was the church soiree. In places where the soiree was still being held in the church itself, organ accompaniment and solos were a welcome addition to the proceedings. But an organ's primary use - in many places its only use - was in the services of worship.

Once installed, an instrument accompanied all the singing in the service with the possible exception of the odd unaccompanied anthem. This meant that most organists spent most of their playing time accompanying hymns and metrical psalms. The criticisms of florid and inappropriate accompaniment which were so common in England in earlier times are not found in nineteenth-century Scotland, where the commonest fault - sometimes elevated to a reason for excluding organs altogether - was playing which people found too loud or too fast.<sup>153</sup> One well-known Free Church musician and organ opponent believed that mixture stops and pedal harmonics confused congregations.<sup>154</sup>

It was a matter of church policy that accompaniments be simple. At the second presbyterian church in Britain to have an organ (St. George's, Liverpool) it was said:<sup>155</sup>

"In leading the psalmody, the air is played with great simplicity - no flourishings or displays are permitted, although we have the services of an eminent organist".

This seems to have been the case in Scotland too. Most organists probably played the vocal parts as they appeared in the tune book, and it is likely that some village organists had difficulty in doing even that - they may perforce have followed Cole's curious advice and played only the treble and bass.<sup>156</sup> Varied harmonies for unison verses are mentioned but rarely, and they seem to have been regarded as unusual.<sup>157</sup> In the Episcopal Church, the eminent pianist Julian Adams was exceptional in playing harmonium interludes between verses at St. Paul's, Glasgow.<sup>158</sup>

It is difficult to find evidence of what organists

played before the singing of a psalm or hymn. Burder recommended to English nonconformists in 1860 that half of the tune should be played over;<sup>159</sup> at Skelmorlie in 1865, the whole tune was played,<sup>160</sup> and a presbyterian writer in 1873 took this practice for granted;<sup>161</sup> at the opening of the Crieff organ in 1867, singing was preceded by a "prelude".<sup>162</sup> But the practice of sounding only the keynote (as precentors had done), which had been used on the organ at Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, in 1829,<sup>163</sup> was certainly followed initially by some churches when they adopted instruments. The usage adopted was determined by kirk sessions rather than by the whims of the organists.<sup>164</sup>

The church authorities also decided whether or not organ voluntaries were played before or after a service.<sup>165</sup> The trouble with voluntaries was that they put too much power into the hands of the organist - an organ voluntary could greatly enhance the mood of a service or could completely destroy it, and the devotional effect by no means correlated with the technical ability of the organist. Complaints about the use of secular music and style, and about the use of voluntaries as display pieces for the organist, were common in eighteenth-century England,<sup>166</sup> and many nineteenth-century pamphlets attacked the same abuses. A number of Scottish presbyterians, as well as English nonconformists, went further, regarding any use of voluntaries as introducing concert-room elements into worship.<sup>167</sup> Others saw voluntaries not as part of worship but as a kind of "musical wallpaper" which diverted attention from the distractions of pre-service conversation, the sound of footsteps, and the opening and closing of pew doors.<sup>168</sup>

In all the Scottish organ debates, the organ was argued for purely as an aid to congregational singing. The petition of Kingston Church, Glasgow, to the presbytery stated that the proposed instrument "would never be used for the entertainment of the people, but solely for the purpose of leading the psalmody",<sup>169</sup> and similar assurances were given in other presbytery applications. Yet in the Church of Scotland, as in other denominations, or-

gan voluntaries were soon being played. Some churches had voluntaries as soon as the instrument was introduced; others adopted them a few years after. Regardless of denomination, the use of voluntaries was a question which each congregation decided for itself. (There were, of course, few if any catholics or episcopalians who objected to organ voluntaries).

As far as can be seen, voluntaries were common in E.U. and methodist churches from the time they obtained instruments. Among congregationalists there were different opinions - at Augustine, Edinburgh, voluntaries were played from the start<sup>170</sup>; in Glasgow they were certainly in use at Trinity Church by 1871,<sup>171</sup> but at Elgin Place they were "strictly forbidden on all occasions".<sup>172</sup> Similar diversity is to be found in the three presbyterian denominations. At least two of the earliest Free churches to have organs used voluntaries from the start,<sup>173</sup> but others were like Grange Free, Edinburgh whose session minutes record in 1894 that "the instrument is to be used as an aid in singing, and not for voluntaries or other performances during public worship".<sup>174</sup> In the U.P. Church, voluntaries were played as soon as the organ was acquired in 1876 at School Wynd, Dundee,<sup>175</sup> but in a number of other places they were introduced several years after the organ.<sup>176</sup> At Renfield Street, Glasgow, the organ was installed in 1878, and in 1889 a congregational vote was four to one in favour of voluntaries being introduced - even then the session waited another three years before giving its sanction.<sup>177</sup> New Kilpatrick U.P. also acquired an organ in 1878; there, opening voluntaries were first allowed in 1893 and closing voluntaries in 1898.<sup>178</sup> The third Established church to have a pipe organ (Skelmorlie) had voluntaries immediately,<sup>179</sup> as did many Established churches in the seventies. Pipe organs came to Aberdeen Established churches only in 1875, and voluntaries were immediately used at St. Clement's there.<sup>180</sup> Crieff is probably typical of the churches which introduced instruments in the sixties - in 1867 no voluntaries were played when the organ was opened; by 1872 closing voluntaries were being played,<sup>181</sup>

and in 1876 an opening voluntary was first used at a communion service.<sup>182</sup> Voluntaries were played on harmoniums as well as organs, and their use in Established churches is to be found in all districts of the country by the mid-seventies.

Curwen, therefore, was wide of the mark when he said of Scotland in 1880:<sup>183</sup>

"In all churches but the Free Church, organs are rapidly spreading, but, where they are adopted, voluntaries are seldom played either before or after worship".

On the other hand, Free Church organ opponents about a year later greatly exaggerated the incidence of voluntaries. John McEwan said that organs were urged as an aid to the human voice, "but [have] in no case been restricted to that purpose",<sup>184</sup> and similar allegations were made in the 1883 debate. All we can say with certainty is that there is definite evidence of about thirty churches (excluding episcopal and catholic churches) using voluntaries by the early eighties, and there is no reason to suppose that these were not typical of many more. Other churches definitely had no voluntaries at that time. This may not always have been a matter of principle. It is likely that some organists in smaller churches had difficulty enough learning to play the psalms and hymns each week; the use of voluntaries in these churches would be unwelcome to organists and congregations alike. By 1914, however, voluntaries were so taken for granted in Scotland that Wauchope Stewart, writing about them then,<sup>185</sup> never even considered that they might be dispensed with.

In the early days of organs, the presence of an organ could be a problem when the members of a church court met in a church. Alexander Munro refused to attend an induction at Warrington in 1854 because an organ was used there,<sup>186</sup> and in 1866 the Presbytery of Ayr requested, to the annoyance of some parishioners, that the organ in Dundonald church should not be used at the induction of their new minister.<sup>187</sup> Provincial synod meetings had traditionally been opened by a service in the parish church, with the praise led by the resident precentor.

When the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale met at Duns in 1870, John Macleod knew that use of the organ at the opening service might offend some members, and he arranged for "a hireling in Kelso" to act as precentor for half a crown. The service being on a weekday, the task was delegated to a very young "dissenting tailor" who did the job badly; reaction to Macleod's criticism of him occupied the correspondence column of the local paper for some time.<sup>188</sup> Watson of Dundee East took a different line and insisted that the organ be used at a meeting of the Synod of Angus and Mearns in 1874, despite receiving a letter from Fraser of Maryton, an organ opponent who was to conduct the service. After Fraser announced the first psalm, the organ struck up; as a result he declined to announce any further praise, and there was no more singing in the service.<sup>189</sup> In 1878 the minister of Penninghame invited the members of the Synod of Galloway, at the close of their business, to attend a private recital on the new organ;<sup>190</sup> thereafter, the organist was paid ten shillings a time to play at the half-yearly synod services.<sup>191</sup>

Finally, what did organists play when they were not accompanying singing? By surveying nearly 500 performances of individual items played in Scotland between 1859 and 1882, we get some indication of the solo organ music used in church and concert hall recitals and as voluntaries at church services. No distinction in repertoire seems to have been made between recitals and services, though medleys of national songs and of operatic arias, which occasionally appeared in recital programmes of hall and church alike, were naturally excluded from service use. There also appears to be no denominational distinction in repertoire.

Of the pieces surveyed, 57 per cent were transcriptions and 40 per cent were original organ works. (The remaining 3 per cent include works of unknown origin and improvisations by the performers). The transcriptions were mainly from oratorio and (surprisingly perhaps) Mozart and Haydn masses, but movements of piano works, symphonies, and chamber music were also common. Transcrip-

tions were a subject of debate, and not only in Scotland. Many clergy enjoyed hearing familiar oratorio tunes as voluntaries,<sup>192</sup> and the view of the organ as a one-man orchestra could lead to absurd statements about the instrument and voluntaries. Addressing divinity students at Yale, Henry Ward Beecher told them:<sup>193</sup>

"The treasure of organ music is very rich ... There is very little that Von Weber ever wrote that is not fit by nature for the church. Much of Mendelssohn is also spiritual. I think you could not find anything in Beethoven from beginning to end that would not fit the church if re-adapted. So of Mozart, Rossini, and many others".

At the other extreme, musicians sometimes objected to the use of any transcriptions<sup>194</sup> and disliked the "saccharine sweet" music (transcription or not) so beloved by some of the clergy and people.<sup>195</sup> Transcriptions, however, had their place at a time when many people could rarely hear the works concerned in their original form, and audiences seem to have preferred them to original organ works.<sup>196</sup> All recitalists in Scotland, however eminent, played transcriptions in their recitals. Oakeley used the organ at Edinburgh University to good effect in illustrating his public lectures on music to be played at forthcoming orchestral concerts.<sup>197</sup>

Over the years surveyed, there appears to have been a very slight tendency for original organ works to replace transcriptions. Though the organ works played may have been in an idiom more suitable for the instrument, they were generally, as music, of less interest than the transcriptions. The majority were by solid nineteenth-century British musicians like Smart or by Frenchmen such as Lefebure-Wely. Nearly the only original organ works played which would be highly regarded today were by Bach and Mendelssohn, though Oakeley sometimes introduced other items from the nineteenth-century German organ repertoire (e.g. Merkel, Schumann) and Peace from the French (e.g. Saint-Saens, Widor). It seems that only Oakeley went beyond the Bach preludes and fugues to the chorale-preludes. Mendelssohn's organ sonatas were popular and his preludes and fugues had an occasional airing.

The composers most frequently played were (with



number of performances as percentage of total):

Handel	14.8
Mendelssohn	10.8
Bach	10.6
Mozart	6.5
Haydn	6.1
Lefebure-Wely	5.3
Beethoven	4.7
Batiste	3.7

The works by Handel, Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven were all transcriptions. Nearly half of the Mendelssohn and nearly all of the Bach performances were of original organ works. The seven most-played pieces were, in order - Handel's Hallelujah Chorus; his overture to the Occasional Oratorio; Mendelssohn's "March of the Priests" from "Athalie"; Bach's so-called St. Anne fugue; a set of variations from a Haydn symphony; Costa's Triumphal March from "Naaman"; and an Andante in G by Batiste. This last piece seems to have been particularly popular with audiences in the seventies. <sup>198</sup>

These works were played as voluntaries as well as in recitals. But nearly all the services surveyed were special services and very often there was a visiting organist. There is little record of what was played on ordinary Sundays, and we may assume that the voluntaries then were less ambitious. It is difficult to find any evidence at all of what was played in churches which had reed organs.

#### 11.7. The organists.

A number of Scottish city and town churches had the wish and the means to employ professional organists. A visitor to the organ loft of such a church on a Sunday in the sixties or seventies would have been likely to find there a young man who spoke with an English accent, in all probability a Yorkshire one. He would have been less likely to hear a Scottish accent, and he might just have heard a Germanic one.

There was nothing new in this. Many English and European musicians were to be found in Edinburgh and Glas-

gow from the middle of the eighteenth century, and newspapers of the nineteenth century show that there were then many more in other localities. Episcopal chapels had often imported their organists from England when they could afford to do so. Many could not, and these had the problem of finding an organist in a land virtually devoid of organs. In 1788 the congregation at the Kelso chapel collected money to send a young local musician to Durham Cathedral for a period of tuition in organ playing.<sup>199</sup> In other places, a member of the congregation would undertake to learn to play. The sudden death of the organist at Arbroath in 1829 led to worries about finding a successor; unable to raise enough money to attract one from some other town, the chapel managers accepted the offer of a member to have tuition in Dundee and eventually take over the duties.<sup>200</sup>

The same problem confronted the catholics when they started to use organs in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The catholics at Aberdeen were indebted to the episcopal organist, John Ross, who declined to accept payment for training a young lady from their congregation or for his provision of organ harmonisations of their chapel music.<sup>201</sup> Some catholic chapels sent their future organists to George Gordon, the Speyside priest who published two early collections of catholic church music. Gordon was said in 1819 to have trained six organists.<sup>202</sup> He offered his pupils lodgings at Dufftown, with use of a piano, at five shillings a week during their period of tuition. He also found them work with a local cooper to pay for their tuition and lodgings.<sup>203</sup>

Later in the century, organs flooded into Scotland. Though vocal music had been cultivated to an amazing extent, instrumentalists were in short supply. As late as 1878 Oakeley was able to say, without contradiction:<sup>204</sup>

"It is still actually necessary to send some 200 miles into England when in the capital of Scotland I want, for instance, an efficient oboe, bassoon or horn player. I only know of one first-rate violoncellist in Scotland, and the proficients in other stringed and wood instruments could be counted on the fingers. An efficient native orchestra is still unobtainable".

Keyboard playing, however, was by this time being taught to a large class of young people as Scotland shared in the British and American fashion of having pianos and harmoniums in the home, and it was largely these young people who supplied the needs of the smaller churches. The *Glasgow News* in 1876, drawing attention to the large number of organs being installed, urged proficient young pianists to turn their attention to learning organ-playing - there was a "scarcity of competent performers" and it was "a serious matter" taking young musicians away from their homes in England.<sup>205</sup>

But of course these young professional organists from England had achieved a standard which few Scots had had a chance to gain. They saw Scotland as a land of promise. Teaching opportunities were good and the instruments attractive. The organist's profession was badly overcrowded in England - in 1875 an ordinary parish church outside London which offered a salary of £30 attracted nearly 100 bona fide applicants,<sup>206</sup> and in 1886 there were 118 applicants for the post of organist at Norwich Cathedral.<sup>207</sup> Outside the bigger episcopal and catholic churches, the duties of an organist in Scotland were light compared with those in the Anglican church, and attractive salaries were offered. "An organist in Scotland is at present a rara avis", said Curwen in 1880,<sup>208</sup> "and commands a good salary". The simple form of service meant that nonconformist organists from England were as acceptable as Anglicans. It is small wonder that organists came in numbers, particularly from the north of England which, apart from being nearer, had a stronger nonconformist organ tradition than the south. Even quite a small Scottish church advertised its vacancy in the *Yorkshire Post*.<sup>209</sup>

Professional organists usually had their first church appointments in their early teens and sometimes even earlier. Nevertheless the youth of the English immigrants is surprising. Of 45 organists whose ages on coming to Scotland are known,<sup>210</sup> 35 were under the age of twenty-eight, and, of these, 26 were under twenty-four and 6 under twenty; none was over forty-one. At the age of thirty-one, Henry Lambeth was comparatively old and experienced

when appointed organist of Glasgow City Hall and St. Mary's Episcopal Church in 1853. When A.L. Peace was appointed to St. Andrew's Halls in 1877 and Glasgow Cathedral in 1879 he was the obvious choice, having long been established as Scotland's leading organist; yet he was at that time only in his early to mid thirties, having come to Glasgow from Huddersfield in 1865 at the age of twenty-one. Some European organists, like Franz Walter (Morningside, 1877) and Friedrich Niecks (Dumfries, 1867, and later Oakeley's successor as Professor of Music at Edinburgh) also came to Scotland in their early twenties.

Many of these young men were coming to major appointments. G.T. Poulter was twenty-three when he became organist of the large new organ in Greenock Town Hall in 1861; Edwin Edwards was twenty-two when appointed to one of the plum episcopal posts (Dalkeith Park) in 1852; his successor there, Thomas Hewlett, was only twenty on appointment; W.G. Martin came to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Glasgow (later the episcopal cathedral) at twenty-two. Morningside Church, Edinburgh, had bad luck, appointing in succession two organists in their early twenties who both died within a few years of their appointment; one came from Switzerland and one from Yorkshire.<sup>211</sup> Henry Hartley, a veteran of thirty-four, quickly established himself as a performer in Edinburgh after coming from Huddersfield to Newington Church in 1874. He brought with him his son John who in 1878, at the age of fifteen, was appointed organist of St. Giles Cathedral<sup>212</sup> when the organ was installed. In the same year a twenty-year-old Northumbrian, Thomas Collinson, was appointed organist at the new episcopal cathedral in Edinburgh;<sup>213</sup> the sub-organist was an eighteen-year-old Yorkshireman.<sup>214</sup>

The subsequent careers of Anglican organists were not adversely affected by a spell in the Scottish Episcopal Church. G.C. Martin went straight from Dalkeith Park to be choirmaster (and later organist) at St. Paul's Cathedral, London;<sup>215</sup> Frank Bates followed his appointments at episcopal churches in North Berwick and Edinburgh by beating 117 other candidates for the post at

Norwich Cathedral.<sup>216</sup> St. John's Episcopal Church, Glasgow, received over seventy applications when Peace resigned in 1874, the successful applicant being the organist of Harrow School.<sup>217</sup>

A few cases of plurality seem to have existed. From 1874 till at least 1894, John Robertson was organist of both St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and New Greyfriars Established Church in Edinburgh.<sup>218</sup> The episcopal posts at Dalkeith Park and St. Peter's, Edinburgh, were by custom held by a single organist, with a deputy playing at St. Peter's in the mornings. Somehow T.S. Drummond managed, between 1876 and 1881, to combine the posts at Maxwell Church, Glasgow, and Moffat Episcopal Church in the borders, and, from 1885, those at Auchingramont (Hamilton) and Christ Church, Dunoon.<sup>219</sup> Peace for many years combined his organistship at Glasgow University (with its Sunday services) with his successive church posts.

Peace may have been responsible for "the Huddersfield connection". One of the two major suppliers (possibly the major supplier) of organs to Scotland in the sixties and seventies was Peter Conacher of Huddersfield, a Scot by birth. Of 52 English organists in Scotland at that time whose provenance is known, no fewer than 10 came from the Huddersfield area. It is possibly more than coincidental that, by the eighties, natives of Huddersfield were to be found in the organ lofts of three of Scotland's most important Established churches.<sup>220</sup>

Quite a few organists and harmonium players throughout Scotland were referred to as "Herr" or had names which appear to be foreign. Most of them, however, do not seem to have held regular church appointments; those who did include Niecks in Dumfries, Schroeder in Hamilton, Lange in Edinburgh, Hempel in Perth, and two episcopal organists in the north - Loffler in Banff and "Professor Morine" in Inverness and later Elgin. Foreign names do not, of course, always indicate first-generation immigrants - two children of Louis Hoeck, a music-seller and precentor in Paisley, achieved some fame as organists in the west, and Joseph Hurka de Monti who played at the

Catholic Cathedral in Glasgow<sup>221</sup> was a grandson of Hurka de Monti who taught music in Glasgow earlier in the century.<sup>222</sup> The Glasgow organist "Herr von Holst"<sup>223</sup> (an uncle of the composer) had come to Scotland following a scandal in his native Cheltenham.

Despite the competition, some native Scottish organists made the grade as professionals even in the seventies. The better-known Edinburgh organists, for instance, included J.S. Anderson, a pupil of G.C. Martin and Peace; A.J. Curle, who studied at Leipsig (as did Allan Macbeth of Glasgow); Augustus Jamieson, organist of St. Paul's Episcopal Church where Oakeley had a kind of "titulaire" appointment; and John Robertson, who studied with Donaldson and in Berlin. As the century drew to a close, native organists became more common in the bigger churches, and much of the credit must go to the teaching and influence of Peace and Oakeley.

Herbert Oakeley's<sup>224</sup> period as Professor of Music at Edinburgh University started inauspiciously. Applicants for the post had included musical notables like Hullah, Stainer and Prout, and musicians were disgusted by the appointment of a well-connected nonentity. The appointment brought scathing comments from virtually every musical journal and from the Scottish newspapers.<sup>225</sup> Matters were not helped by Oakeley's asking immediately for leave of absence on account of illness. The critics, however, were soon singing his praises as he brought to the job the enthusiasm and energy which were needed at that time. He remodelled the Reid Concerts to become full symphony concerts where, over the years, the whole classical symphonic repertoire could be heard; he brought to Edinburgh distinguished soloists such as Clara Schumann; he founded the University Music Society and in 1891 succeeded in having a faculty of music formed. After Oxford he had spent some time in Germany and he had a great love of the organ and the organ works of Bach. At a recital in 1868 he played a piece in memory of his fellow professor, Robert Lee, praising the latter's advocacy of organs in the Established Church.<sup>226</sup> In his years at Edinburgh, Oakeley achieved fame as an organ teacher and he did more

than anyone else to popularise the instrument in Scotland. His popular fortnightly recitals on the large organ in the Music Classroom were unique.<sup>227</sup> Students (some of whom had never heard an organ before) were admitted free, and there they rubbed shoulders with the cream of Edinburgh society. He introduced the items himself, and his well-judged programmes nearly always included original organ works of quality; even Bach chorale-preludes were encored. Many a divinity student left Edinburgh with a taste for organ music, and many a music student with a knowledge of organ music and technique thitherto unobtainable in Scotland.

Peace and Oakeley acted as consultants and opening recitalists on the installation of organs, and both were surely consulted on the appointment of organists. Usually the latter function was carried out quietly, and it is difficult to determine how often advice was sought. The method of appointment of Brechin Cathedral's first organist in 1878 was certainly unusually elaborate. The job attracted forty-five applicants, one or more of whom were subjected to tests by Oakeley at the Edinburgh University organ in the presence of Brechin session members.<sup>228</sup>

Outside the episcopal and catholic churches, professional organists would appear to have been greatly overqualified, particularly if the church concerned prohibited the playing of voluntaries and the organist had simply to accompany a few psalms and hymns and perhaps an anthem. As Curwen pointed out,<sup>229</sup> a good organist was not always a good choirmaster; where the posts were combined, as they increasingly were, it was usually better to appoint an able choir-trainer even if his organ-playing was no better than average, for only modest demands would be made on the latter.

Most churches, of course, had to rely on local amateurs and semi-professionals as they had done for their precentors. The word "local" requires some qualification - the precentor of a village church near Huntly walked seven and a half miles to church every Sunday for an annual salary of £7,<sup>230</sup> and the precentor of Lossiemouth

U.P. Church lived in Elgin.<sup>231</sup> The introduction of Sunday public transport, opposed though it was by some church people, enabled churches to employ precentors, and organists, from a greater distance. The precentor of Dunbar Parish Church travelled 28 miles from Edinburgh each Sunday by train,<sup>232</sup> and Arngask Church lost its organist when a Sunday train service was discontinued.<sup>233</sup>

Only a minority of precentors were dismissed when churches got organs. Often it was the resignation of the precentor which led to consideration of instrumental music, especially late in the century when precentors were difficult to find. In many a church the precentor had become a choirmaster; some precentors could play the harmonium and some used harmoniums at choir practice.<sup>234</sup> Where the precentor or choirmaster could competently play a harmonium or an organ, the instrument was just regarded as an aid in his work and he became organist, usually without any increase in salary.<sup>235</sup>

It was mainly the younger generation who had learned keyboard playing; a precentor who could not (or did not want to) play might have a son or daughter who could. The father and son or daughter would then sometimes form a choirmaster/organist partnership. At Anderston Church, Glasgow (1865), the first Established church to use a pipe organ, Stenbridge Ray and his daughter had such a partnership, and they later moved together to Bellahouston Church. The Joseph Wilsons, senior and junior, worked at Hurlford Church from its opening in 1875, and in 1877 they moved together to the new organ at Kilmarnock Laigh. The arrangement must have worked well at Hurlford, for the Wilsons were succeeded by a similar partnership there, the David Harveys, senior and junior, coming from Princes Street U.P., Kilmarnock. There were at least three other such partnerships.<sup>236</sup> Minnigaff (1873) was served by a husband and wife (or possibly mother and son) team, Mr. Dick as organist and Mrs. Dick as choirmistress.

Where the choirmaster could not play, he usually retained his post and was joined by an organist. A high in-



vidence of resignations of precentors within a year or two of the introduction of an instrument suggests that this was often an inharmonious arrangement. It would be particularly so when one musician was an amateur and the other a professional. In 1869 T.S. Gleadhill, a well-known organist and a minor composer, was dismissed by the session of Glasgow Tron as a result of his disagreements with the amateur choirmaster there. He wrote to the *Daily Mail* and a lively public correspondence ensued.<sup>237</sup> On the other hand, A.L. Peace worked with an amateur unpaid choirmaster at Trinity Congregational Church, and there are many other places where there seems to have been no disagreement. Some quite eminent professional choir-trainers submitted with a good grace to the arrival of organists, or even welcomed them. James Geikie, the *Scotsman's* music critic, continued in post as choirmaster at Augustine Church, Edinburgh, for seventeen years after the organ came, and T.M. Hunter continued at Palmerston Place U.P., Edinburgh, until his retirement. When Lothian Road U.P., Edinburgh, acquired an American organ in 1891, the precentor's salary was reduced by £20 in order to pay an organist; despite this, there was "never the slightest breath of discord" between the old professional singing-teacher and the young organist, who worked together for nine years.<sup>238</sup> By the beginning of the twentieth century, most churches had a single officer who acted as organist and choirmaster.<sup>239</sup>

The precentors in presbyterian churches had been men, but the introduction of instruments opened the door to women. Robert Lee wrote in 1864:<sup>240</sup>

"It so happens that in this country a knowledge of music is not common among men, but is almost universal among women of the higher and middle classes. So that while it is often impossible to find in a country parish a competent male performer and teacher ... there is, perhaps, hardly any parish or congregation which does not contain some female thoroughly qualified to instruct the people to sing and who would be not only willing but delighted to make herself useful ... But to do this she must use a harmonium ... By means of it a lady may train first a few female voices to sing correctly and with good taste the melody of some few psalm-tunes; and with her instrument to accompany them, to regulate the time, to keep them up, and to supply the harmony - may produce real

music where such a thing never was heard before. Thus the minister's wife or his daughter, or some other pious and accomplished lady, may turn her laboriously acquired skill to the most valuable use ..."

Within a few years, Lee's recommendation was being followed. The "pious and accomplished ladies" who started playing harmoniums, and sometimes training choirs, in small churches came in many cases from the minister's family and in many more from "the big house". They were often described as "young".

Like some other writers,<sup>241</sup> Lee seems to imply that harmoniums were for women and organs for men. Yet women had been playing pipe organs in some episcopal and catholic chapels in the first half of the century and, at the time when Lee was writing, at least two of the new pipe organs in independent churches were being played by women. Outside the large churches served by professional organists, men outnumbered women by about three to two in churches with pipe organs, and women outnumbered men by just over three to two in churches with reed organs.<sup>242</sup> Women sometimes played quite large organs. The first person appointed to play a pipe organ in the Church of Scotland was a young woman,<sup>243</sup> as was the first known organist of a catholic church in Scotland.<sup>244</sup>

Apart from frequent references to lady organists being from the manse or the big house, there is little information, other than their names, about the amateurs who served most churches. A few were aristocratic ladies, several were music-sellers or members of their families, several were school teachers, and there were also a baker, a master tanner, a doctor, a banker, and a hotel-keeper; in one village the minister himself acted also as organist.<sup>245</sup> In some places the playing was shared on a rota basis among several ladies,<sup>246</sup> and in another between two sisters.<sup>247</sup>

In the early days of instrumental music, it was difficult for some churches to find organists at all. The problem which had earlier faced the episcopalians and catholics was experienced by churches of other denominations in the third quarter of the century. In 1856

Brighton Street E.U. Church, Edinburgh, stipulated in its contract with the organ-builder that he would himself act as organist for a year.<sup>248</sup> Perth Baptist Church got an organ in 1865 but its use was restricted to evening services because nobody could be found to play it in the mornings.<sup>249</sup> At Eyemouth (1870) the minister's wife started having lessons before the organ was introduced, and it was played initially by a schoolmaster before she took over.<sup>250</sup> The precentor at Ward Chapel, Dundee, "qualified himself" and became organist when the instrument was introduced in 1865.<sup>251</sup> When they bought instruments, some churches entered into agreements with nearby musicians to play for a few weeks or months until they found a permanent organist or until their future organists felt competent to take over.<sup>252</sup> Country organists quite commonly had lessons from teachers in the nearest town in preparation for the installation of instruments in their churches.<sup>253</sup>

As the years passed, organists became more plentiful. By the mid-seventies an ordinary city church could expect quite a few applicants. Long before the organ of Forres Parish Church was completed in 1877, there were said to be "a good many applicants" for the post of organist.<sup>254</sup> In 1890 Troqueer Parish Church received twenty-one applications when it advertised widely for its first organist at a salary of £40,<sup>255</sup> and in 1902 seventeen people felt confident enough to apply for the post at Inverness West Church.<sup>256</sup>

A professional organist in a city church or a large town church in the eighties could expect to be paid about £60 to £90 *per annum*; an amateur or semi-professional in a reasonable-sized suburban or town church could expect about £20 to £40. In a small church with a harmonium the salary could be as little as £10, in line with the amount being paid to precentors. Salaries of course depended on whether the organist also undertook the duties of choir-master. The accompanist in one church which had a separate choirmaster received "£10 and his dinner".<sup>257</sup> In 1891 the session of Arngask advertised in the Scotsman for a precentor, preferably one who could play the har-

monium, at a salary of £16 to £20; evidently they did not have an applicant of the standard they hoped for, for the man appointed, though he played the harmonium, was paid only £12.<sup>258</sup> Many organists, however, gave their services free. These were mostly women and mostly in small churches, but there are also instances of "honorary organists" in prosperous city churches<sup>259</sup> and even of a professional musician declining to accept payment.<sup>260</sup>

Finally this is an appropriate point at which to mention the role of the organ builder as an organist. A surprising number of builders played in recitals and at services, and some were regular church organists. David Hamilton, remembered as the inventor of the pneumatic lever, was well-known in his own day as a recitalist as well as being Scotland's leading builder; he was also organist of St. John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh.<sup>261</sup> From 1865 the same church employed another organ-builder as its organist, this time Frederick Holt. Holt usually played the opening recitals on his own instruments,<sup>262</sup> sometimes taking members of his church choir with him, and sometimes sharing the recital with the organist of the church.<sup>263</sup> Another shared recital between builder and organist was at the opening of Bevington's organ at Dunfermline Congregational Church in 1859. Bevington also opened his rebuild of the organ at Glasgow Unitarian Church in 1856. Some other English builders, too, opened their organs in Scotland - Henry Willis played on the opening Sunday of at least one of his firm's organs,<sup>264</sup> as did Nicholson of Worcester;<sup>265</sup> Harston's son played a recital for the Synod of Galloway at Penninghame. Robert Davidson, one of the Hamilton firm's employees, was a good organist and held a succession of church appointments;<sup>266</sup> he gave opening recitals on a number of the firm's organs in the sixties,<sup>267</sup> and in the seventies young Charles Hamilton did the same.<sup>268</sup> Other Scottish builders to open their own organs include Renton of Edinburgh<sup>269</sup> and Brook of Glasgow.<sup>270</sup> This is perhaps a remarkable list, but it may say more about the general standard of organ-playing than about the playing of organ-builders.

## 11.8. The instruments.

In 1848 an Anglican clergyman<sup>271</sup> said that the organ was

"the musical instrument of God. For consider the almost unbounded compass of the Organ; and then its restricted use - seeming as if it would hardly speak, except in praise of Him!"

Paradoxically, these words come from a sermon preached in a church where the singing had, as in many English country churches, customarily been accompanied by other instruments, and the church was only a few miles from Birmingham Town Hall, where crowds of up to 1800 people had been attending secular weekday recitals.<sup>272</sup> The explanation is that the sermon was intended to justify replacing the gallery musicians by an organ. The two sentiments expressed, however, were frequently voiced in other contexts, not least in Scotland. The pretension of an organ in claiming to comprehend other instruments often came under attack. But it is the other assertion - that there was something peculiarly ecclesiastical about organs - which concerns us here.

A common subsidiary argument against the introduction of organs was that it would open the doors of churches to other instruments - an argument which implied that an organ might just be acceptable, but that "the violin of the village fiddler", "the flute of the moorland shepherd", and "the new-fangled accordion of the Jack-of-all-trades"<sup>273</sup> certainly were not. One objection to the organ at Claremont Street in 1856 was that it might lead to "the high-sounding cymbals at Perth, trumpets further north, and the bagpipe further still".<sup>274</sup> (Bagpipes in worship formed a natural humorous diversion,<sup>275</sup> especially to Englishmen who read of the Scottish debates<sup>276</sup>). When the Claremont Street case came up again in 1858, Calderwood told the synod that "the question they must face was not merely whether they would authorise the organ, but whether they would allow also all sorts of wind and stringed instruments".<sup>277</sup> Fiddles, hurdy-gurdies and bagpipes were feared at Dundee in 1865.<sup>278</sup>

The fear of these other instruments, which arose from

their secular association, was shared by some organ enthusiasts. John Robertson said in Glasgow Cathedral in 1862:<sup>279</sup>

"There are some instruments, certainly, which one would hardly like to hear in church service; our associations being such that the use of them is not ... appropriately suggestive of reverent ideas. There is one instrument, however, against which this objection does not lie - I mean the organ".

Making the same point, Robert Lee added in 1864:<sup>280</sup>

"That noblest of instruments is not only specially adapted for sacred music, but it may be said to have been consecrated to the service of the Church, and so to be associated in the mind of all Christendom with the solemnities of religion".

Some who favoured instrumental music did not agree with this view. "In the absence of an organ", said John Cumming, the leading Church of Scotland minister in England in 1840,<sup>281</sup> "a violoncello is the next most appropriate". "You have excommunicated the violin and consecrated the organ ... on very unsatisfactory grounds", he said in 1850;<sup>282</sup> in 1859 he regarded it as "a pity" that it was "now settled beyond all dispute that the instrument must be the organ".<sup>283</sup> In 1872, J.S. Curwen<sup>284</sup> found that organs and harmoniums were

"so much the fashion that it is almost hopeless to plead for any other kind of instrument ... The idea that there is anything more secular in playing a fiddle or a cornet in church than in playing an organ is purely conventional, as a moment's reflection will show".

In Scotland, several writers would have been happy to see other instruments introduced.<sup>285</sup> Colin Brown, an inveterate opponent of instrumental music, was particularly upset that the chosen instrument was the organ - "about the worst possible".<sup>286</sup>

In the country parish churches of England, other instruments were commonly used up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Wesleyans and other nonconformists had not scrupled to follow suit. When Thomas Chalmers had preached at Stockport, he had been appalled to find the singing accompanied by a large band of brass, woodwind, strings and percussion.<sup>287</sup> In the mid-seventies there was a movement for the reintroduction of other instruments in

the large English parish churches<sup>288</sup> and orchestras accompanied special services in some cathedrals. By then, however, amateur rural instrumentalists were less easy to find. "We never did a worse day's work", lamented Shuttleworth in 1892,<sup>289</sup> "than when we disestablished the old village orchestra". These orchestras had been disbanded because their technical competence (and sometimes their conduct) did not match the expectations of the age. Those who favoured organs for small rural churches and orchestras for large city ones<sup>290</sup> were not being inconsistent - in a small church, problems of intonation and of securing the regular availability of a balanced ensemble were overcome by having a single keyboard player.<sup>291</sup>

A few instances are recorded of the use in Scotland of instruments other than organs. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, the priest of one catholic chapel in the north-east used a double-bass until an organ was ready, and another asked to borrow a harpsichord under the same circumstances.<sup>292</sup> Later, large catholic churches could sometimes get an orchestra together for mass on festival occasions. According to Farmer,<sup>293</sup> a violin was used to give confidence to the ladies when they started singing in the choir at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Glasgow. And, at the end of the century, bands sometimes accompanied special evening services in presbyterian churches.

There is another, quite remarkable, instance of other instruments being used in Scottish worship. At a time when only about thirty other Scottish presbyterian churches had dared to introduce organs and harmoniums, one of the country's historic churches resounded each Sunday to a military band accompanying the psalms.

While the Black Watch was stationed at Stirling in the sixties, the regimental band accompanied the singing in the garrison chapel. Far from objecting, the chaplain, who was also minister of the West Church, asked his civilian congregation if they too would like to have the services of the band in their worship.<sup>294</sup> It happened that the West congregation were then worshipping in the Guild Hall due to restoration work on their church; this may

have made them more amenable to the experiment. In any event, they were unanimously in favour. The woodwinds of the band successfully accompanied the singing in the Guild Hall and continued to do so on a regular basis in the restored church building.<sup>295</sup> After a few months, however, the congregation lost its band when the regiment was moved to Edinburgh. On the band's last Sunday at the church, large crowds assembled; when the doors were opened, the church was quickly filled and hundreds were unable to get in to the services.<sup>296</sup> It is amazing that these events were never brought up in the presbytery, or even as much as mentioned in the many pamphlets and speeches of the period.

Elsewhere, "instrumental music" in a Scottish church meant an organ, or, from the sixties on, a keyboard reed instrument - in the early days a harmonium, and later either a harmonium or an American organ. A large potential market existed for these reed instruments and competition was fierce - they were sold for church and drawing-room in large numbers and were very widely advertised in newspapers and magazines at a wide range of prices. Alexandre's models in 1857 ranged in price from six guineas to £63<sup>297</sup> and Debain's in 1864 from six guineas to £91.<sup>298</sup> The larger instruments had two manuals, a pedal-board of two and a half octaves, and many stop-knobs. Some were made in England and Scotland but most were imported. The sales techniques of manufacturers and dealers left the pipe organ builders far behind. The musicologist E.F. Rimbault, who also cashed in on the market for albums of harmonium music, was enlisted to write a book which amounted to an extensive sales brochure for Alexandre. There we find Hector Berlioz quoted at length<sup>299</sup> - he describes the mixture stops of pipe organs as "monstrosities" and argues that harmoniums are preferable to organs for sacred music, being unsuitable for "pieces of a skipping, petulant or violent character". Lemmens, one of the outstanding organists of the time, gave regular "seances musicales" on Mustel instruments twice weekly in a London dealer's shop,<sup>300</sup> with ambitious programmes including Rossini's *William Tell* over-



ture. He also gave demonstration recitals in the provinces; after he had done so at Greenock Town Hall in 1867, the formidable local performer and music-dealer Marquis Chisholm gave his own recital to show that the effects Lemmens had got from the Mustel instruments could also be achieved on Alexandre's, for which Chisholm was an agent.<sup>301</sup> Dealers sometimes employed prominent local organists to give public demonstrations of their reed instruments in town halls<sup>302</sup> or even in churches.<sup>303</sup>

Reed instruments were cheaper than pianos for drawing-rooms, and cheaper and less space-consuming than organs for churches. They also produced a sound which most Victorians regarded as "religious". "A few simple chords, that produce no effect on the pianoforte, make a heavenly sound upon the harmonium", claimed Rimbault. "Indeed, the small skill required in its performance is one great charm of this instrument".<sup>304</sup> Thus reed organs were sold in vast numbers. Curwen estimated in 1880 that, over English churches of all denominations, they outnumbered pipe organs by about five to one.<sup>305</sup> In the Church of Scotland in 1906 the ratio was about two to one,<sup>306</sup> but it is difficult to assess the situation in other denominations.<sup>307</sup>

Pipe organ builders might not manage their marketing so well, but the large ones met this encroachment on their church market by producing remarkably cheap instruments, often on the Scudamore model.<sup>308</sup> Indeed, so many reputable English builders were advertising small organs at prices up to £100 in the sixties and seventies<sup>309</sup> that it is a mystery why very few of them found their way to Scotland. Perhaps the absence of an organ tradition meant that Scots were likely to be more impressed by the large number of stop-knobs on a reed organ than by the musical potential of a pipe organ. Perhaps the financial caution with which Scots are credited played a part - reed organ dealers had the advantage that they could offer churches free Sunday trials, and they would sometimes arrange for different models to be tried on successive Sundays, after which the congregation or a committee would decide which to buy.<sup>310</sup> On the other hand, we have seen that the pipe

to reed proportion was apparently higher in Scotland than in England. Maybe the Scots simply preferred bigger instruments.

Despite assertions that harmoniums and American organs were instruments in their own right,<sup>311</sup> the almost universal view was that they were cheap substitutes for pipe instruments. Some American organs demonstrated this by having dummy pipes on their fronts. To Robert Lee a harmonium was "an excellent substitute"<sup>312</sup> for an organ (which he nevertheless replaced by the real thing within two years). To Curwen it was a "feeble parody"<sup>313</sup> and to Shuttleworth (an unusually musical clergyman) an "instrument of torture".<sup>314</sup> Installation of a harmonium or an American organ in a church was often accompanied by expressions of regret that a "proper organ" would have been too expensive. In some churches there was frank disappointment - the instrument at Scoonie was "too weak for the size of the building",<sup>315</sup> as were those at Abbotshall<sup>316</sup> and elsewhere. In a large number of churches the intention all along was to have a pipe organ. The acquisition of a reed instrument as a first step could be, in the uncertain sixties, to establish the usage of instrumental music before a church court might pronounce a general ban, or to gauge the degree of resistance in the congregation and perhaps win over the doubters. More often it was a stop-gap until funds could be raised for an organ or until the organ-builder had completed his work. Organs were what most congregations wanted when they could afford them.

Until the sixties the small market for organs in Scotland had been shared between Scottish and English builders. With the odd exception, Scottish builders did not supply instruments to English churches. By the time of the expansion of the Scottish market which began in the sixties, demand in England had been increasing and English builders old and new had been expanding their operations and organising themselves to produce durable organs in quantity at competitive prices. In 1859 Forster and Andrews installed nineteen new organs and were employing between twenty and thirty staff.<sup>317</sup> By 1874, when

Conacher opened a larger factory at Huddersfield, the firm had built a total of 340 organs in roughly twenty years.<sup>318</sup> In 1878 Harrison was employing thirty-three staff at Durham and producing around fifteen organs per year.<sup>319</sup>

No Scottish builder worked on anything like this scale; Scottish firms were not geared up to meet the new demand. Though builders like Hamilton and Mirrlees continued to operate successfully and local firms sprang up in various parts of the country, their operations were always small compared with those of the English competition. Even the newer English builders were able to obtain a share of the lucrative Scottish market, and one or two instruments came from France (Cavaille-Coll) and Ireland (Telford). Major English builders set up Scottish branches. Nearly every major Scottish contract went to an English firm. During the sixties and seventies the main suppliers of organs to Scottish churches were Forster and Andrews of Hull and Conacher of Huddersfield. By 1881 about a third of the organs in the Church of Scotland had been built by Conacher<sup>320</sup> who had also supplied many to other denominations; Forster and Andrews, with a wider denominational spread, had installed about the same number of instruments. These firms were soon meeting increasing competition from other English builders like Willis, Lewis, Harrison, and Brindley and Foster. Hill installed a number of large and small instruments throughout the period, and estimated for many more, but the firm's share of the Scottish market was never large.

Though Scotland had its reputable builders, it suffered like England from local firms which produced the "churchwarden's organ" - "a combination of nails, wood, metal and glue, at ninepence an hour" with an impressive stop-list, an inadequate pedal department, and copious use of tenor C ranks and grooved basses.<sup>321</sup> Even a quality builder like Hill surprisingly often omitted the expensive and space-consuming bottom octave of a rank, but some minor builders did so to excess. Holt of Edinburgh produced instruments in which about half the manual stops were of tenor C compass,<sup>322</sup> and John Renton built an or-

gan with a tenor C swell as late as 1879.<sup>323</sup> These two builders illustrate the less impressive side of organ-building. Renton's organ at Dublin Street Baptist, Edinburgh, was rebuilt after sixteen years; his Crieff organ was immoderately criticised by the Psalmodist's reporter<sup>324</sup> and was replaced by a Forster and Andrews when the congregation moved to a new church fifteen years after its installation; his Inverbrothock organ was regarded by the minister as worthy of replacement less than seven years after its installation; and his Duddingston organ lasted just ten years before being replaced by one from Young of Manchester. Holt's rebuild and enlargement of the instrument which he himself played at St. John's Episcopal, Edinburgh, lasted only fifteen years before a rebuild,<sup>325</sup> and his large ambitious organ at College Street U.P., Edinburgh, with its reversed console, had to be rebuilt by Harrison after only eleven years. Such problems arose for many congregations - in 1900, only seventeen years after Free churches started to use instruments, the Free Church Praise Committee reported that it had received "a large number of applications for renewal of instruments". "It is to be feared", said the report, "that many inferior organs and harmoniums have found their way into our churches".<sup>326</sup>

By contrast, organs by the top builders, and the solid durable instruments of Conacher and of Forster and Andrews, continued to give good service for many decades. Untouched centenarian organs by these firms can be found in churches today. The organists of Biggar Parish Church, where there was an 1889 Conacher, put their joint salary of £20 a year into a fund for organ maintenance; when they retired in 1904 after ten years of this arrangement, the fund stood at £251,<sup>327</sup> presumably after paying for regular tuning and adjustment - this gives some indication of the organ's reliability. Arthur Ingram set up business in Edinburgh in the nineties, producing cheap organs which had at least the virtue of reliability, and he found many buyers.

By and large, builders based in Scotland tended in the nineteenth century to provide organs for a restricted

geographical area, Hamilton for example working mainly in the south-east and Mirrlees in the west, but English builders' work with some exceptions tended to be spread over the whole of Scotland.<sup>328</sup> In the sixties, when organs were still a novelty, purchasers often patronised builders who had already installed organs in churches of their own denomination or in their neighbourhood. For instance, Conacher's first Scottish organ, at Greenock Congregational Church (1861), led to his supplying most of the organs for independent churches during the following six years<sup>329</sup> - the connection with Greenock is confirmed by some of these organs being opened by the Greenock organist. It was one of Conacher's larger organs - at Trinity Congregational, Glasgow - that brought with it from Huddersfield the young A.L. Peace. Thus within a few years the firm became well known in Scotland, just in time to catch the presbyterian market. The outstanding example of the preponderance of one builder in a geographical area occurred at Dundee between 1864 and 1868, when Forster and Andrews built four organs, three of them large and expensive.<sup>330</sup>

A few church organs were built by amateurs. In the second decade of the century, a priest at Fochabers built organs for the chapel at Aberdeen and for his own chapel, using pipes supplied by Bruce of Edinburgh. The Aberdeen organ was unsatisfactory and was soon replaced by one from Flight and Robson of London.<sup>331</sup> Andrew Leckie, a baker, built a small organ for the Independent Chapel at Ardrossan in 1872.<sup>332</sup> A chamber organ bought by Mauchline Parish Church in 1882 had originally been built for his own use by a miller.<sup>333</sup>

Stop-lists survive for a great many Scottish organs of the period. Not much need be said about them here, for they show the same features as those in England, principally a trend away from traditional tone-colours. By the seventies a small one-manual organ was no longer expected to include a chorus, be it the work of Hill (16,8,8,8,4 at Inveraven, 1876) or of a small local builder like Roberts of Dundee (8,8,8,8,4,4 at Tay Square U.P., 1875). A moderate-sized two-manual organ in the seventies usual-

ly still contained a compound stop or a twelfth on one or both manuals, but organs were increasingly built whose only concession to upper-work was a single fifteenth or even a piccolo; one of many examples is Willis's 1874 seventeen-stop organ at Coats Parish Church. The later trend in church organs was anticipated by the instrument Thomas Smieton had installed in his Broughty Ferry villa in 1875 where the three manual departments contained fourteen stops, ten of them at eight-foot pitch and four at four-foot. In the sixties, pedal departments were inadequate<sup>334</sup> or non-existent;<sup>335</sup> the seventies saw an increase in their sizes, but any stop above eight-foot pitch was a rarity.

W.H. Richmond, the consultant for Smieton's organ, was probably not wholly responsible for the scheme. Consultants seem to have been happy to go along with their clients' wishes or to recommend a standard builder's scheme. A.L. Peace was consultant for two quite large Willis organs installed in Glasgow in 1876 (Dowanhill U.P. and Hillhead), and the specifications were identical. Oakeley was consultant for the 1875 organ at Morningside Church, Edinburgh, but the large Conacher instrument was simply a copy (save for one stop) of the same builder's organ of the previous year at Perth East, with which Oakeley had not been involved. The ten per cent commissions which consultants obtained from the organ-builders were the subject of cynical comment in musical circles but the general public rarely heard about them.<sup>336</sup>

In his role as consultant, Oakeley accepted prevailing trends in design, but he showed his true colours in 1870 when Hamilton rebuilt and enlarged the Snetzler/Bruce instrument in his own church, St. Paul's Episcopal, Edinburgh. The west gallery position was retained and, as far as can be judged from written descriptions, he respected the historic stops, leaving them unchanged. His additions included a swell mixture, a swell sixteen-foot reed, a tremulant, and a greatly augmented pedal section including a four-foot principal and a sixteen-foot reed. The result was, on paper at least, an

exciting and versatile instrument with choruses in all three manual departments. This was a world away from the general thinking of the period.

Manual compass universally started at CC by the time organs became common in Scotland. During the sixties and seventies, fifty-six or fifty-eight note manuals were normal, but the lowest octave of the swell manual was sometimes silent, or operated on the great organ. Such tenor C swells were not unusual in the early sixties and instances can be found in 1869<sup>337</sup> and even 1879.<sup>338</sup> A number of Conacher's organs for independent churches in the sixties had tenor C swells, but Conacher also built in 1868 what was probably the first organ in Scotland with five-octave manuals, a thirty-two-note pedal-board, and all stops of full compass (the three-manual organ at Johnstone Town Hall); and his 1871 organ for Glasgow University was claimed to be the first in Glasgow with five-octave manuals.<sup>339</sup> Pedal-boards in the sixties usually had twenty-nine or thirty notes, with thirty becoming the norm in the seventies, though a few twenty-five-note boards were still installed.<sup>340</sup>

An English writer said in 1852:<sup>341</sup>

"It is quite common practice in this country for an organ to be ordered of a builder at a distance, who is quite ignorant of the form, structure or magnitude of the church in which it is to be placed ... it is ordered with less regard to suitability than a piece of upholstery, a washstand, or a Tudor bedstead"

and the same criticism seems to apply to many Scottish organs. Around 1881, Harrison was advertising small organs which

"are made whole, and are sent in one case, and have only to be lifted out and placed in position, according to full instructions sent with each Organ".<sup>342</sup>

But normally the builder's employees would set up an organ in a church. Cavaille-Coll's men appear to have taken about three months to put up the Paisley Abbey organ.<sup>343</sup>

If so, they were unusual. In some cases there cannot have been much, if any, on-site finishing - an organ of thirteen speaking stops could be set up in "a few days".<sup>344</sup>

The period between the arrival of the packing cases and the formal opening of an organ was sometimes remarkably

short - at Stonehaven it seems to have been four days;<sup>345</sup>  
at Minnigaff the packing-cases arrived on 25 April 1873  
and the organ was opened on 4 May.<sup>346</sup>

Organ casework quickly degenerated from the gothick and classical cases of the fifties and sixties to the almost universal post-and-rail type which appears so offensive today. In Scotland, the unpleasantness of this type of organ-front is heightened by the prominent position which an organ usually occupies in the building.

#### 11.9. Siting of organs in churches.

A harmonium or an American organ could be accommodated in a church without any major rearrangement. It was usually placed beside the choir so that the musicians were together. Pipe organs, however, had long been an embarrassment to architects in the Church of England. The traditional west gallery position came under attack in the forties, particularly with the removal of choirs from there to the chancel. There was much discussion about where an organ should be placed. Ecclesiologists in the forties favoured a position on the floor at the west end.<sup>347</sup> The west gallery was best acoustically, but galleries were being removed and damage to the organ from gas heating was reckoned to be greater when the organ was high.<sup>348</sup> The advantage of having the organ near the chancel choir resulted in more and more organs being buried in "organ chambers" or, at best, speaking across the chancel from an aisle. Musicians were as perplexed as everyone else.<sup>349</sup> In 1852 Spark concluded lamely, after discussing various possibilities, that the position should be chosen on general grounds of "utility and decency".<sup>350</sup> The editorial columns of the *Musical Standard* in the seventies show the same indecision. After reviewing several publications on organs and their position in churches, an 1873 issue<sup>351</sup> concluded that the best position was probably in chambers on both sides of the chancel. But in 1877 the same column<sup>352</sup> was advocating a high position and criticising architects for boxing organs into chambers.



Episcopal churches in Scotland followed the Anglican pattern.<sup>353</sup> Choirs moved from west galleries into chancels, and the organs went with them. In 1870 Oakeley succeeded in winning twenty-two years' grace for the west gallery position at St. Paul's, Edinburgh, and suggestions were made for an organ and choir gallery at St. John's, Perth, in the seventies.<sup>354</sup> But generally we find episcopalians at that time moving their organs into chambers<sup>355</sup> and almost invariably building new churches with an organ chamber or an "organ aisle" on the north or south side of the chancel.<sup>356</sup> Roman catholic churches, however, usually retained galleries for choirs and organs.<sup>357</sup>

The other denominations in Scotland shared a problem with English nonconformists. The focus of worship, the pulpit, had become established at one end of the church and, in most larger churches, galleries of pews had been built round the other three sides. When organs were little more than chamber instruments they could be accommodated in the "back" or "centre" gallery (the equivalent of the episcopalians' west gallery) without the loss of too many seats and without causing distress to those who might still occupy pews nearby. But larger instruments brought several difficulties - headroom above or under a gallery was often insufficient for an organ with sixteen-foot or even eight-foot pipes; pews would have to be removed and accommodation for the congregation reduced, with a consequent loss of seat rents; in a parish church, the heritors' pews or the magistrates' pews were sometimes at the front of a gallery; and in most places the choir was already at the other end of the church. These considerations led to organs being placed at the "front" of the church. But the result was that the organ dwarfed the pulpit and became the most prominent feature of the church interior. It occupied a position which, though acoustically good, was out of all proportion to its importance. The appearance of an organ almost as "an idol to be worshipped"<sup>358</sup> was disliked by some English nonconformists, whether or not they approved of instrumental music,<sup>359</sup> and later in the century by Scots.<sup>360</sup>

This unsatisfactory siting of organs, which had arisen from necessity, quickly became fashionable.<sup>361</sup> The front position was unnecessarily adopted in most of the new churches opened in the seventies<sup>362</sup> - exceptions, like Rubislaw, Aberdeen (where the organ was in the back gallery), are hard to find; at Greyfriars, Dumfries, the organ was initially placed in a back gallery but within two years steps were being taken to resite it.<sup>363</sup>

In the sixties and the early seventies, an organ was as likely to be placed in the back gallery as at the pulpit end, and the choice of a site was sometimes a matter of debate.<sup>364</sup> At Dundee East, a lofty building, the magistrates agreed to lose their pew and some seat rents in order to accommodate the organ in the gallery, and at Peterhead the provost and others offered to give up their pews so that the church could have an organ. At Perth East, on the other hand, the town council refused to allow the organ to be placed in the back gallery as intended; the next site chosen - the north-east corner - involved a reduction in the "desirability" of the seats of influential parties. The council eventually insisted that the organ be placed behind the pulpit on the east wall, where there were several monuments and a fine window. The organ, however, had been designed for the west gallery, and as it was being installed it became evident that it was going to obscure more of the east window than had been supposed. Work was stopped, and Conacher himself came from Huddersfield. The church committee reluctantly accepted his assurance that nothing could be done to reduce the organ's height. The result was a sad defacement of the interior of a historic building.

After about 1875 it became increasingly unusual for an organ in a non-catholic church to be placed in a back gallery. Organs were installed in back galleries in 1876 at Inveraven, Hillhead, and Dowanhill U.P., Glasgow, and in 1877 at Camphill U.P., Glasgow; but such exceptions became rare. A number of instruments which had been in this position were moved within a few years to the pulpit end of the church<sup>365</sup> or replaced by a larger instrument there.<sup>366</sup> Whichever end of the church was chosen, care

had to be taken not to exclude light or hide stained glass - for this reason the organ might be placed on the floor behind the pulpit,<sup>367</sup> or to one side of a front gallery,<sup>368</sup> or built in two sections, one on each side of the window.<sup>369</sup> Even when an organ was in some other position, considerable trouble had to be taken to avoid excluding light.<sup>370</sup>

In some larger churches it was possible to put organs in unusual positions<sup>371</sup> and elsewhere too they were occasionally placed unconventionally.<sup>372</sup> At Wigtown (1878) the organ was placed against the west wall, and the pulpit was moved from there to the north wall, the seating being rearranged accordingly; even so, the organ was regarded as being unduly prominent.<sup>373</sup>

In a great majority of churches, however, the organ was placed at the pulpit end. There were three basic methods, all frequently used, by which it could be accommodated there. Firstly, if the church was high enough, a new gallery could be built above the pulpit for the organ and usually also the choir. Secondly, the pulpit could be moved forward and the organ placed on the floor behind it; when this was done, the pulpit was often bracketed on to the front of the organ case, and then the console was usually under the pulpit, so that the pulpit had the appearance of being an adjunct of the organ. But bringing the pulpit forward far enough to accommodate a largish organ could adversely affect the internal proportions of the church and cause removal of pews. So a third and more drastic method was to place the organ in a chamber or chancel or apse behind the pulpit. In a few churches such a space already existed,<sup>374</sup> but most churches which adopted this solution had to build an extension on to the church, at a financial cost which could equal or exceed that of the organ itself. Kilmarnock Laigh Church had its plan to build an organ chamber out above a public stairway interdicted by the town council and had to be content with making a two-foot deep recess in the four-foot thick wall and moving the pulpit forward.<sup>375</sup> Building an extension to accommodate the organ was often combined with the first two methods and, when the organ was at gallery lev-

el, the opportunity was taken to provide a session-house or vestry in the extended space under the organ. In churches which already had an extension for these rooms at the pulpit end, an organ loft could be built on top of them. A former window opening could be used to frame the organ case; at Sandyford (1866) the mullions and transoms were retained and the organ was placed in an extension behind them.

Unless the church was lofty and the organ could be placed in a gallery well clear of the pulpit, the result was usually - at least to twentieth-century eyes - a disfigurement of the church interior. Led by the Scottish ecclesiologists, a reaction set in towards the end of the century. An early meeting of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society in 1886 was unanimous that organ and choir should be in the "west" gallery.<sup>376</sup> The prominence of organs came under attack<sup>377</sup> and it became fashionable, on the Anglican model, to have a chancel containing the communion table and perhaps the choir. "Chancels were never meant to be organ chambers", said the minister of St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in 1905,<sup>378</sup> "and the sooner the organ finds a less prominent and obstructive location, the sooner will the church regain its proper form and original dignity". The later practice of placing an organ at one or both sides of an open chancel was anticipated in at least one presbyterian church in the eighties.<sup>379</sup> But in Scottish churches, as in nonconformist chapels in England, plenty of organs were still built across the pulpit end of the church right through to the middle of the twentieth century. The organ movement had started partly as a quest for beauty in worship, but in many churches it resulted in generations of worshippers being confronted with ugly rows of pipes.

#### 11.10. Geographical distribution.

We have on several occasions noted inaccuracies of contemporary and later commentators as to the pattern of introduction of instruments into churches. Nowhere is this more evident than in the matter of geographical distribution. The commonest fallacy is that instruments were

initially confined to the cities, and to Glasgow and Edinburgh in particular. We have already seen that only half of the instruments adopted in the Church of Scotland before the 1866 Act were in these two cities and that only one of them was in Edinburgh. The same balance between city and country appears also in other denominations. (Episcopal and Roman churches are of course excluded from this discussion). Among presbyterians, the large cities, other than Glasgow, certainly did not take the lead - of nearly sixty instruments known to be in use before 1872, fifteen were in Glasgow, but only two were in Dundee, one (or possibly two) in Edinburgh, and none in Aberdeen.

Figures 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3 (at the end of this chapter) show cumulatively the distribution of known instruments at the ends of the years 1867, 1871 and 1875 respectively.<sup>380</sup> By and large, these reflect quite well the distribution of population and churches, but a few observations are worth making. Instruments appear to have been particularly favoured in the Dundee/Arbroath area; possibly a contributing factor was the publicity given to the large Kinnaird Hall organ in 1865. Again, there were more than would be expected around Morayshire; the explanation is probably the offers of harmoniums made to several churches by Grant of Elchies. There was a shortage of instruments in the area of Stirlingshire, Clackmannan and West Fife. The most surprising feature is the absence of any instruments at all in Aberdeen presbyterian churches until 1874 or 1875;<sup>381</sup> this cannot be accounted for solely by the opposition of Pirie, for the opposite view was represented there by Milligan and others. It was quite a long time, too, before anyone in Edinburgh followed Lee's example; the date of the harmonium at Buccleuch Church has not been established, but it seems that no other Edinburgh presbyterian church adopted an instrument before 1872. Edinburgh was not without organs in other churches, especially episcopal ones. Hutchings' statement<sup>382</sup> that "the first protestant church in the city of Edinburgh to install an organ was Augustine Congregational Church, in 1863" is misleading.

however one may restrict the meanings of "protestant", "city" and "organ". It is more informative to observe that there were at that time instruments in at least fifteen non-Roman churches in the area which is now referred to as Edinburgh and Leith.<sup>383</sup> Since both Edinburgh and Aberdeen had quite a number of instruments in episcopal and Roman churches, it is tempting to attribute the reluctance of presbyterians to adopt them to a fear of aping these churches, but there seems to have been no such fear in other places such as Dundee.

Clearly, the "insuperable repugnance" to organs "particularly in the west and in the south" claimed by Smith<sup>384</sup> was illusory. Much more common was a claim that the main opposition was in "the north". This is quite untrue of the north-east (Moray, Nairn, Banff, etc.) and the northern isles. The Free Church territory of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and the western isles, however, had no instruments at all in 1876. The Established ministers there, and their meagre congregations, seem to have shared the local Free Church attitude to organs.<sup>385</sup> By 1890 there were instruments in several Established churches, and in at least one U.P. church, in Easter Ross; but the north-west remained unsympathetic to the organ movement - in 1902 Story claimed that the use of an organ at the Established Church Assembly would offend highland members.<sup>386</sup>

It is certainly not the case that congregations were more likely to introduce instrumental music the nearer they were to Edinburgh and Glasgow. Several areas of the central belt had no presbyterian instruments before the eighties; yet, among the very first congregations to agitate for organs in 1865 were those of the parish churches of Dumfries in the south and Lerwick in Shetland. David Johnston's persistent opposition to organs was attacked in his own day as "coming from the uttermost ends of the earth",<sup>387</sup> and his 1872 pamphlet has been cited by a music historian<sup>388</sup> as evidence of the attitude "at the presbyterian outposts". But Johnston was English by birth and known for his personal eccentricity. The fact that his parish was in Orkney was quite irrelevant. Another

Orkney parish minister, William Spark, had spoken in favour of organs at the 1865 Assembly, when every Orkney and Shetland elder present voted in favour of congregational freedom to introduce instrumental music.<sup>389</sup> In the same year a Shetland congregational minister expressed his approval of organs.<sup>390</sup> When Johnston wrote his pamphlet, there was already an organ in Lerwick Parish Church, a hundred miles north of Orkney, and parish churches in Morayshire had more instruments than those in Edinburgh.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Proc & Deb 1881, p.241. Begg's ultimate fear was unjustified by later events and indeed by what had happened earlier elsewhere. Among episcopalians, liturgy had preceded both organs and hymns; and, when the Leeds methodists had expressed a fear in 1827 that organs would lead to use of the prayer-book, it was pointed out that "in City Road, the prayers have for half a century subsisted without the organ; in Keighley, on the contrary, for the same period, the organ without the prayers" (Galland 1827b, p.9).
2. It is not clear why the plan to do so at Dundee East (*Dundee Courier*, 19 Dec 1865) was abandoned. Chants were not introduced there until 1870 (*Glasgow Weekly Mail*, 21 May 1870).
3. Platform pulpits appear to have been less common in the Church of Scotland than among other presbyterians.
4. Macfarlane 1965, p.36; *Stonehaven Journal*, 6 Jan 1876.
5. The innovations are listed in a letter to the *Perthshire Constitutional*, 3 July 1872.
6. Hall 1895, p.120. And Liff Parish Church was exceptional in requesting presbytery sanction for simultaneous introduction of the same three changes; the request came from the congregation and was signed by 360 members and adherents (Dalgetty 1940, p.25).
7. Twenty-two cases have been found in which an instrument and new postures were introduced on the same Sunday.
8. Report of General Assembly Committee on Innovations, 1864. (See, e.g., *Aberdeen Journal*, 1 June 1864).
9. For details of the postures dispute at Cupar, see *Edinburgh Courant* throughout May 1873.
10. *Galloway Gazette*, 10 May 1873.
11. e.g. Macduff of Glasgow Sandyford, Charteris of Glasgow Park, Robertson of Greenock, Watson of Dundee.
12. Robert Lee, John Macleod, Walter Boyd.

13. Shanks of Craigrownie and Finlay Mathieson of Buccleuch, Edinburgh.
14. James Mackie of St. Mary's, Dumfries, rapidly emptied his church by his uncertain temper, was imprisoned at the instance of his creditors, and offered to leave his charge in return for £3000. Robert Leitch of Abernyte was an Irishman who later took orders in the Church of England and spent some years as a chaplain in Germany.
15. *Dunfermline Press*, 14 March 1861.
16. *Elgin Courant*, 6 Jan 1871.
17. *Fasti* - Maxton.
18. *Greenock Advertiser*, 29 June 1865.
19. *Stirling* 1894, p.194.
20. *Fasti* - Edinburgh, High.
21. *Elgin* 1901, p.13.
22. Walter Boyd, at Skelmorlie.
23. John Macleod, at Duns.
24. *Scotsman*, 17 June 1865. He moved to the organ-using Park Church, Glasgow, in 1869.
25. *Kelso Chronicle*, 12 Apr 1872; *Kelso Courier*, 18 Oct 1872.
26. Dun Parish Church. (*Montrose Standard*, 10 July/21 Aug 1868).
27. Bellahouston, Glasgow (George Porter, ex-assistant at Dundee East) and St. Mary's, Dumfries (James Mackie from St. Mary's, Patrick).
28. Townhead, Glasgow (W.B. Turnbull from St. Mary's Dumfries).
29. For instance, Thomas Niven moved from the organ-using Glasgow Tron to Linlithgow in 1872. By the time he left there in 1876, his congregation had decided to have an organ. Due to fund-raising and other delays, the Linlithgow organ was not opened until February 1878, only three months before that at Pollokshields Church to which Niven had gone.
30. Where the churches concerned had patrons, the patrons would at this time be happy to present the man of the congregation's choice. (Drummond 1975, p.330; Boyd 1892, i, p.9.).
31. Most of the offers were unconditional, and some included an undertaking to meet the expense of any necessary structural alterations. At New Kilpatrick, however, a condition of the offer was that the heritors undertake the structural alterations. (*Dumbarton Herald*, 11 Apr 1878) At Dunfermline Congregational, the offer was conditional on the congregation first clearing a building debt of £200. (*Dunfermline Press*, 1 Dec 1859) At Kirkmabreck the offer was part of a package which included a donation for church renovation, and the congregation was asked to accept or reject the complete package. (*Galloway Gazette*, 5 Oct 1872; *Ayr Advertiser*, 13 Mar 1873)
32. Of course, there must also have been many unsuccessful organ proposals made at such meetings, as at Elgin Place Congregational, Glasgow (1856), Kirkcaldy Congregational (1860 and 1874) and St. Ninians (1882).
33. At Dundonald, 1865. (*Kilmarnock Standard*, 28 Jan 1865).
34. At Cupar, 1866, and at Cramond, 1870, this was ex-



- PLICITLY stated to be the case. (*Fife Herald*, 3 May 1866; *Weekly Review*, 13 May 1871).
35. At Lerwick in 1865 the session was in doubt about the legality of the proposal. At Lasswade U.P. in 1876 the session took no action "out of consideration for the minority", and at Millhill U.P., Musselburgh, in 1879 an offer of a harmonium was declined as "inexpedient". At Portree in 1879 the petition had come from the English-speaking members only.
  36. At Manor in 1874, Mauchline in 1881, and Newhaven in 1883.
  37. e.g. at Renfield Street U.P., Glasgow in 1878 (Forrest 1898, p.44); at New Kilpatrick in 1876 (McCardel 1949, p.61); at St. John's Free, Paisley, in the eighties (Macalaster 1943, p.20). Two elders resigned at Allan Park U.P., Stirling, in 1872 (Robb 1966, p.19), and two at Cranshaws in 1893 (Eddy nd., p.4).
  38. This was in ten cases due to a reluctance to implement immediately the decision of a congregational meeting especially if the attendance had been small - four sessions proceeded to issue voting papers, five to issue a call for objections, and one to conduct a house-to-house survey. In two cases, the use of voting papers was followed by an invitation to the objectors to attend a meeting.
  39. Macfarlane 1965, p.36.
  40. *Edinburgh Evening News*, 4 Sept 1875; *Dumfries & Galloway Courier*, 4 Jan 1876.
  41. *Orcadian*, 28 Apr 1883 to 2 June 1883.
  42. Mitchell 1956, p.6.
  43. At Carlsburn (1874) the organ later permanently adopted appears to have been used during the trial period (Macleay 1914, p.22). At Minnigaff the small organ used during the trials was replaced by a larger one following a favourable congregational vote (*Galloway Gazette*, 5 Oct 1872, 26 Apr 1873).
  44. At Junction Road U.P., Leith in 1876 (*Arbroath Guide*, 10 June 1876), and at Haddington West U.P. in 1879 (Turnbull 1896, p.68).
  45. At Nenthorn. (*Kelso Chronicle*, 8 Dec 1871).
  46. *Arbroath Guide*, 5 Nov/10 Dec 1872.
  47. But the vote in some places must have been influenced by sermons and, at Minnigaff in 1872, by the minister's threat that he would leave the parish if the vote were unfavourable. (*Galloway Gazette*, 9 Nov 1872).
  48. There is very little evidence that meetings or calls for objections were used as a means of avoiding an unfavourable vote which would result from the use of voting papers, though this was occasionally alleged, in one case apparently with some justification. (Coupair Angus, in 1866).
  49. *Dumfries & Galloway Herald*, 19 Apr 1867.
  50. Elgin 1901, pp.13-14.
  51. The suspiciously round figures are those presented to the presbytery and reported in the press.
  52. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 15 July 1872.
  53. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 5 Feb 1872.
  54. e.g. *Proc & Deb* 1883, p.131.
  55. Crieff was unusual in having a greater proportional

- majority in a paper ballot than at a congregational meeting; but Crieff was unusual in many other respects.
56. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 21 Jan 1865; *Greenock Advertiser*, 17 Oct 1865.
  57. Barras 1893, p.70.
  58. e.g. at Linlithgow the vote was 300-279 in 1865 (the lowest proportional majority known anywhere) and 759-42 in 1875.
  59. Beattie 1778, p.31.
  60. Precentor 1858, p.25.
  61. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 13 Oct 1865.
  62. Church of Scotland 1906, p.10.
  63. Henderson 1901, p.35.
  64. Elvin 1973, p.80.
  65. Burnett 1927, p.55.
  66. This is based on a reed to pipe ratio of 2.5 to 1 and on the average costs of pipe and reed organs being respectively £500 and £50.
  67. James Robb, who presented a large organ to St. Andrew's Parish Church, Glasgow, was not a member of the Church of Scotland (*Glasgow Herald*, 4 Jan 1866). A "dissenting lady" offered an organ to Inchtute Parish Church (*Arbroath Guide*, 26 Aug 1876).
  68. One minister, however, took the harmonium with him when later obliged to demit his charge (Mitchell 1956, p.6).
  69. *Dumfries & Galloway Herald*, 2 Aug 1873
  70. Murray 1911, p.28; *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, 1863, p.387.
  71. W.H. Houldsworth ordered, on the same day, two sizeable organs - one for the chapel in his home (where he later had another installed in the billiard room) and the other for the episcopal church in Kilmarnock (William Hill Order Books, 1873 - English Organ Archive). His brother had an organ in his residence, Coltness House, and gave two to local presbyterian churches (Cambusnethan Parish Church and Coltness Memorial Church, Newmains). Mrs Grant had an organ installed in her home, Cluny Castle, in 1873 (Elvin 1976, pp.85-6); a few years later she presented one to the new episcopal church at Buckie (*Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 8 Nov 1876), and she may have given another to her local parish church in 1877 (The 1877 organ may, however, have been for the private chapel at the Castle - cf. Elvin 1968, p.75 and Elvin 1976, p.118). Her namesake, the laird of Elchies, contributed to the cost of the organ at Inveraven Parish Church as well as offering harmoniums to at least three other village churches - Aberlour (1870), Dallas (1870), Knockando (1872).
  72. In churches which had not used an instrument before, fund-raising usually began after the congregation had taken its decision. But at Ward Chapel, Dundee (1863-5) and at St. Brycedale, Kirkcaldy (1890-3), it was resolved that the question should not be put to the congregation until the necessary funds had been subscribed. In some other places a subscription list was opened, and a large part of the cost subscribed, before the congregation was formally asked for its opinion. (e.g. Duns (1865), Blairgowrie (1874)).

73. *Kelvinside* 1909, p.47.
74. *Arbroath Guide*, 8 Feb 1868.
75. *Story* 1870, ii, p.77.
76. *Dickie* 1926, pp.83-4.
77. Among other examples are Eyemouth (1870), St. Vigens (1875) and Kilmarnock Laigh (1878).
78. There are many examples. A member of St. Brycedale, Kirkcaldy, offered in 1890 to subscribe £1000 if the rest of the congregation could raise the same sum; they did so. At Morningside, Edinburgh (1875), a lady encouraged the others with a subscription of £100; at Perth East (1873), the pipe organ project was initiated by three members offering £50 each. A bequest of £2000 from a former session clerk triggered the organ movement at Brechin Cathedral. At a more modest level, the organ fund at the village church of Inveraven was started with two subscriptions of £20 each (one from the choirmistress, and later the organist, Lady Macpherson Grant); the congregation then subscribed £105, and the balance of the £170 required was paid by Sir George Macpherson Grant.
79. *Fife Herald*, 8 Feb 1866.
80. *Galloway Gazette*, 30 Nov 1872 to 15 Mar 1873.
81. *Wishaw Advertiser*, 19 Sept 1874.
82. *Galloway Gazette*, 15 Mar 1873.
83. *Elgin Courant*, 22 Sept 1871.
84. *Elgin Courant*, 31 Mar 1871.
85. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 6 June 1873.
86. *Henderson* 1901, pp.33-50.
87. "It is much to the honour of the members of the kirk of Scotland", said the Dean of Canterbury in 1784, "that many of them have lately subscribed liberally towards the erection of an episcopal chapel, with an organ, at Edinburgh" (Horne 1784, p.8) - presumably this is a reference to the Cowgate Chapel. And in 1788 a committee was appointed at the Kelso episcopal chapel "for going through the Town to collect subscriptions" for an organ (St. Andrew's 1970, p.2).
88. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, Mar 1864, p.95.
89. *Scotsman*, 5 May 1865.
90. Only six cases have been found, and in two of these the purchase of an organ was only one of several purposes for which the bazaar was held.
91. St. Margaret's Hall, Dunfermline (1878) and Stirling Town Hall (1883).
92. *Falkirk Herald*, 6 Oct 1877.
93. *Elgin Courant*, 13 July 1877.
94. *Forrest* 1898, p.44.
95. *Robb* 1966, p.19.
96. *Dundee Advertiser*, 27 Apr 1881.
97. e.g. *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 9 Feb 1876; *Dunfermline Journal*, 14 Oct 1882.
98. *Arbroath Guide*, 14 Mar 1868.
99. *Paisley Herald*, 21/28 Feb 1874.
100. *Greenock Advertiser*, 28 Mar 1867.
101. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 10 Feb 1871.
102. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 7 Mar 1887.
103. *Weekly News*, 11 Nov 1876.
104. *Renfrewshire Independent*, 2 Jan 1875.
105. Church accounts for year ending March 1886 (New College Library, Edinburgh). And in 1872 a member of

Wigtown Parish Church pointed out that the expenses of an organ and organist could not be met from the church's average weekly collection of 16/- or 17/- (*Galloway Gazette*, 30 Nov 1872). Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that the first organist there stayed for only two years after the organ was installed in 1878.

106. At Newington Church, Edinburgh, enough money was collected to pay for the organ and provide a fund for its maintenance (*Scotsman*, 7 Nov 1873). At Brechin Cathedral, a bequest of £2000, intended for the purchase of an organ, was supplemented by £800 collected from the congregation. After purchase of the organ and expensive alterations to the building, this still left a fund for the organist's salary and maintenance of the instrument (*Montrose Standard*, 28 Sept 1877; *Dundee Advertiser*, 26 Apr 1878).
107. The legacy of the Disruption, however, was often still in evidence in relations between Free churches and their Church of Scotland neighbours.
108. Murray 1911, p.21.
109. McLaren 1895, p.27.
110. As early as 1839, the parish congregation of East Kilbride presented a gallery clock to the Relief congregation in gratitude for the use of its building during repairs to the Parish Church (*East Kilbride* 1891, p.25).
111. *Stonehaven Journal*, 18 Sept 1873.
112. *Galloway Gazette*, 9 June 1877.
113. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 21 Dec 1874.
114. *Arbroath Guide*, 17 Oct 1874.
115. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 6 Mar 1871.
116. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 27 Apr 1865.
117. *Queen's Park* 1918, p.29.
118. *Dumbarton Herald*, 25 Apr 1867.
119. *Galloway Advertiser*, 21/28 May, 11 June, 1863.
120. *Elgin Courant*, 22 Sept 1871.
121. Shanks 1875.
122. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 6 Oct 1866.
123. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 7 Sept 1874.
124. Centenary Committee 1906, pp.53-4.
125. In addition to his periods as organist in congregational and established churches, Peace was also for a short time organist of St. John's Episcopal Church. See *Choir*, 9 May, 1874.
126. W. Harrison of St. James, Leith, a well-known episcopal organist, opened the organ at the Sacred Heart Church, Edinburgh (*Musical Standard*, 28 Dec 1867), and S.C. Hirst of Dundee East Parish Church opened the one at St. John's, Perth. (*Choir*, 21 Sept 1867).
127. Hewlett (then at Newington Parish Church), Haswell of St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, G.C. Martin of Dalkeith Park and St. Peter's, and the builder Frederick Holt of St. John's. (*Edinburgh Evening News*, 3 Apr 1874).
128. At Inverness Cathedral (1869), the organ was first used at the cathedral's consecration. Two episcopal choirs from Edinburgh and one from Perth made the journey to Inverness for the occasion. (*Choir*, 18 Sept 1869).

129. At Holy Trinity, Stirling (1867), Oakeley played for the service and gave a full recital immediately afterwards. (*Choir*, 28 Dec 1867).
130. *Kelso Chronicle*, 13 Sept 1872.
131. Kerr 1909, p.90.
132. The openings of the organs at Sandyford (1866), Broughty Ferry (1875), Kirriemuir (1875) and Fettersesso (1876) went unremarked even by the local press; yet these were not very small instruments, and all were in districts where other organs had earlier been opened amid great publicity and enthusiasm.
133. e.g. Paisley Abbey (*Paisley Herald*, 28 Feb 1874); Brechin Cathedral (*Choir*, 25 May 1878, pp.331-2).
134. *Choir*, 25 May 1878, pp.331-2.
135. *Berwick Journal*, 20 Jan 1881.
136. *Greenock Advertiser*, 29 Oct 1861.
137. *Paisley Herald*, 12 Sept 1874.
138. The best seats, however, were over-subscribed, and people who had bought tickets for them had to sit elsewhere. (*Galloway Gazette*, 27 Apr 1878).
139. By 1894, A.K.H. Boyd had officiated at the openings of 31 organs (Boyd 1894, p.17).
140. *Teviotdale Record*, 17 Apr 1875.
141. *Greenock Advertiser*, 2 Apr 1867.
142. *Daily Review*, 13 Dec 1864.
143. *Fife News*, 1 Jan 1876.
144. e.g. at Eastwood (*Renfrewshire Independent*, 2 Jan 1875).
145. *Fife Herald*, 3 May 1866.
146. Glasgow Bellahouston (1866), Glasgow Kingston (1866), Greenock Wesleyan (1868).
147. The harmonium at Knockando (1872) was opened at a crowded Sunday School soiree in the church, and that at Auchmithie (1870) at a congregational meeting, as was the instrument, described as an "organ", at Linlithgow West U.P. (1876).
148. *Elgin Courant*, 10 Nov 1871.
149. J.G. Boardman of Exeter Hall, London, opened Kilmarnock High (1869); Alcock opened Christ Church Episcopal, Morningside (1878); and the great W.T. Best opened St. Mark's, Dundee (1880). The small organ at Lerwick Parish Church (1871) was played by N.J. Holmes of London on its first Sunday; Bryceson, who built the organ there, also supplied the well-known and very large organ for Holmes's residence at Regent's Park. The Penninghame organ (1878) was built by Harston of Newark, Notts., who brought Samuel Reay, organist of Newark Parish Church, to open it. By the nineties, it was not unusual for a large organ to be opened by an organist from England.
150. Organs in catholic churches were usually (but not always) opened by catholic organists, and J.M. Hutchison of Greenock seems to have opened only Congregational church organs.
151. See 11.7, *infra*.
152. *Dumbarton Herald*, 23 Dec 1875.
153. In at least one case, however, a too reticent accompaniment was disliked (*Ayr Advertiser*, 17 July 1873).
154. Colin Brown. (*Proc & Deb* 1883, App.37, p.25).
155. *English Presbyterian Messenger*, Dec 1855.
156. Cole 1819, p.45. Cole recommended this as a means of

avoiding loud playing!

157. e.g. *Greenock Advertiser*, 8 Oct 1874.
158. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 14 Mar 1871.
159. Burder 1860, p.87.
160. Boyd 1865, p.521.
161. Scroggie 1873, p.52.
162. *Crieff Journal*, 23 Feb 1867.
163. *Nugae Organicae* 1829, p.3.
164. In the seventies, the organist of at least one Dundee U.P. church was allowed to play only the initial chord, and another U.P. organist there was told to play only the first line of the tune (Jamieson 1932, p.124). In 1882, the organist of Clark Memorial U.P., Largs, was restricted to playing only the key chord (McIntyre 1942, p.22). The session of Argyle Place, Edinburgh, ordered discontinuation of "the playing of the tune before the service of praise" (Gibson 1927, p.14). In 1872, after the first Minnigaff organ had been in use for some weeks, it was suggested that the congregation would be helped if part of the tune were played over (*Galloway Gazette*, 2 Nov 1872).
165. No mention has been found in nineteenth-century Scottish sources of the use of voluntaries during the course of the service.
166. See, e.g., Temperley 1979a, pp.137-8.
167. e.g. Burder 1860, p.87; Proudman 1873, p.17; Glasgow 1873, p.204; Balfour 1884, p.16.
168. e.g. Boyd 1865, p.524; Pearsall 1869, p.120. But then those who liked listening to voluntaries were annoyed by these other sounds. An Edinburgh visitor to Perth Cathedral found the closing voluntary ruined by the noise of the vergers removing and stacking away seats. (*Perthshire Constitutional*, 19 Feb 1873).
169. *Greenock Advertiser*, 9 Dec 1865.
170. c.f. Boyd 1865, p.524 and Boyd 1892, i, p.245.
171. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 24 Jan 1871.
172. Clark 1904, p.112.
173. At Glasgow and Elgin (Proc & Deb 1885, pp.179-81).
174. Maxwell 1966, p.47. At a Free church in Hamilton, after six years of voluntaries being forbidden by the session, a deputy organist ignorant of the ban played them one Sunday. Nobody objected, and the regular organist then continued the practice (Centenary Book 1934, pp.42-3).
175. *Dundee Advertiser*, 7 Nov 1876.
176. St. Andrew's U.P., Crieff, got a harmonium in 1885 but voluntaries were not introduced till 1904 (Williamson 1982, p.7). At Lothian Road U.P., Edinburgh, the dates were 1894 and 1898 (Lothian Road 1911, pp.142-4).
177. Forrest 1898, pp.43-4, 68.
178. Bearsden 1974, p.18.
179. Boyd 1865, p.521.
180. *Aberdeen Daily Free Press*, 22 Nov 1875.
181. *Psalmist*, 15 Sept 1872, p.191.
182. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 16 Dec 1876.
183. Curwen 1880, p.88.
184. McEwan 1883, p.32.
185. Stewart 1914.
186. Duncan 1857, pp.24-5.

187. *Ayr Observer*, 8 May 1866.
188. *Berwick Advertiser*, 15 Apr 1870; *Berwickshire News*, 19/26 Apr, 10 May, 21/28 June 1870.
189. *Arbroath Guide*, 31 Oct, 7 Nov 1874.
190. *Galloway Gazette*, 27 Apr 1878.
191. *Galloway Gazette*, 27 Apr, 26 Oct, 1878.
192. e.g. Pearsall 1869, p.120.
193. *Tonic Solfa Reporter*, 1 Jun 1873, pp.163-7. Before he lost credibility in the Tilton scandal, Beecher's writings were popular in the U.S. and Britain. This lecture, "Music in Churches", contains among its gems for connoisseurs of the ludicrous the statement that "the finest orchestra that ever stood on earth, compared, on the whole, with the organ, is inferior".
194. e.g. *Choir*, 9 Jan 1869, p.202.
195. e.g. Engel 1856, pp.68-9, 110.
196. e.g. *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 7 Nov 1877.
197. *Choir*, 9 May 1872.
198. The British Library music catalogue lists fifty editions of this work, in many different arrangements.
199. St. Andrew's 1970, p.2.
200. Logie 1904, p.68.
201. Davidson nd., p.77.
202. Johnson 1983, p.166.
203. *ibid.*
204. *Choir*, 9 Mar 1878, p.150.
205. Quoted in *Musical Standard*, 6 May 1876, p.292. Perhaps the key word here is "competent", for ordinary city and town churches by this time usually had several applicants for organists' posts.
206. *Choir*, 28 Aug 1875.
207. Baptie 1894, "Bates" entry.
208. Curwen 1880, p.88.
209. Troqueer (1890). (Mangles 1971, p.62).
210. Information about ages comes from biographical notes in sources like Baptie, Marr, Love and Thornsby. The ages are rarely mentioned in contemporary reports and do not seem to have been regarded as noteworthy.
211. Mair 1940, p.29.
212. Baptie 1894, "Hartley" entries.
213. *ibid.*, "Collinson".
214. Marr 1889, pp.49-50.
215. *Edinburgh Evening News*, 19 June 1874, and Baptie 1894, "Martin".
216. Baptie 1894, "Bates".
217. *Choir*, 9 May 1874.
218. Baptie 1894, "Robertson".
219. Marr 1889, pp.44-5.
220. Glasgow Cathedral, Paisley Abbey, Edinburgh St. Giles. Peace himself was at Glasgow, and the appointment of the boy John Hartley to St. Giles was made at the time of the installation of the new organ, for which Peace was consultant. Peace was succeeded at Trinity, Glasgow, by a former pupil from his Huddersfield days.
221. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 13 Feb 1871; Baptie 1894, p.42.
222. See Farmer 1947, p.383.
223. Baptie 1894, p.82.
224. Oakeley 1904.
225. For a selection of musical journal comments on the appointment, see *Choir*, Dec 1865, p.65.

226. *Choir*, 4 Apr 1868.
227. Oakeley managed his publicity well, and musical journals regularly carried detailed reports of his Edinburgh recitals. See particularly *Choir and Musical Standard*.
228. *Dundee Advertiser*, 9 Apr 1878; *Choir* 13 Apr 1878, p.231.
229. Curwen 1877, pp.32-3.
230. *Huntly Express*, 23 Dec 1876.
231. *Morayshire Advertiser*, 8 Sept 1875.
232. *Edinburgh Evening News*, 5 Nov 1874.
233. Mackie 1958, p.196.
234. Precentors of at least two organless churches were presented with harmoniums as retirement gifts. (Whithorn U.P. - *Galloway Gazette* 9 Nov 1872; Fochabers Free Church - *Elgin Courant*, 23 Apr 1875).
235. A harmonium was acquired for Falkirk Parish Church on the session's express condition that the precentor would play it without receiving any additional salary. One James Inglis, the precentor at Bowden, resigned when the session refused him a salary increase for the "extra work" involved in playing the harmonium.
236. Louis Hoeck and his daughter at St. George's, Paisley (1874); and, as a temporary arrangement, Mr. and Miss Heggie at Bethelfield U.P., Kirkcaldy (1882). At St. James's, Forfar, (1891) the precentor was responsible for the organist's salary; the organist resigned because "the precentor was desirous that one of his daughters should become Organist"(Kirk 1965, p.57).
237. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 22 Nov to 3 Dec 1869.
238. *Lothian Road* 1911, pp.142-5.
239. *Church of Scotland* 1906, p.10.
240. Lee 1864, p.134.
241. e.g. Rimbault 1857, p.14; Shuttleworth 1892, p.58.
242. These conclusions are based on the names of 127 amateur and semi-professional church organists in the period 1860 to 1890. 59 per cent of pipe organists were men, and 63 per cent of reed organists were women.
243. Emily Stenbridge Ray, at Anderston, 1865.
244. Mrs. Catherine Fraser, at St. Peter's, Aberdeen, 1815.
245. John Macdonald at Dallas (1871).
246. e.g. Carnbee (from 1873), Arbirlot (from 1874), and Millseat Congregational (dates unknown) - all, incidentally, churches with pipe organs. "A relay of young ladies" served Paterson Church, Kirkwall, from 1880, and "ladies of the congregation" played at Lenzie Union (1875-1887).
247. Biggar (from 1889) - also a pipe organ.
248. *Brighton Street* 1894, p.36.
249. *Perthshire Advertiser*, 18 Jan 1866.
250. *Berwick Advertiser*, 29 Apr 1870.
251. Falconer 1934, p.55.
252. e.g. at Dun (1868), Lhanbryd (1871), Alloway (1873).
253. e.g. at Eyemouth (1870), Dallas (1871), Knockando (1872).
254. *Elgin Courant*, 5 Dec 1876.
255. Mangles 1971, p.62.



256. Wright n.d., p.8.
257. Milngavie Parish Church, in 1879. (Peat 1966, p.14).
258. Mackie 1958, p.196.
259. e.g. Queens Park Church, Glasgow. (Choir, 1 May 1869).
260. Loffler at St. Andrew's Episcopal, Banff (Choir, 15 July 1871).
261. Farmer 1947, pp.451,459. The "Mr Hamilton" who played the opening recital on the firm's organ at Old Greyfriars (Scotsman, 24 Apr 1865) was probably his brother Adam (Farmer, p.401), for David had died in 1863.
262. e.g. Cupar (1866), All Saints' Episcopal, Edinburgh (1867).
263. e.g. Ward Chapel, Dundee (1865), Abbotshall (1872). He also shared a recital with three other organists on his then new organ at College U.P., Edinburgh (1874).
264. Coats Parish Church, Coatbridge (1875).
265. or Walsall? (N.B. Daily Mail, 6 Mar 1871). St. Thomas Wesleyan, Glasgow (1871).
266. Baptie 1894 - "Davidson".
267. e.g. Dundonald (1865), Stonehaven (1866). He was also one of the recitalists to play on his firm's new organ at Old Greyfriars on the opening day of the General Assembly. (Scotsman, 19 May 1865).
268. e.g. Cupar Episcopal (1875), School Wynd U.P., Dundee (1876).
269. e.g. Crieff (1867), Inverbrothock (1868).
270. e.g. Crieff Congregational (1900).
271. Miller 1849, p.10.
272. *Musical World* 1844, p.396.
273. Bannatyne 1857, p.72.
274. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1856, p.280.
275. e.g. *Witness*, 3 May 1856.
276. e.g. *Orchestra*, 11 Feb 1865, p.313.
277. *U.P. Magazine*, June 1858, p.273.
278. *Dundee Courier*, 7 Sept 1865.
279. Robertson 1867, p.202.
280. Lee 1864, p.109.
281. Cumming 1840, p.xviii.
282. Cumming 1850, p.22.
283. Cumming 1859, p.439.
284. *Congregationalist*, Apr 1872, pp.234-5.
285. e.g. Vickery 1873, p.3; Scroggie 1873, p.41.
286. *Proc & Deb* 1883, App. 37, p.24.
287. *Witness*, 15 Mar 1856.
288. *Musical Standard*, 12 Feb 1876, pp.101-2.
289. Shuttleworth 1892, p.57.
290. e.g. Latrobe 1831, pp.235-9; *Musical Standard*, *ut supra*.
291. e.g. Engel 1856, p.40.
292. Johnson 1983, p.166.
293. Farmer 1947, p.351.
294. *Perthshire Advertiser*, 28 May 1868.
295. *Stirling Journal*, 14 Aug 1868.
296. *Stirling Journal*, 9 Oct 1868.
297. Rimbault 1857, p.26.
298. *Orchestra*, 8 Oct 1864.
299. Rimbault 1857, pp.12-14.
300. *Greenock Advertiser*, 10 Sept 1867, quoting *Daily*

*Telegraph.*

301. *Greenock Advertiser*, 7/10/24 Sept 1867.
302. e.g. *Arbroath Guide*, 21 Mar 1874.
303. e.g. in Kingston Church, Glasgow. (*Glasgow Herald*, 25 Dec 1865).
304. Rimbault 1857, p.14.
305. Curwen 1880. p.109.
306. Church of Scotland 1906, p.10.
307. The proportion in the other denominations does not at first sight appear to be very different, but we are more likely to know about pipe organs because of the greater publicity given to them.
308. Baron 1862.
309. An excellent survey of these instruments can be found in chapter 3 of Elvin 1976.
310. e.g. at Stirling North, 1882.
311. e.g. Rimbault 1857, preface.
312. Lee 1864, p.134.
313. *Congregationalist*, Apr 1872, p.234.
314. Shuttleworth 1892, p.58.
315. *Fife Herald*, 13 Feb 1873.
316. *Fife Free Press*, 14 Oct 1871.
317. Elvin 1968, p.14.
318. *Huddersfield Weekly News*, 1 Aug 1874.
319. Elvin 1973, p.63.
320. *Berwick Journal*, 20 Jan 1881.
321. *Musical Standard*, 23 June 1877, pp.388-390.
322. e.g. six of twelve stops at Cupar (1866) and five of eleven at Abbotshall (1872).
323. At Duddingston.
324. *Psalmist*, 15 Sept 1872, p.191.
325. It is only fair to add that the later rebuild may have been necessary only for resiting.
326. Proc & Deb 1900, App.23, p.3. In this context, the term "organs" probably means American organs.
327. Rutherford 1946, p.84.
328. Lewis appears to have had a western bias, and Wadsworth of Manchester concentrated on the north-east.
329. Of thirteen pipe organs built in Congregational and E.U. churches between 1861 and 1867 whose builders are known, ten were by Conacher.
330. Kinnaird Hall, Dundee East, St. Andrew's R.C. Cathedral, and Lochee R.C. Church.
331. Johnson 1983, p.166.
332. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 9 Apr 1872.
333. Morrice nd., p.19.
334. Park Church, Glasgow (1866) was one of the few exceptions.
335. e.g. Hamilton's organs at Dundonald (1865), at Stonehaven (1866 - a pedal bourdon was added later) and his organ "for a gentleman" (1867).
336. Oakeley, as consultant, failed to turn up as arranged to open the small Hamilton organ at Cupar Episcopal Church in 1875, and Charles Hamilton played instead. It may have been this circumstance which led Hamilton to reveal to the local press that his firm would be handing over £25 of the price to Oakeley. (*St. Andrews Gazette*, 25 Dec 1875).
337. Forster and Andrews, Newport Independent Chapel, Fife.
338. John Renton, Duddingston.

339. *N.B. Daily Mail*, 9 Jan 1871.
340. e.g. Bryceson's organ at Minnigaff (1873).
341. *Spark* 1852, p.22.
342. *Elvin* 1973, p.75.
343. *Paisley Herald*, 28 Feb 1874.
344. At Port Glasgow. (*Greenock Telegraph*, 19 Dec 1873).
345. *Stonehaven Journal*, 20/27 Dec 1866.
346. *Galloway Gazette*, 26 Apr 1873, 10 May 1873.
347. *Rainbow* 1970, pp.319-320; *Temperley* 1979a, p.253.
348. *Spark* 1852, p.24.
349. e.g. *Kent* 1984, pp.40-1.
350. *Spark* 1852.
351. *Musical Standard*, 15 Nov 1873.
352. *Musical Standard*, 7 July 1877.
353. For a period following 1813, the organ of St. Andrew's, Glasgow, was unusual in being placed on a gallery above the altar. (Wade 1822, p.261).
354. *Perthshire Constitutional*, 30 Apr/5 May, 1873.
355. e.g. Coatbridge (1871), Kilmarnock (1875), St. Andrew, Aberdeen (1880), Stonehaven (1885).
356. e.g. Alloa (1869), Kelso (1869), Culross (1874), Aberlour (1877), Fort William (1880).
357. From 1869 the catholic church at Dalkeith had the luxury of two organs, one at each end of the building. (*Dalkeith Advertiser*, 25 Aug 1869).
358. *Macleod* 1895, p.222.
359. e.g. *Burder* 1860, pp.85-7; *Congregational Advance*, 1 Aug 1873, p.97.
360. e.g. *Wotherspoon* 1891, p.38; *Thompson* 1895, p.241.
361. e.g. at Duns in 1881, the organ was said to be "seen to advantage from all parts of the building". (*Berwick Journal*, 20 Jan 1881).
362. e.g. Bargeddie (1876), Bellshill (1878), Coats (1875), Dalziel (1874), Helensburgh West (1878), Hurlford (1875), Jedburgh (1875)
363. *Dumfries & Galloway Herald*, 7 Aug 1875.
364. See, e.g., *Clark* 1904, p.222.
365. e.g. *Inverbrothock* (1868/1873), *Morningside* (1875/1887), *Greenock Congregational* (1861/1880).
366. e.g. *Maxwell Church*, Glasgow (1865/1875), *St. Stephen*, Broughty Ferry (1871/1880).
367. e.g. *St. Marnock*, Kilmarnock (1872).
368. e.g. *Belmont Congregational*, Aberdeen (1876).
369. The organ in the back gallery at Ward Chapel, Dundee (1865), was claimed as Scotland's first divided organ (*Musical Standard*, 30 May 1868). Later examples of divided organs, or organs with low central sections, include *Auchingramont* (1866), *Eastwood* (1874), *Shamrock Street U.P.*, Glasgow (1874), and *Maxwell Church*, Glasgow (1875).
370. e.g. *St. Giles*, Edinburgh (1878), *Biggar* (1889).
371. (for Scotland) - e.g. *St. Giles*, Edinburgh (1878), *Glasgow Cathedral* (1879), *Dunfermline Abbey* (1882).
372. e.g. in a specially-built gallery in the north transept (*Biggar* (1889)); under a gallery (*Carnbee* (1873), *Arbirlot* (1874)) or in a new aisle (*Rosneath* (1873)). Some earlier organs were placed at the pulpit end of a side gallery (e.g. *Milton*, Glasgow (c.1869), *Townhead*, Glasgow (1866)).
373. *Galloway Gazette*, 8 June 1878.
374. e.g. *St. Andrew's*, Glasgow (1866), *Penpont* (1875).

From the seventies, such a space was a feature of many new churches.

375. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 15/22 Sept 1877.
376. Whyte 1984, p.148.
377. e.g. Wotherspoon 1891, p.38; Macleod 1895, p.222; Thompson 1895, p.241.
378. Thomson 1905, p.17.
379. e.g. Morningside, Edinburgh (1887).
380. These diagrams are based on a very detailed study. They do not include some E.U. and other independent churches which were almost certainly using instruments, and a few more independents may have escaped attention. But it can be confidently asserted that the diagrams for 1867 and 1871 are complete as regards presbyterian churches. Some presbyterian instruments have probably been missed in the 1872-5 period, particularly in and around Glasgow and in other conurbations. The total for the area of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, however, agrees well with Boyd's estimate of 1876.
381. The St. Clement's organ (1875) was preceded by a harmonium which may have been taken into use towards the end of 1874.
382. Hutchings 1967, p.133.
383. Stewart 1975, p.24.
384. Smith 1863, p.12.
385. e.g. *Choir*, 29 July 1876, pp.480-1.
386. *Scotsman*, 30 May 1902.
387. *Choir*, 29 July 1876, p.480.
388. Farmer 1947, p.369.
389. *Scotsman*, 25 May 1865.
390. *Scot. Cong. Mag.*, April 1865, p.122.

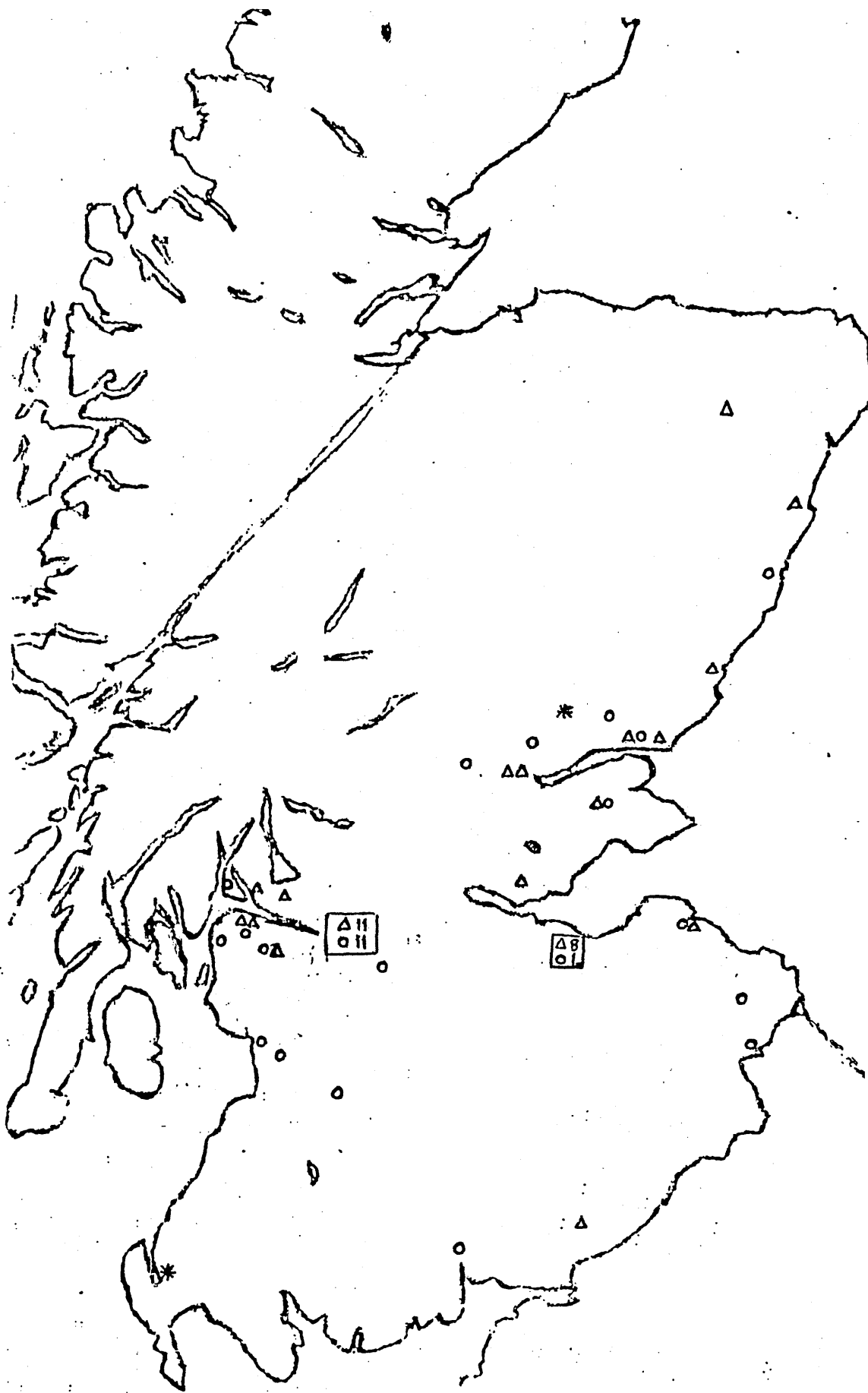


Figure 11.1. Geographical distribution of instruments: churches (other than episcopalian and R.C.) known to be using instrumental music by the end of 1867.

○ Presbyterian      △ Other denominations  
 \* Presbyterian - instrument removed following protests

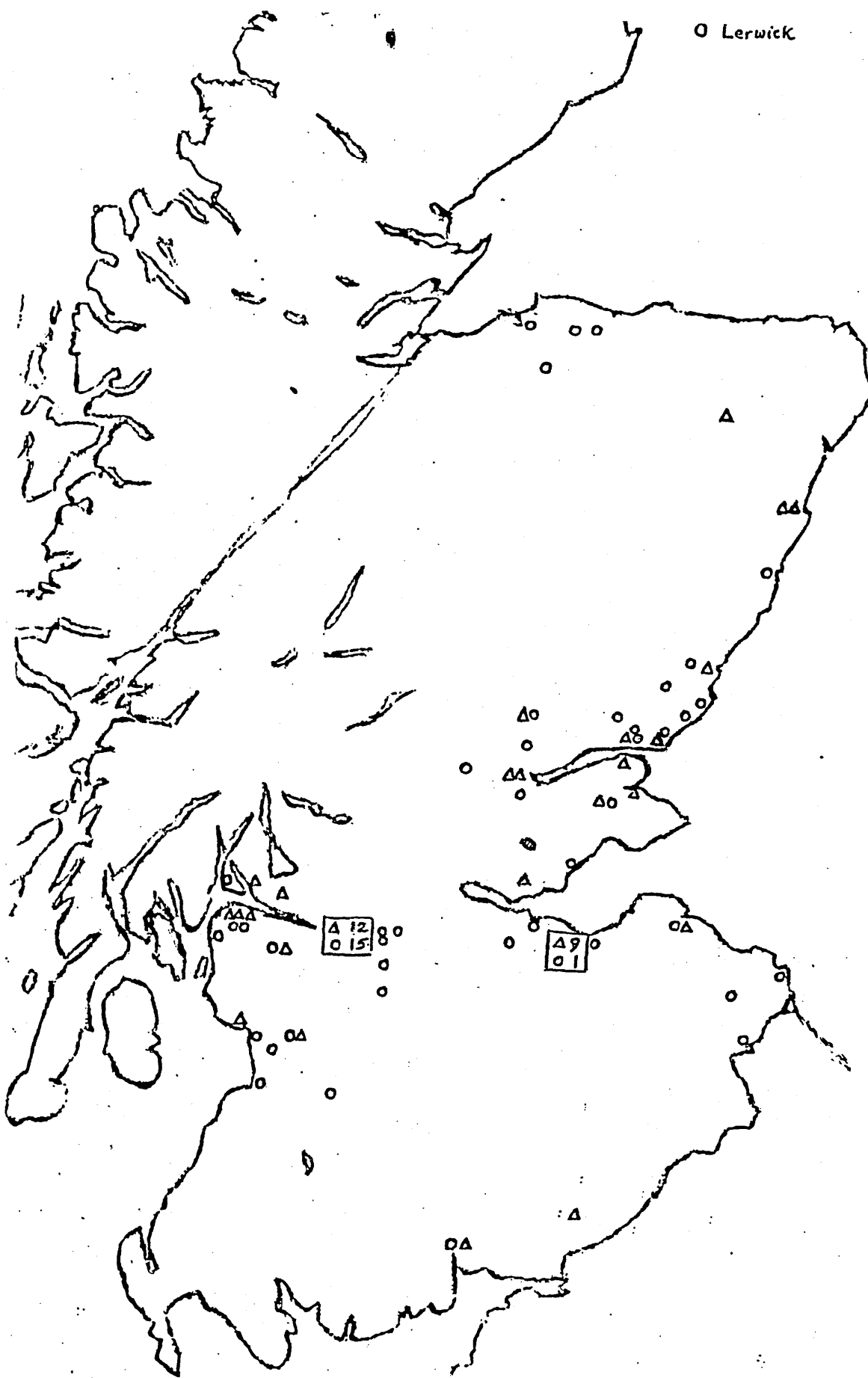


Figure 11.2: Geographical distribution of instruments: churches (other than episcopalian and R.c.) known to be using instrumental music by the end of 1871.      O Presbyterian      Δ Other denominations  
 (At least two other churches probably had instruments by this date)

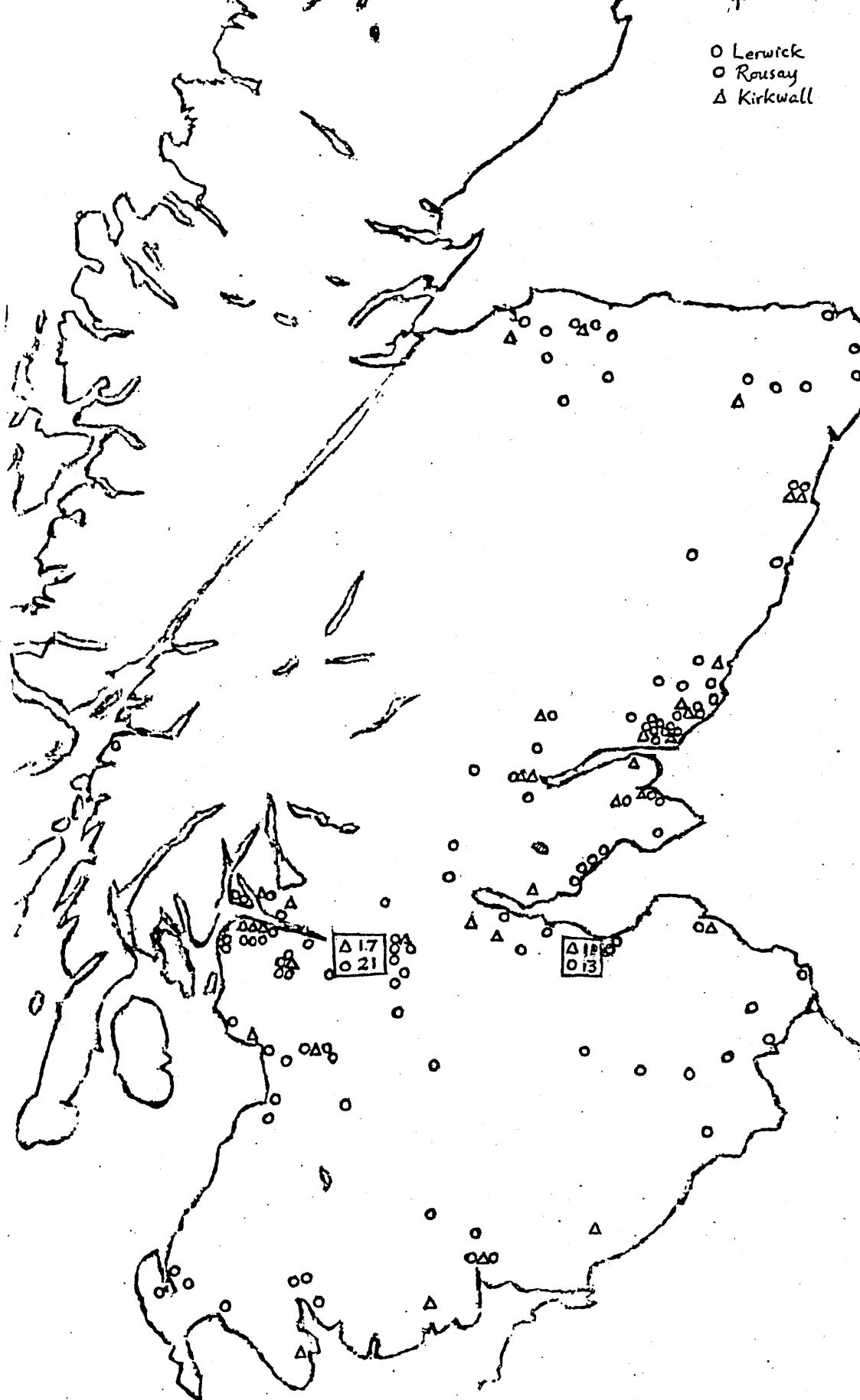


Figure 11.3: Geographical distribution of instruments: churches (other than episcopalian and R.C.) known to be using instrumental music by the end of 1875.

○ Presbyterian      △ Other denominations

## 12. INFLUENCES

The main contribution of this thesis is a factual one. But it is to be hoped that, despite the narrative and descriptive nature of the preceding chapters, some picture has emerged of the social and economic factors involved. This chapter briefly draws the threads together to indicate the influence of some of these factors.

### 12.1 Travel and breadth of outlook.

William Ritchie<sup>1</sup> was not ordained as a minister until he was forty-six, having worked until that time as a tutor to "families of quality". In this capacity he had spent eight years on the continent, a fact not unconnected with his being in 1807 the first presbyterian minister in Scotland to attempt to use an organ in worship.<sup>2</sup> Families like those which employed Ritchie as a tutor frequently travelled abroad; their sons sometimes went to school in England and might receive university education at Oxford or Cambridge or on the continent. They thus became familiar with forms of worship with which presbyterian services compared, in their eyes, unfavourably. A consequence was the defection of many of them to the episcopal church, a defection which, as we have seen, acted as part of the motivation of presbyterians in reforming their worship. After the Napoleonic wars, continental travel was no longer the prerogative of the landed and moneyed classes alone; many divinity students were able to spend long spells in Germany.<sup>3</sup> Scots who served in the British armed forces came into contact with other forms of worship.

An age of railways and population migration led to a general broadening of outlook. There are many references to travellers returning from England, Europe and America with a desire for organs in worship. It was dishonest to claim that European travellers had acquired their taste in Roman churches<sup>4</sup>; the fact is that these travellers heard organs in churches which were every bit as true to reformation principles as their own churches in Scot-



land.<sup>5</sup> It was only necessary to make a railway journey of a few hours into England, perhaps to visit a relative who had settled there, to hear organs being used in nonconformist churches whose anti-papal and anti-episcopal soundness was beyond question. In the face of such evidence, stigmatisation of organs as leading to Rome could not be maintained. A member of Lindsay Alexander's Edinburgh congregation had threatened that, if an organ were installed in the church, he would "tak' a stick and brak' her".<sup>6</sup> His attitude to organs changed to one almost of enthusiasm as a result of a visit a year later to his son in Birmingham, where he was impressed by the contribution of an organ to a service he attended.<sup>7</sup> It was no answer to say that such people had been contaminated by the Romish tendencies of other churches.<sup>8</sup>

In 1870, members of the Presbytery of Arbroath told a local farmer that he was mistaken in regarding the harmonium in Guthrie church as an "idol". A shrewd editorial in the local newspaper pointed out that the farmer was saying no more than the churches had said for years and no more than some doctors of divinity in the Free Church were still saying.<sup>9</sup> "Purity of worship" - unadorned worship in unadorned churches - had long been seen as a major bastion against popery. Scottish divinity students had been discouraged from studying theological works which might undermine their orthodoxy.<sup>10</sup> But as ministers' education broadened,<sup>11</sup> and as their less lowly parishioners came increasingly into contact with people of other denominations and other lands, it became the practice to speak of the "vulgar prejudice" of ordinary people who rarely strayed far beyond their parishes and who held fast to what they had been taught. A.K.H. Boyd had an exceptionally broad background by the standards of the Scottish clergy of his time; he beguiled his *Fraser's Magazine* readers with tales of the "prejudice" and the "horror of Prelacy and all its belongings which exists among the humbler classes, at least in country places" in Scotland, and of the objections of these people to stained glass, choirs, and even pulpit gowns.<sup>12</sup> However true Boyd's picture may have been in 1856, stained glass

and choirs were widely accepted by 1870, and only two other people in the country parish of Guthrie joined the farmer in his opposition to the harmonium.

## 12.2. Increasing musical activity.

Some account has been given of the psalmody improvement movement and its popularity and effectiveness. People who participated enthusiastically in this movement soon went beyond singing psalm-tunes in four parts. Choral societies, vocal music classes, and soloists alike needed instrumental accompaniment for the largely oratorio-based repertoire which they adopted. Outside Sunday church services it was normal to accompany voices by a keyboard instrument.

Scotland shared in the general adoption of pianos and harmoniums in the home:

"Formerly the only musical instrument in the parish, perhaps, was a ricketty spinet in the manse, but now the piano is in nearly every farmer's house, and his daughters are taught by an accomplished governess. And not only is a certain gentility attached to musical ability, but something like vulgarity is attached to the meagre attainments of former days - and perhaps not altogether excluded from the old-fashioned psalmody of the house of God".<sup>13</sup>

"There are few families of anything like position in society, but have a few of their number who can sing and play upon an instrument pieces of the first-class music of the day. In every home where pieces from Mendelssohn or Beethoven are being played, a regular system of musical education is rapidly going on".<sup>14</sup>

Both of these quotations come from Scotland in the sixties. A Scots clergyman in England observed in 1874:

"For every house that forty years ago contained a good pianoforte .... there are now a dozen or more".<sup>15</sup>

All three writers went on to observe, as did many others, that these new musical enthusiasts demanded better music in their churches. Keyboard accompaniment of singing was the norm outside church services and there was a growing supply of young amateur players whose musical literacy far exceeded that of the precentors in most churches.

Where players were available, harmoniums found their way into all kinds of church events before they came into

the Sunday services. In the sixties and seventies they accompanied psalms and hymns at prayer meetings, soirees, mission services, revival meetings, lectures and choir practices. The Moody and Sankey campaign of 1874 has been singled out as "probably the strongest factor in reconciling many Scottish presbyterians to the organ".<sup>16</sup> No doubt it had some effect. But contemporary reports of the campaign seldom mention the evangelists' harmonium as being anything unusual, and it was very rarely adduced in the debates of the period to support the use of instruments in Sunday worship. At the time of the campaign only about one hundred presbyterian congregations were using instruments in Sunday morning services, but committed members of many others were thoroughly familiar with instrumental accompaniment of praise on other occasions.

But the motivation of members in introducing instruments into their churches was probably not entirely musical. Ehrlich<sup>17</sup> has characterised the domestic keyboard instrument as a symbol of family prosperity and respectability. There is evidence from city and country alike that church organs represented similar aspirations on the part of some congregations. This was no more the case in relation to organs than to church buildings and their other furnishings. Putting it rather differently, contemporaries said that a growing class of prosperous churchgoers were ashamed to live in beautiful houses while the house of God remained bare and cold.

### 12.3. Cost.

The prosperity and musical awareness which brought keyboard instruments into the homes of these members also brought them into their churches. Probably about a third of the instruments installed in churches were gifts, and in a number of other cases quite large subscriptions came from individual members. This situation, as well as the impact of harmoniums, had not been foreseen - before the sixties, it had long been said that permission for organs in the Church of Scotland would make little practical difference, for few churches could afford to pay for an organ and the services of a competent organist.

The general musical activity of the period was not only one of the reasons for the strength of the organ movement; it also provided a supply of amateur players to serve the many churches which could not afford to employ professional musicians. These players either gave their services free or accepted salaries which were no more than had been paid to precentors.

The advent of harmoniums brought instrumental music within the reach of many churches which could earlier never have contemplated paying for an organ. But the harmonium's advantage was not confined to its low purchase price - it cost less to maintain, and it eased the problem of finding a player. Considerable training was required to convert a pianist into an organist; but a pianist could easily learn to produce acceptable sounds on a harmonium, though possibly not as easily as Rimbault claimed:<sup>18</sup>

"As regards the player there is no difficulty; the vicar's lady, or the family governess, by the aid of a small guide book, and a few days' practice, will become perfectly competent to accompany the psalms and chants".

It must be remembered too that by the seventies domestic harmoniums were not uncommon and a church might easily find someone who was already able to play. And many a church had no difficulty at all, for there was already at least one person who played the harmonium regularly at other church meetings before it was adopted in Sunday worship. It is likely that these factors account in part for the relative failure of very small cheap pipe organs to compete with harmoniums.

#### 12.4. Social class.

It is not easy to assess what the general attitude to organs was before the sixties. In 1822 Wade feared that the circumstances attending the Glasgow case of 1807 could have "had the effect of lessening the probability, that might otherwise have existed, of a speedy introduction of organs into the worship of the established church".<sup>19</sup> Anderson, however, believed in 1829 that the "majority of serious people" were "decidedly hostile to

it, among all the Presbyterian denominations of Scotland, and also, I believe, among the churches of Independency"; the majority was "not so large as some suppose" - "the opposition is rapidly subsiding, but still it is high".<sup>20</sup> But within a year Marshall wrote:<sup>21</sup>

"From opinions of other parts of the country ... I am led to believe that the people who worship in Roxburgh Place chapel have not gone far in advance of public opinion"

and the Scotsman's Falkirk correspondent said:<sup>22</sup>

"The liberal and enlightened conduct of the Reverend Mr. Johnston's congregation has spread, and what might at one period be viewed as an awful innovation is now warmly seconded by unprejudiced good sense".

According to Dalyell in 1849,<sup>23</sup>

"It becomes more and more questionable whether the organ will ever form an auxiliary in the service of our National Establishment"

but ten years later an Independent minister from Dundee said that<sup>24</sup>

"those who were really opposed to the introduction of the organ were not so numerous as might be supposed".

On one point most writers were in agreement: what was preventing the acceptance of organs was the attitude of the uneducated and poorer classes. In 1811, according to Thom,<sup>25</sup> "the more rational part of the presbyterians" had no objection, but "the ignorant, who are numerous and bigotted" saw the introduction of organs as "an approach to Popery". In 1829 Anderson saw the opposition as consisting of two groups<sup>26</sup> - "the uneducated" and those clergymen who were selfishly interested in maintaining the *status quo*. In 1849, "the wise and temperate", said Dalyell, had no objection to organs, but it was "prudent to concede many points, even to popular prejudice, though somewhat absurd".<sup>27</sup> In 1856, according to Boyd,<sup>28</sup> "in every circle of polished society, the wish may be heard for its introduction"; the "educated classes" were no longer afraid of episcopacy, but "the humbler classes - at least in country places" would take a century to overcome their "horror of Prelacy". John Smith in 1857 saw a similar dichotomy:<sup>29</sup>

"We should like to see the Church more free, generous and expansive, with services for the intellectual and polished as well as for the poorest of the poor".

In 1863, George Smith said that organs and liturgies were being sought by the upper classes and by the members of a new "middling" class which had sprung up in the preceding half-century;<sup>30</sup> but the "peasantry, mechanics and artisans", he said, would rise against these innovations as their "anti-prelatic and covenanting spirit" was aroused.<sup>31</sup> William Spark of Kirkwall favoured the use of organs but, he told the 1865 Assembly,<sup>32</sup>

"he knew well the great dislike which many devout God-fearing country people had to the use of the organ, and it would not do to permit a few influential and wealthy people in the parish to override the sympathies of the common people and to introduce an organ against their will".

A class division on the organ question was thus averred alike by friends and foes of the instrument, the former fearing that its introduction would be opposed by the mass of the people. Robert Lee had no such fear. "My experience of the Scotch people," he wrote in 1864,<sup>33</sup> "has taught me to conceive a very different idea of their intelligence and good sense from that which dictates such apprehensions." Lee proved to be right. One can attribute the opposite view to the circumstances of particular writers - to Anderson's zeal for popular education, to the upper-class environment in which Dalyell lived, to Boyd's notorious snobbery, to the wishful thinking of the aged George Smith - but there must at some period have been truth in a belief so widely held. The presbyterian congregations which had attempted to use organs in 1807, 1829 and 1856, as well as Lee's own congregation at Old Greyfriars, had all been unanimously in favour, but they had all been prosperous city congregations. Many of the congregations which followed the Greyfriars example in the sixties, however, could not be so described. By 1866 it had been shown beyond doubt that popular opposition was illusory. Lee claimed that "working men" from outside his parish had sent him unsolicited donations to the Old Greyfriars organ fund.<sup>34</sup> Congregations of all kinds were voting unanimously or heavily in favour of introducing instruments. Hardly anybody other than Lee had expected this, but only a man as devoted to lost causes as James Begg could ignore the evidence around him and say in 1875

that "the great mass of the Scotch people are uncontaminated".<sup>35</sup> The conservatives, who had made much of the will of the people being on their side, were soon arguing that the will of the people must be resisted.<sup>36</sup>

In presbyterian churches which adopted instruments, the small minority opposition sometimes claimed that a few wealthy or educated members were imposing their tastes on the ordinary people. It would certainly have been difficult for members of a voluntary church to oppose the wishes of those whose money kept the church going; this may in part account for the virtual absence of evidence of active opposition to organs in U.P. and Free congregations which adopted them. The allegation, when made, came in endowed churches of the establishment. The response was always that a large majority favoured the instrument and, where it was not a gift, that the members generally had subscribed to its cost. It is unlikely that paternalism or economic power could account for favourable majorities of the size usually found, particularly where nearly all members of the congregation, or nearly every household in the parish, had subscribed to the organ fund. Allegations of class influence at Blairgowrie were answered summarily by the observations that four-fifths of the congregation were from "the industrial classes", and that the petition in favour of instrumental music, which had come from almost the entire congregation, had been completely unopposed at a congregational meeting.<sup>37</sup>

Certainly in a great many churches, prominent local land-owners, industrialists and businessmen took the lead in initiating organ movements, as they did in other activities. But, as we have seen, the other church members gave their support to these movements. The cases in which the occupations of people involved in the introduction of organs are recorded strongly suggest that, in any given class, those who favoured the use of organs significantly outnumbered those who opposed it.<sup>38</sup> Whatever may have been the case earlier, it appears that a person's view on the organ question from the eighteen-sixties on had little to do with his occupation, wealth or social

standing.

## 12.5. The popularity of organs.

Few of the romantic composers wrote major works for the organ. The organ is not an instrument ideally suited to romantic music, and the nineteenth century was the age of romanticism. Yet there was something about organs that appealed to the Victorians. The great instruments at Birmingham Town Hall and York Minster attracted much attention. People liked the imposing appearance of a large organ, and they admired the engineering skills and mechanical ingenuity which went into its construction. They obtained organs as substitutes for orchestras, which, outside the cities, they heard but rarely.

In Scotland, musical education had developed through vocal training, and instrumentalists were in short supply. The organ acted as a one-man orchestra. Listeners marvelled at its range of power and they exaggerated its ability to reproduce the sounds of other instruments. Correspondents raved about the "thunder stop" at Paisley Abbey. Town hall organs were used for recitals and for providing music while audiences for other events assembled and dismissed. They were also, most importantly, used in the absence of orchestras to accompany the frequent oratorio performances given by choral societies; with this purpose in view, the newly-formed Arbroath Choral Union joined with the Public Hall Company in raising money for the organ. By 1880 there were organs in public halls in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Greenock, Dundee, Johnstone, Hamilton, Kilmarnock, Partick, Arbroath, Grangemouth, Dunfermline and Ayr.

It appears that, after the first few recitals, audiences did not attend in great numbers for solo performances on these instruments. Great enthusiasm marked the opening in 1865 of the large organ at Kinnaird Hall, Dundee, with three grand concerts by well-known vocal performers and a choral society, with Lemmens playing the organ. Special trains and ticket concessions were available on the Arbroath and Perth lines and a special ferry



service was provided for those coming from Fife.<sup>39</sup> Yet within a few weeks newspaper correspondents were bemoaning the small attendances at recitals in the hall and contrasting them with the large crowds which attended prize-fights there.<sup>40</sup> The familiar remedies were proposed - more stop-changing, vocal interludes, and interludes on other instruments.<sup>41</sup> E.T. Chipp was appointed organist but did not stay long. In 1868, when Oakeley came to accompany the Choral Union and play solos, the organ was in poor condition.<sup>42</sup> By 1875 an orchestra had been assembled and had supplanted the organ in accompanying choral concerts and the organ was rarely heard except incidentally at social meetings and benefit concerts.<sup>43</sup> A similar waning of enthusiasm was evident in other places.<sup>44</sup> When Drummond and Bulloch remark that the effect of the large organ at Glasgow Cathedral in drawing people to worship was only transitory,<sup>45</sup> they are simply giving an instance of what happened in most places. But their statement that "it is easy to understand the fascination of such a great instrument in a country as starved of music as Scotland then was" needs to be qualified by reminders that an even larger organ had been opened by W.T. Best in the Glasgow Public Halls less than eighteen months before, that regular recitals were given there by the Cathedral organist, and that organ recitals in Glasgow churches were quite common in the seventies. The truth is that the "organ fever" so often referred to at that time was for most people a matter of curiosity and novelty. They would go once to see and hear a new organ as they might go to see the opening of a new building or the launching of a ship.

Nevertheless, the number of instruments installed indicates that the contemporary term "organ fever" was no exaggeration. By the end of 1871, Glasgow alone could boast no fewer than thirty-eight pipe organs in its churches and public buildings, and there were many others in private residences. There was nothing new about wealthy people putting organs into their homes, but now the instruments were bigger and there were more of them. At a Dundee bazaar in 1876, the lottery prize was an "organ" worth £100. In some places, churches seem to have

been influenced by the presence of local hall organs - the connection was explicitly referred to in the case of St. Marnock's, Kilmarnock, which ordered an organ soon after the one at the Corn Exchange was opened, and the same builders were employed. The Corn Exchange organ (1872) was followed by four other new organs in Kilmarnock by 1878; by then three of the town's four established churches had organs.

The phenomenon was not confined to Scotland - Dr. Spark of Leeds opened seven new organs in the north of England in the space of three weeks in 1876.<sup>46</sup> Nor, in Scotland, was it confined to the presbyterians. Roman catholics and episcopalian were replacing their old instruments by grander ones and, as their numbers increased, they had new churches to equip; independents, methodists and baptists were also installing organs. Of the new instruments known to have been taken into use in Scottish churches before 1870, those of other denominations each year outnumbered those of presbyterians. It was not until 1873 that the presbyterians took a clear lead in the number of instruments installed annually.

In a quite remarkable period between 1864 and 1868, Dundee (then with a population of only 91,000) acquired no fewer than six large organs, the smallest being a two-manual of nineteen stops at Ward Chapel and the largest the four-manual of forty-eight stops at the Kinnaird Hall. All the others were three-manual instruments, ranging from twenty-three to thirty-six stops. But only one of the six was in a presbyterian church. No less remarkable, taking its size into account, was Montrose, where between 1865 and 1870 three church organs were installed, not one of them in a presbyterian church. Perth, with only 26,000 inhabitants, acquired five organs in the same period, and there too they all went to non-presbyterian places of worship. In Edinburgh in the sixties twelve organs were installed, only one of which (Old Greyfriars) was in a presbyterian church.

These examples demonstrate also a tendency for organs to have a sudden period of fashion in a town or a dis-

trict. In the small town of Newton Stewart a new episcopal chapel with an organ was opened in November 1872. The town's two parish churches quickly followed suit, and in 1878 the U.P. church acquired a harmonium. Thus within six years Newton Stewart churches had three pipe organs and one harmonium. In Dunfermline there were no presbyterian organs before 1882; in that year the Abbey and two U.P. churches adopted instrumental music and the local Free Church presbytery was unique in declaring itself unanimously in favour of removing the prohibition. An instrument at Tain Parish Church in 1890 was immediately followed by another in the U.P. church and (for this was in the north) the formation of a choir in the Free church. Such bursts of local activity leave little doubt about the existence of a competitive spirit. Thriving as it did on interdenominational competition, the organ fever of the later nineteenth century was characterised by local epidemics.

#### 12.6. "Progress".

At the root of controversies over innovations, and not only those in worship, is the tension between tradition and novelty. Whatever arguments may have been used on the two sides, the conflict over organs arose, in the last analysis, from "the eternal division between the mind which most stresses progress and the mind most inclined to cherish inherited good".<sup>47</sup> The former recognised the ever-changing nature of worship over the centuries; the latter had, as well as a love of tradition, a natural fear of the dangers that were implicit in excessive innovation. The Victorian age was, in general, one of unprecedented change, and the victory of the organ party was probably a symptom of the general ideal of progress.

The relatively unimportant question of instrumental music became a major battleground between conservatives and innovators in the Scottish churches. This was largely the result of historical accident. As people travelled more widely within the country, innovations spread more quickly. While some innovations which had first appeared

many decades before were still spreading, new innovations were adopted at a faster rate, with the result that several changes were taking place simultaneously, to the alarm of the conservatives. This alarm reached its peak in the sixties, just at the time when organ fever was reaching Scotland, when musical awareness was becoming widespread, and when instrumental music first became a practical possibility for most churches as cheap harmoniums and competent players became available. As they themselves never tired of saying, those who opposed instrumental music were really trying to arrest the introduction of innovations in general. They had lost the battle on hymns and they were now closing ranks. Many of the changes they did not like had gone too far to be reversed, but in 1863 the only presbyterian church with instrumental music was Old Greyfriars. Here was their chance to make their stand.

There was another practice for which the worship at Old Greyfriars was at that time unique, and that was the use of a printed prayer book. To the conservatives this was a much more serious matter than the harmonium there, and their initial fury was directed mainly against "liturgical practices". But within two years it had become clear that the clergy and people of Scotland had no immediate wish to follow Lee into liturgical prayer, while from all quarters there were threats of instrumental music. The conservatives also had to face the practical consideration that a minister could incorporate prayers from liturgical sources into his normal service with few or none of his congregation being able to identify them; the presence of an organ, by contrast, was an undisputed fact. They were aware also that those who used liturgical prayer had the precedent of the reformers on their side, while organs had never before been used in the reformed Church of Scotland. The organ thus became for twenty years the main symbol of change in presbyterian worship, and its introduction was attended by disproportionate zeal from innovators and conservatives alike.

## 12.7. Concluding Observations.

The notion that Scottish presbyterians resisted the introduction of the "kist of whistles" has passed into folk-lore; the organ in the nineteenth century takes its place along with Laud's liturgy in the seventeenth as a symbol of resistance to change in Scottish churches. But organs were not imposed on an unwilling people; rather, it was the people who demanded them.

The same demand emerged in churches of other denominations. In the nineteenth century, Roman catholics and episcopalians installed new and larger organs in their churches. Comparatively little publicity accompanied the adoption of instruments by congregational, E.U., methodist and baptist congregations from the eighteen-fifties on, though their instruments represented to the members as great a change as those in presbyterian churches; people of these denominations were no more or less innovative in their worship than the presbyterians.

The public attention which attended the introduction of organs into the presbyterian churches had its origin in the reluctance of the higher courts of the three main denominations to allow kirk sessions to make their own decisions. The story might have been very different had the church courts not intervened in 1807 and 1829; other congregations could have followed quietly when the time became ripe for them, as happened later in the independent churches. But the congregations of St. Andrew's, Glasgow, and Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, though unanimous, were ahead of general presbyterian opinion. As the people of two Glasgow U.P. churches found in the fifties, any presbyterian congregation which wanted to introduce an organ had to wait until the mind of its denomination as a whole (as represented by its supreme court) was ready for the change.

By the mid-sixties, the General Assembly of the Established Church made it clear that it had no objection in principle to organs. But at the same time it provided a procedure whereby very small minorities in its congrega-

tions and in its courts could for a time obstruct the will of large majorities. The frustration of the latter contributed greatly to the heat of exchanges which naturally attracted publicity. Tension was created in the other two presbyterian churches because their sanction was withheld longer than many of their congregations deemed reasonable. The U.P. Church was apparently just as ready for organs in the sixties as the Established Church; but the Synod delayed its sanction until all hope of union with the more conservative Free Church had been destroyed by the intransigence of Begg's Free Church minority party. Appeasement of this same minority resulted in Free Church congregations waiting until 1883 before they could use organs. Begg and his followers courted publicity, and public attention was thus focussed on a small and unrepresentative group of Scottish presbyterians.

From the eighteen-sixties on, organs were popular. Their use was supported by most of the national and local newspapers and by most of the influential preachers. There was a large majority in favour of instrumental music in nearly every congregation which was formally consulted. As each denomination gave freedom to its congregations, the freedom was exercised from the start by prosperous city churches and small village and mission churches alike.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES.

1. Nelson 1830.
2. In his statement to the presbytery, Ritchie made much of the use of organs in continental reformed churches (Porteous 1808, pp.73-4, 85). Mitchell 1889 attributes Ritchie's support of the organ to his continental experience.
3. Drummond 1975, pp.249-50.
4. Smith 1863, p.6.
5. e.g. Bisset 1866, p.23.
6. This is the only threat of violence to an instrument that has been found. The only case in which actual malicious damage to an organ was alleged was in England, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Sheffield, in 1875. The damage, which was no more than a small

slit made in one of the bellows (though greatly extended when the wind was switched on), was exaggerated out of all proportion by an editorial in the local newspaper which imagined dramatic scenes involving "Scots of the old school". The newspaper treatment was resented by the church authorities, and the damage may have been simply a random act of vandalism. (*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 9/11 March 1875; see also *Choir*, 20 Mar/10 Apr 1875). No evidence has been found to support the claim that heated opposition to organs in Scotland "often resulted in scenes of mob-rule, when the newly-installed organs were removed and publicly burnt or destroyed after service". (Maxwell 1955, p.167).

7. Ross 1887, p.194.
8. e.g. Hislop 1858, pp.41-3.
9. *Arbroath Guide*, 10 Dec 1870.
10. Lee 1866.
11. Drummond 1975, pp.240-265.
12. Boyd 1856, p.667.
13. Smith 1863, p.5.
14. G 1866, p.491.
15. Brown-Borthwick 1874, p.9.
16. Drummond 1975, p.188.
17. Ehrlich 1976, pp.92-8.
18. Rimbault 1857, p.14.
19. Wade 1822, p.265.
20. Anderson 1829, p.46.
21. Marshall 1830, p.60.
22. *Scotsman*, 24 Apr 1830.
23. Dalyell 1849, pp.135-6.
24. *Dunfermline Press*, 1 Dec 1859.
25. Thom 1811, ii, p.107.
26. Anderson 1829, pp.2-9.
27. Dalyell 1849, p.137.
28. Boyd 1856, p.667.
29. Smith 1857, p.50.
30. Smith 1863, p.5.
31. *ibid*, p.12.
32. *Scotsman*, 25 May 1865.
33. Lee 1864, p.135.
34. Story 1870, pp.81-2.
35. Begg 1875, p.48.
36. e.g. Balfour 1884, p.13.
37. *Blairgowrie Advertiser*, 30 May 1874.
38. One wealthy industrialist, Kidston of Helensburgh, actively campaigned against organs; he was exceptional - quite a number of others, notably the Baird family, presented organs to churches. Against the ship-owner who was responsible for the trouble at Elgin can be set others in the shipping industry who supported organs and a ship builder who gave Aberdeen its second presbyterian pipe organ. Only two medical men are known to have actively opposed organs - a doctor led the opposition at Coupar Angus, and T.A.G. Balfour succeeded Begg as the principal anti-organ campaigner in the Free Church; but in a number of churches doctors served on the organ committees, and in at least one church a doctor acted as organist. The only schoolmaster known to have opposed an instrument was the spokesman for the objectors at Ful-

larton; against him can be set the schoolmaster of Kirkmichael who raised money for the harmonium at Tomintoul and a number of other schoolmasters who acted as organists on the newly-installed instruments. All occupations had their shares of conservatives and innovators, and in all, it would seem, the latter significantly outnumbered the former.

39. *Weekly News*, 30 Sept, 7 Oct 1865.
40. *Dundee Courier*, 20 Dec 1865.
41. *Dundee Courier*, 24/26/30 Oct, 2 Nov 1865.
42. *Choir*, 4 Apr 1868.
43. *Dundee Advertiser*, 27 Sept 1875.
44. e.g. *Kilmarnock Standard*, 3 Feb to 23 Mar 1872.
45. Drummond 1975, p.189.
46. *Musical Standard*, 4 Mar 1876.
47. Lamb 1955, p.18.



## APPENDIX

### AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE ORGAN QUESTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

This list includes books, pamphlets, periodical articles and book chapters published in Britain in the nineteenth century. With some exceptions, each item listed is primarily concerned with the organ question or contains a substantial treatment of it. The exceptions are items which, though treating the subject only incidentally, have some novel aspect or some special significance in the context in which they were published.

Scottish clergymen became involved in organ disputes south of the border, and there is also much evidence that pamphlets published in England and Ireland were read in Scotland; the list is therefore not restricted to purely Scottish publications.

With a very few exceptions, all the listed items have been consulted in the preparation of the thesis. Items of which I have failed to locate an extant copy are marked "\*".

- 1 Worcester, 1803. 22pp.  
The Antiquity and Advantages of Church Music, considered in a sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of Worcester ... by H. A. Stillingfleet.  
One of many published 'Three Choirs' sermons. The author argues that choirs and organs have scriptural authority and devotional value.
- 2 London, 1805. 49pp.  
Lyra Evangelica; or, an Essay on the use of Instrumental Music in Christian worship ... by Joseph Jefferson.  
The author, a dissenting minister at Basingstoke, strongly disapproves of instrumental music in worship.
- 3 London, 1805. 3pp.  
On the due regulation of instrumental music in public worship, by R. L., in *Christian Observer*, April 1805, pp. 212-214.  
This article (little more than a letter), in a C of E magazine, pleads for control of organists by the clergy, to avoid excesses.
- 4 Glasgow, 1808. 44pp.  
A Treatise on the Use of Organs and other instruments of music in the worship of God, by James Begg.  
An anti-organ pamphlet arising from the Glasgow case of 1807-8. By the father of the better-known James Begg.
- 5 Glasgow, 1808. 81pp.  
To the Lord Provost of Glasgow, the two following Letters are respectfully addressed, on the subject of the organ which was introduced into St. Andrew's Church, Glasgow: to which are added remarks on the Rev. James Begg's Treatise ...  
Pro-organ and highly disrespectful to His Lordship. Published anonymously by Alexander Fleming, minister of Neilston.
- 6 Glasgow, 1808. xxii+269pp.  
Statement of the Proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow relative to the use of an organ in St. Andrew's Church ... on 23rd August, 1807.  
Reply to 5, prepared by a committee led by William Porteous. Contains copies of many documents in the case.
- 7 Glasgow, 1808. 99pp.  
Answer to a Statement of the Proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow, relative to the use of an organ ...

Reply to 6, published anonymously by Fleming.

- 8           Edinburgh, 1816. xi+213pp.  
An Account of the First Edinburgh Musical Festival ... to which is appended An Essay containing some General Observations on Music, by George Farquhar Graham.  
In his introductory essay, the author advocates the use of organs in Scottish churches. Only James Beattie (26, unpublished at this date) and Fleming (5, 7) appear to have done so in print before this time.
- 9           Colchester, 1819. viii+119pp.  
A View of Modern Psalmody, by William Cole.  
Cole was a dissenter who also published books on comets and the properties of light. 44 pages are devoted to justifying the organ and advising on its proper use.
- 10          Bristol, 1822. 24pp.  
Church Music: a sermon preached at the opening of the new organ in the Parish Church of St. Nicholas in the City of Bristol, by John Eden.  
Briefly puts the case for organs and argues that music should be used to attract people to church.
- 11\*         [Manchester], 1823.  
A Few Candid Reasons why instruments of music should not be used in the worship of God, by John Adamson.  
Appears in catalogue of Dr. Williams's Library, but copy is lost. Referred to in 12, 13 below. Arose from the installation of an organ in a Manchester chapel.
- 12\*         Manchester, [1823].  
A Reply to the Rev. John Adamson's "Few Candid Reasons...", by J. Bedford.
- 13          Manchester, 1823. 102pp.  
The Unlawfulness of Instrumental Music in the Worship of God, stated in a letter to a friend in defence of "A few candid reasons &c" against the misrepresentations of Mr. J. Bedford, by John Adamson.  
Presents standard anti-organ arguments.
- 14          Newcastle, 1824. 25pp.  
The Churchman's Song of Praise: a sermon preached on the opening of the organ, in Gateshead Church, January 25, 1824, by Charles Thorpe.  
A typical "organ opening" sermon, justifying

the organ and expenditure on it. The Gateshead organ cost five hundred pounds and, incidentally, was built by Wood of Edinburgh.

- 15 Leeds, 1827. 8pp.  
A Letter to the Editor of the Leeds Mercury, on the present unhappy discussions of the Methodists in Leeds (2nd. edition), by Isaac Keeling.  
This and the succeeding ten items arose from the dispute centred on the installation of an organ in Brunswick Chapel, Leeds.
- 16 Leeds, 1827. iv+48pp.  
A Statement of the Facts, being a brief history of the measures adopted by the Leeds Wesleyan Methodist Society, in their opposition to the introduction of an Organ into Brunswick Chapel ..., by John Barr.
- 17 Leeds, 1827. 48pp.  
Strictures on a Letter to the Leeds Mercury by I. Keeling, by John Barr.
- 18 Leeds, 1827. 28pp.  
A Reply to the Pamphlet intituled 'A Statement of Facts, &c' in reference to the introduction of an Organ into Brunswick Chapel and the dissensions connected with that proceeding, by Isaac Keeling.
- 19 Leeds, 1827. 8pp.  
A Letter to the Rev. Thomas Galland, by John Barr.
- 20 Leeds, 1827. 8pp.  
Letter I to Mr. T. A---, of K---, East Riding of Yorkshire, by Thomas Galland.
- 21 Leeds, 1827.  
Remarks on Letter I to Mr. T. A. of K., by Thomas Galland, by John Barr.
- 22 Leeds, 1827. 26pp.  
Letter II from a Minister, in Leeds, to his friend in the country, by Thomas Galland.
- 23 Leeds, 1827.  
[Remarks on Letter II to a friend in the country], by John Barr.
- 24 Leeds, 1827. 51pp.  
A Vindication of the Statement of Facts relating to the Leeds Wesleyan Methodists; being remarks on three pamphlets on that subject, by the Rev. Isaac Keeling and the Rev. Thomas Galland, by John Barr.

- 25           York, 1827. 68pp.  
Vocal Melody, or Singing the only music sanctioned by divine authority, by Daniel Isaac.
- 26           Edinburgh, 1829. 32pp.  
A Letter to the Rev Hugh Blair D.D., one of the ministers of Edinburgh, on the improvement of psalmody in Scotland.  
This pamphlet was printed in 1778, but not published until the Roxburgh Place affair of 1829. It was written by James Beattie, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen. In a single paragraph it asserts the reasonableness of using instrumental music in Scottish churches, but draws comfort from its expense and from its abuse elsewhere.
- 27           Edinburgh, 1829. 8pp.  
Nugae Organicae; or, a collection of letters and notices concerning the introduction of instrumental music into the worship of the Relief congregation, Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh.  
Like all the pamphlets connected with the case except nos. 31 and 34, this is on the side of the Roxburgh Place congregation.
- 28           Edinburgh, 1829. 40pp.  
Organs and Presbyterians: being a few observations intended for the particular benefit of the Anti-Organists; with Strictures on some of their recent meetings in Edinburgh, by Clericus.
- 29           Edinburgh, 1829. 16pp.  
Observations on the Use of Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of God; addressed to the people of Scotland in general and to the synod of relief in particular, by A Presbyterian.  
This has been attributed to Henry Fergus, but a pencilled note in the British Library copy says "Supposed to be by the Rev. John Johnston."
- 30           Glasgow, 1829. 48pp.  
An Apology for the Organ as an assistance of congregational psalmody, by William Anderson.
- 31           Glasgow, 1829. 46pp.  
Reply to "An Apology for the Organ", with observations on the use of instrumental music in churches, by An Anti-organist.  
Known from the 1856 edition to be by James Russel, Relief minister of Old Kilpatrick.

- 32            Glasgow, 1829.  
A Chapter of Organ History (appendix to second edition of the Apology), by William Anderson.
- 33            Edinburgh, 1829. 16pp.  
A New Stop to the Organ, by A member of the Synod, Glasgow.
- 34            [Glasgow, 1829]. 44pp.  
A Vindication of the Sentence of the Synod of Relief in the case of the Organ; and an answer to the misrepresentations of the Rev. William Anderson in his "Chapter of Organ History", by A Member of the Synod.  
Written by Alexander Harvey, Relief minister of Calton, Glasgow.
- 35            Edinburgh, 1830. 71pp.  
Seven Letters to the Reverend Robert Brodie, Moderator of the Relief Synod, on Christian Fellowship, The Organ Question, and other matters connected with the respectability and usefulness of the Relief Body, by A Catholic Presbyterian.  
Attributed in British Library catalogue to William Marshall, a Relief minister in Fife. The B L copy is signed by him.
- 36            London, 1831. 454pp.  
The Music of the Church, by John Antes Latrobe.  
A comprehensive treatment of all aspects of Anglican church music, including 41 pages on the use of organ voluntaries. Advocates replacing gallery musicians by organs in village churches, but also recommends supplementing organs with other instruments in town churches. Not directly relevant to the organ question in Scotland.

The following pamphlets indicate some attitudes to the organ in a number of different denominations during the period preceding the major presbyterian debates.

- 37            Bristol, 1834. 45pp.            C of E  
The Use and Excellence of Church Music - A sermon preached at the opening of an organ, in the parish church of Kenilworth, May 25, 1834, by George Ayliffe Poole.  
Justifies scripturally the use of organs and attacks their rejection by some dissenters.
- 38            London, 1838. 39pp.            C of E - High  
The Music of the Sanctuary. A sermon preached at the reopening of the organ in Newland Church, Oct 16, 1838, by James Hogan.

Defends organs with a list of scriptural references, and proposes cathedral services as a model for parishes.

- 39 London & Edinburgh, 1840. xxviii+265pp. C of S  
The Liturgy of the Church of Scotland, or John Knox's Book of Common Order ..., edited by John Cumming.

Republication of the full Scottish prayer-book of 1564. In his preface, Cumming advocates its general adoption; he also holds that organs are essential to improve the singing of most C of S congregations.

- 40 London, [1842]. 11pp. Independent  
An Essay on Psalmody, by John Burder. (Pages xvi - xxvi of J. J. Waite's "Hallelujah; or Devotional Psalmody", a collection of tunes and chants for congregational use).

The organ had already made considerable inroads among the English Independents. Burder, while denying that organs were unlawful, preferred to cultivate unaccompanied congregational singing by teaching singing to whole congregations, an exercise in which Waite had been very successful. Thomas Binney took the same view in 1848.

- 41 London, 1845. 63pp. C of E  
A popular tract on church music, with remarks on its moral and political importance, and a practical scheme for its reformation, by Robert Druitt.

In Druitt's opinion, organs stopped people singing; gallery musicians should not be replaced by "these odious machines".

- 42 Londonderry, 1846. 16pp. Irish [Presbyterian]  
A Catechism on the Use of Organs, or similar instruments of music, in the service of the true God, by A Protestant Witness.

36 questions and answers, violently anti-organ.

- 43 London, nd. 27pp. Quakers  
Congregational Worship, practically considered, by W. P.

Interestingly, uses some common anti-organ arguments to attack the practice of congregational singing.

- 44 London, 1846. 16pp. Quakers  
Music and its Influence, or an enquiry into the practice of music, in reference to its effects on the moral and religious condition of mankind, by

Isaac Robson.

Disapproves of the cultivation of music generally and of the use of music and organs in church.

- 45 London, 1847 14pp. C of E  
Use of the Organ. In *Christian Remembrancer*, vol xiv, pp 54-67.  
Starts as a review of Sutton's "Short Account", but becomes a general statement of the case for strong organ accompaniment.
- 46 Chichester, 1849. 27pp. C of E  
Church Music - a sermon preached in Smethwick Old Chapel in the County of Stafford, on the opening of a new organ, on Sunday afternoon, December 10th 1848, by Edward Miller.  
The final pages seem to be warning the former gallery musicians to accept the new organ gracefully.
- 47 London, 1850. 40pp. C of S  
Music in its relation to Religion: a lecture delivered before the YMCA in Exeter Hall, January 29, 1850, by John Cumming.  
Once again (see 39), this unusual C of S minister attacks the anti-organ prejudice of Scots presbyterians, recommending the organ as an aid to congregations who sing badly, though he would prefer stringed instruments. But he warns against too much reliance on the support of an organ.
- 48 London, 1852. 26pp. C of E - evangelical  
Remarks on the Protestant Theory of Church Music, by Steuart Adolphus Pears.  
Choirs should be disbanded, but the organ appears to be a necessary evil. The organist should be religious.
- 49 Oxford, 1853. 26pp. C of E - tractarian  
The Antiquity of Choral Services and Musical Instruments in the Church of God. A sermon, preached at St. Matthew's, Buckley, on Sunday, December 26th, 1852, after the opening of a new organ, by H. P. Ffoulkes.  
Ten pages justify the organ, the remainder choral service, chanting, priestly dress, etc.
- 50 London, 1853. 2pp. Baptist  
On Organs in the House of God, by William Odling. In *"The Earthen Vessel"*, Nov 1853.  
Odling was one of a group of Baptists who opposed organs. Reprinted 1866.



- 51\*           Aberdeen, 1855.                   Free Church  
Remarks on Congregational Psalmody, by William  
Anderson.

The author was an Aberdeen precentor. He appears to have been the first to advocate the use of organs in the Free Church.

- 52            London, 1856.   110pp.  
Reflections on Church Music, by Carl Engel.  
A musician's view. Includes various observations on the use of organs.

In 1856, the organ question came to prominence among presbyterians with the simultaneous cases of St. George's, Liverpool and Claremont Street, Glasgow.

- 53            Glasgow, 1856.   38pp.  
An Apology for the Organ as an assistance of congregational psalmody, by William Anderson.  
A third edition of the 1829 pamphlet (30), with two appendices removed. Issued at the request of the organ party of Claremont Street.

- 54            Glasgow, 1856.   45pp.  
Reply to the Rev. Dr. Anderson's Apology for the Organ, with observations on the use of instrumental music in churches, by James Russel.  
A second edition of the "Anti-Organist" pamphlet of 1829 (31).

- 55            Liverpool, 1856.   23pp.  
Narrative of the proceedings in connection with the introduction of an organ into St. George's Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, by The Session.

- 56            Edinburgh, 1856.  
The Organ Question: Statements by Dr. Ritchie and Dr. Porteous, for and against the use of the organ in public worship, in the proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow 1807-8, with an introductory notice by Robert S. Candlish.  
Reissue of papers from the 1808 pamphlet (6). Candlish warns the English Presbyterians not to sanction instrumental music.

- 57            London, 1856.   15pp.  
Organic versus Inorganic Music - an appeal against the judgment of Dr. Porteous and Dr. Candlish, to the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England, by Jno. W. Lamb.

- 58            London, 1856.   9pp.  
The Organ Question, by A. K. H. Boyd, in Fraser's

Magazine, June 1856, pp. 660-668.

Strong argument against Candlish from a well-known writer and C of S minister.

- 59           Edinburgh, 1856. 124pp.  
A Vindication of the Organ. A review of the Rev. Dr. Candlish's publication entitled "The Organ Question", by Alexander Cromar.  
Cromar was the minister of St. George's, Liverpool.
- 60           London, 1856. 19pp.  
The Organ Heresy, containing an examination of The Great Palladium, by Lazarus Short.  
A satire on Presbyterian sanctimoniousness. "Watchword", Aug 1866, p.158 suggests it was by Cromar.
- 61           London, 1857. 79pp.  
Hearts and Voices, the only musical instruments of the New Testament Church, by Alexander M. Bannatyne.  
Extreme anti-organ arguments, issued before 1857 Synod meeting.
- 62           Liverpool, 1857. 23pp.  
Narrative of further proceedings in connection with the introduction of an organ into St. George's Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, by The Session.  
A second instalment (See 55).
- 63           London & Edinburgh, 1857. 40pp.  
Speech by the Rev Thomas Duncan, of Newcastle, at the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church, held at Newcastle in April 1857, on the Use of Instrumental Music in Public Worship; and Statement by the Rev Alexander Munro, DD, of Manchester, on the same occasion.
- 64           London, 1857. 48pp.  
On Simplicity in Divine Service, by William Wrightson.  
An English Presbyterian minister presents arguments against organs and goes on to condemn hymns, pulpit dress, reading of sermons, etc.
- 65           np, nd. 4+4+4+4+14+11+10pp.  
Addresses to the People of God in Scotland on the Organ Question, by J. S. Taylor. (Issued as seven separate tracts).  
Taylor was an opponent of the Claremont Street organ; he resigned as a U. P. minister in protest against the sanctioning of organs in

1872. These pamphlets appear to date from the fifties.

- 66 London, 1858.  
Should Musical Instruments be used in the Worship of God? by James Begg.  
This republication of his father's 1808 pamphlet (4) with Begg's own introduction was intended to influence the English Synod.
- 67 London, 1858. 10pp.  
The Organ Catechism: being a few plain questions and answers on the Organ controversy, by A Deacon of the English Presbyterian Church.  
Blames Scottish prejudices for organ opposition in England.
- 68 Glasgow, 1858. 70pp.  
The Organ Question. Report of a discussion in the U. P. Synod of May 1858, on the memorial of the session of Claremont Church, Glasgow, on the subject of forbearance in reference to the use of instrumental music in public worship. With an appendix containing an address to Claremont Church by the Rev. Alex. McEwen in reference to the Synod's decision, and the resolutions of the congregation regarding that decision.
- 69 Glasgow, 1858.  
The Scriptural Principles of the Solemn League and Covenant, by Alexander Hislop.  
Ten pages of this anti-episcopal pamphlet attack the use of organs.
- 70 Glasgow, 1858. 61pp.  
The Sacrifice of Praise, by A Precentor.  
Suggests methods of improving psalmody in the Church of Scotland. Regards an organ as a last resort.
- 71 London, [1859]. 12pp.  
Instrumental Music in Worship.  
Published anonymously by the Quaker Isaac Robson. Chiefly extracts from his 1846 pamphlet (44) and from his "Thoughts on Christian Worship" (1858).
- 72 London, 1859. 18pp.  
Sacred Music. A lecture by John Cumming, in Lectures delivered before the YMCA in Exeter Hall from November 1858 to February 1859, pp. 425-442.  
His views on instrumental music are unchanged from those in his 1850 lecture (47).

- 73\*           ?,186-. 8pp.  
 Voice of the Ages against Instrumental Music in  
 Worship.  
 This pamphlet is listed in the New York Public  
 Library music catalogue as bound with a Scot-  
 tish pamphlet, but it may be American.
- 74           Bristol,[1860]. vii+96pp.  
 The Two Organs: An essay on psalmody, by John  
 Burder.  
 As well as discussing the organ question, sum-  
 marises the state of the organ movement, and  
 of music generally, among English nonconfor-  
 mists.
- 75           Belfast & Edinburgh,[1862]. 16pp.  
 Public Worship, by John Moran. One of the "Tracts  
 on the form and order of the Christian Church", by  
 ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.  
 Over half of the text deals with praise. In  
 the two pages given to the organ question,  
 regards organs as lawful but inexpedient, a  
 position being increasingly adopted by  
 opponents of the organ.
- 76           Edinburgh,1863. 54pp.  
 The Worship, Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of  
 Scotland.  
 Published anonymously by G. W. Sprott, this  
 pamphlet mentions organs only briefly, but  
 states that it would be dangerous to bring the  
 question before the General Assembly at this  
 time. The best strategy, it says, is to fami-  
 liarise congregations with instrumental music  
 at church meetings other than those for public  
 worship.
- 77           Edinburgh,1863. 16pp.  
 Innovations in Public Worship; their origin, ten-  
 dency, consequences and cure.  
 Beautifully written, and published anonymously  
 by George Smith, minister of the Tolbooth par-  
 ish, Edinburgh. Urges the General Assembly to  
 suppress innovations, clearly with Lee in  
 mind.
- 78           Edinburgh,1863. 3pp.  
 The Organ in Augustine Church, Edinburgh; (A report  
 in the Scottish Congregational Magazine; Dec 1863,  
 pp.385-388).  
 Contains the full speech by the popular  
 Lindsay Alexander justifying the use of  
 organs.

- 79           Edinburgh, 1864. 4pp.  
Our Psalmody - what hinders and helps it, by  
"Nemo", in *Scottish Congregational Magazine*, Apr  
1864, pp.145-149.  
A Congregational writer claims psalmody can be  
improved without organs.
- 80           Edinburgh, 1864. 32pp.  
Instrumental Music (Chapter 9 of "The Reform of the  
Church of Scotland" - pp.109-142) by Robert Lee.  
The arch-innovator defends the use of the  
organ.
- 81           Edinburgh, 1864. 92pp.  
Dr. Bisset's Address and Episcopal Tendencies, by  
Robert Young.  
Refers to Bisset's address as Moderator of the  
General Assembly in 1862. Includes main anti-  
organ arguments.
- 82           Edinburgh, 1864. 8pp.  
Instrumental Music in the Church of Scotland  
unnecessary and inexpedient, by A. T. Niven.  
Strongly against organs, Niven was later to be  
one of the leaders of the Association for pur-  
ity of worship. As convener of the General  
Assembly's Committee on Psalmody, he published  
this to put an end to rumours that the Commit-  
tee had been appointed to promote the use of  
organs.
- 83           Edinburgh, 1865. 112pp.  
Hearts and Voices, the only organs for Christian  
praises, by Alexander M. Bannatyne.  
Mainly material from his 1857 pamphlet (61).
- 84           Glasgow, 1865. 70pp.  
An Essay upon the Sacred Use of Organs in Christian  
Assemblies, by an Old Divine, reprinted from the  
edition of 1713, with a preliminary discourse by  
the Rev. Robert Williamson, Kingarth.  
Williamson's discourse is entirely on the  
"carnal worship" issue. This edition reached  
at least two thousand copies, complimentary  
copies being sent to all Presbyterian minis-  
ters in Scotland and England.
- 85           Glasgow, 1865. 28pp.  
Remarks on Recent Proceedings and Speeches anent  
Innovations, by Alexander Hill.  
Professor Hill urges the General Assembly to  
take strong action against organs and the  
reading of prayers.

- 86           Aberdeen, 1865. 31pp.  
Fiddle-de-dee: a Hurdy-gurdy Ode; or Pseudo-Pindaric anent Presbyterian Church Organs, by A Kn-oxonian.  
Attributed to the Rev. J. Allan of the Free Church, Potterton, Belhelvie. The 700 lines of verse sometimes make anti-organ points more tellingly than prose pamphlets.
- 87           London, 1865. 5pp.  
The Organ in Scotland, by A. K. H. Boyd, in *Fraser's Magazine*, Oct 1865, pp.520-524.  
Satisfaction with progress of the organ movement.
- 88           Edinburgh, 1865. 23pp.  
The Use of Organs in Christian Worship: a sermon preached in Trinity Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, October 22, 1865, by Edward B. Ramsay.  
Dean Ramsay defends the use of organs against the censure of "our Scottish Presbyterian brethren".
- 89           Edinburgh, 1866. 32pp.  
Inquiry into the Spirit of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, with a defence of improvements recently introduced into her services and others which are still desiderated, by James Bisset.  
Attacks "despotism" by superior church courts. Eight pages justify the use of organs.
- 90           Glasgow, 1866. 271pp.  
The Use of Organs and other Instruments of Music in Christian Worship Indefensible. With reviews of the publications of Dean Ramsay, Dr. Lee and others on the subject; and some remarks on the bearing of recent innovations, by James Begg.  
Begg's *magnum opus*, much reviewed and discussed.
- 91           London, 1866. 28pp.  
The Organ Question, Pro and Con, in *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, July 1866, pp.613-640.  
Anonymous. Purports to be unbiased; concludes in favour of organs.
- 92           Glasgow, 1866. 49pp.  
Instrumental Music in Christian Worship; is it lawful and expedient? An exposition and an argument, by Henry Batchelor.  
The author was Chairman of the Congregational Union at the time, and had an organ in his Glasgow church.

- 93           Edinburgh, 1866. 10pp.  
Instrumental Music in Christian Worship. Has it, or has it not, the sanction of New Testament Scripture? An inquiry into the import and bearing of Ephesians v, 19, by A Free Church Minister.  
Attributed in National Union Catalogue to John Mackenzie of Ratho, whose signature appears on the cover of the copy in New College library, Edinburgh. Appears to have been the first pamphlet by a Free Church minister devoted to the organ cause.
- 94           London, 1866. 6pp.  
The Organ Question, by W. G., in *U. P. Magazine*, Nov 1866, pp.491-496.  
Advocates caution in face of ritualism, etc.
- 95           Edinburgh, 1866. 6pp.  
Dr. Begg on the Organ Question, by K., in *Scottish Congregational Magazine*, Nov 1866, pp.341-347.  
This issue of the Magazine contained two papers, one for, the other against, organs (see 96, below). This paper heartily attacks Begg.
- 96           Edinburgh, 1866. 8pp.  
The Image which Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon set up, by "Melankome", *ibid.*, pp.347-354.
- 97           London, 1867. 20pp.  
Places and Forms of Worship (pp.189-208 of "Pastoral Counsels", 3rd. edition. Originally published in Glasgow, 1865) by John Robertson.  
A sermon preached at the reopening of Glasgow Cathedral in June 1862, advocating not only the use of organs but also architectural beauty, changes of posture, and a partial liturgy.
- 98           Glasgow, 1869. 24pp.  
Human Hymns and Instrumental Music (Chapter 7 of "The Public Worship of God" - pp.101-124) by James Gibson.  
The Free Church College professor, a notorious conservative, argues that, if hymns are admitted into worship, there can then be no scriptural argument against organs.
- 99           London, 1869. 213pp.  
Public Worship: the best methods of conducting it, by John Spencer Pearsall.  
Little mention of organs, except for some remarks on voluntaries. Speaking to Congregationalists, he takes the organ for granted.

- 100 London, 1871. 6pp.  
 Innovations in Public Worship, by William Milligan, in *Sunday Magazine*, Jan 1871, pp.210-215.  
 The Professor of Biblical Criticism at King's College, Aberdeen, argues that uniformity of worship is illusory and that freedom is necessary; and this in a magazine edited by a prominent Free Churchman.
- 101 London, 1871. 20pp.  
 The Praise of God. A sermon preached in the Parish Church of Crosthwaite, Cumberland, on 28th August, 1870, by Robert Brown-Borthwick.  
 The author was a Scot, an Anglican clergyman, and a friend of George Grove. He answers three of the standard arguments against the organ. (See also 118).
- 102 Edinburgh, 1871. 16pp.  
 Report of a Speech on the use of instrumental music in public worship, delivered in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Friday May 26, 1871. Revised by the speaker, and with his consent, published by certain members of the late General Assembly, by W. R. Pirie.  
 Reactionary speech triggered by the Eyemouth case.
- 103 London, 1871. 7pp.  
 A Sunday in the Waldensian Valleys, part 1, by Thomas Guthrie, in *Sunday Magazine*, July 1871, pp.634-640.  
 In a single paragraph, strongly condemns arguments used against organs and speaks in favour of freedom. This paragraph was picked up by the newspapers, for Guthrie was not only a Free Churchman, but one of the most revered Disruption fathers.
- 104 Belfast, nd. 39pp.  
 Instrumental Music; its place in the worship of God the same under all dispensations, by Henry Wallace.  
 The organ controversy in the Irish Presbyterian Church was just coming to the boil, and Professor Wallace's pamphlet was frequently cited in the many debates and pamphlets of the seventies and eighties.
- 105 Belfast, nd. 28pp.  
 The Law of Liberty in Worship - a lecture delivered in Duncairn Presbyterian Church, Belfast, by Andrew Charles Murphy.  
 Despite its title, entirely a well-argued pro-organ pamphlet.



- 106\* Belfast, 1872. 36pp.  
Instrumental Music; no place for it in the public worship of God, under the gospel dispensation; a review of a pamphlet entitled "Instrumental Music ..." by the Rev. Henry Wallace, by William Dobbin.
- 107\* Belfast, 1872. 48pp.  
Christian Worship. Praise pure and perfect without instrumental music. A review of the pamphlet by Professor Wallace, by J. Gardner Robb.
- 108 np., 1872. ix+125pp.  
Instrumental Music in the Church of Scotland, by The Minister of the united parishes of Harray and Birsay.  
"Printed for private circulation". The author was David Johnston, a persistent organ opponent, and later Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen.
- 109 London, 1872. 10pp.  
The Music of Congregational Churches, in *Congregationalist*, April 1872, pp.229-238.  
Contains arguments against using organs and organists. Written by the eminent musician, J. S. Curwen (see Tonic Solfa Reporter, May 1872).
- 110 London, 1872. 1p.  
Musical Culture and Organs, in *Congregational Miscellany*, 1 Nov 1872, p.157.  
Anti-organ. By J. T. Feaston (see Tonic Solfa Reporter, 15 Nov 1872).
- 111 London, 1873. 3pp.  
In Favour of Organs, by Joseph Vickery, in *Congregational Advance and Miscellany*, 1 Jan 1873, pp.2-4.  
Wildly enthusiastic. Vickery was a Congregational minister in Aberdeen.
- 112 Paisley, 1873. 2pp.  
The Organ in Worship, by Joseph Proudman, in *The Psalmist*, Feb 1873, pp.15-17.  
Rejection of organs purely on grounds of expediency. Proudman was precentor of Regent Square Presbyterian Church, London, renowned for the quality of its unaccompanied congregational singing.
- 113 Paisley, 1873. 6pp.  
The Organ in Worship. A Reply to Mr. Proudman, by W. T. Scroggie, in *The Psalmist*, Apr and May, 1873, pp.40-42, 51-54.

- 114           Belfast, 1873. 48pp.  
Instrumental Music: ought the General Assembly to prohibit its use in the worship of God? A review of the leading arguments employed by the anti-instrumentalists, by James A. Robson.  
Contains some history of the Irish organ movement. Comprehensive answers to twenty standard arguments.
- 115           Belfast, Edinburgh & London, 1873. xvi+275pp.  
Heart and Voice: instrumental music in Christian worship not divinely authorised, by James Glasgow.  
Claims that even 275 pages cannot do full justice to the anti-organ cause.
- 116\*          Londonderry, 1873. iv+87pp.  
Instrumental Music in Christian Worship. A review chiefly in the way of a reply to Professor Henry Wallace, by Robert Nevin.
- 117           Paisley, 1873. 4pp.  
The Organ Question. Speech in the Irish Presbyterian Assembly 1872, by Thomas Sinclair, in *The Psalmist*, July 1873, pp.86-90.  
Pro-organ. Sinclair was a layman.
- 118           Edinburgh, 1874. 22pp.  
Art in Worship: its use and abuse. A sermon preached in Beverley Minster, May 18th 1874, by Robert Brown-Borthwick.  
Urges the congregation of the minster to spend more on their organ, to improve the beauty of the services. Interestingly, the author, a Scot, chose to publish the sermon, with its pro-organ arguments, in Scotland.
- 119           Edinburgh, nd. 8pp.  
Instrumental Music Unwarranted in the Worship of God, by James Begg.  
By 1876 had run to 12,000 copies.
- 120           London, 1875. 14pp.  
The Organ in the Church of Scotland: a letter to His Grace the Duke of Richmond, by R. Shanks.  
Triggered by the gift of an organ by the Duke to Enzie Church. Shanks was a Free Church minister in Buckie.
- 121           Edinburgh, 1875. 48pp.  
Anarchy in Worship, or recent innovations contrasted with the constitution of the Presbyterian Church and the vows of her office-bearers, by James Begg.  
Linked with the formation of the Association

for defending the purity of worship, and mainly directed against liturgies and instrumental music. Widely and unfavourably reviewed by the press.

- 122           Edinburgh, nd. 4pp.  
Instrumental Music in the Worship of God, by James Begg.  
A shortened version of Begg's standard arguments, sold at 2/6 per hundred.
- 123           Edinburgh, 1876. 103pp.  
Purity of Worship in the Presbyterian Church, as set forth in the Westminster Standards, and illustrated by our history since the Reformation, by James Begg.  
Welcomes C of S General Assembly action in the Duns innovation case, but castigates that court for encouraging the use of instrumental music. Reviews some recent organ cases.
- 124           London, 1876. 10pp.  
At the General Assembly, by A. K. H. Boyd, in *Fraser's Magazine*, July 1876, pp.53-62.  
Almost entirely on the organ question, saying that the battle has long been won and seeing little future for the Purity Association.
- 125           London, 1877. 36pp.  
Papers on Psalmody, chiefly in Non-conformist churches, by John Spencer Curwen.  
Reprinted from articles in *The English Independent*. Surveys music in a wide range of London churches, and contains interesting observations and conclusions on the use of organs.
- 126           Edinburgh, 1878. 4pp.  
Dr. Boyd of St. Andrews defying the Almighty with a Box of Whistles. in *U. K. Anti-Papal League Magazine*, May 1878.  
Trivial but amusing exchange between Boyd and James Johnstone of the League.
- 127           [Edinburgh, 1879]. 12pp.  
Proofs of God's Command for Instrumental Music to be Prayer Acted, and a sacrifice to Him, which has been abolished by the death of Christ, by James Johnstone.  
Copies were sent to all protestant ministers in Scotland except episcopalians.
- 128           [Edinburgh, 1879]. 14pp.  
Proofs from the Scriptures that Instrumental Music

in Worship was a sacrifice which was abolished by the death of Christ, and it is therefore a sin to practise it now, by James Johnstone.

A follow-up to 127, stating the case again and answering critics.

- 129\* Greenock, 1879. 29pp.  
The Fruit of our Lips, by James Kerr.  
Anti-organ.
- 130 Glasgow, nd. 8pp.  
Consensus of Opinions against Instrumental Music in Worship, by James Kerr.
- 131 Edinburgh, [1882]. 13pp.  
Instrumental Music (chapter 3, pp32-44, of "The Scottish Sanctuary as it was and as it is") by Andrew Duncan.  
A balanced treatment by a U.P. minister.
- 132 Glasgow, 1882. 24pp.  
The Sacrifice of Praise. A discourse preached on January 8th, 1882, by Charles A. Salmond.  
Contains 8 pages against adoption of organs by the Free Church.
- 133 Edinburgh, [1882]. 8pp.  
Instrumental Music in Christian Worship Unlawful, by James Begg.  
Text of a speech in the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh.
- 134 Belfast, 1882. x+95pp.  
The Westminster Divines and the use of Instrumental Music in the Worship of God, by William Dool Killen.  
Reproduction of periodical articles and responses to Robinson (135).
- 135 Belfast, 1882. 181pp.  
Review of the Rev. Dr. Killen's articles on the Westminster divines and the use of instrumental music in the worship of the Christian church, by [Archibald] Robinson.  
Reproduction of articles attacking Killen, and further anti-organ material.
- 136 Belfast, 1882. 31pp.  
"What saith the Scripture": Instrumental Music as an Accompaniment of Vocal Praise in the Worship of God. Speech ... at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, held in May Street Church, Belfast, on Friday, 9th June 1882, by H. B. Wilson.

Pro-organ.

- 137           Belfast, 1883. 35pp.  
Instrumental Music: A discussion of the question: Is there divine authority for the use of instrumental music in the worship of the New Testament Church? With a refutation of the main arguments of the Rev. H. B. Wilson, and other leading innovators in the Irish Presbyterian Church, by A. Robinson.
- 138           np., [1883]. 12pp.  
Instrumental Music, by W[illiam] Simpson.  
Text of pro-organ speech at Irish General Assembly 1882 by the minister of one of the rebel congregations.
- 139           Edinburgh, 1883. 32pp.  
Instrumental Music - a consideration of the arguments for and against its introduction into the worship of the Free Church of Scotland, by John McEwan.  
Anti-organ.
- 140           Edinburgh, 1883. 30pp.  
Report on Instrumental Music in Public Worship. In *Procs. of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1883.*  
The committee which prepared this report appears to have been representative of the different views in the Free Church. These views are expressed in the recommendations and in the various dissents which make up the bulk of the report.
- 141           Edinburgh, 1884. 56pp.  
The Question of Instrumental Music in Public Worship, by T. A. G. Balfour.  
The author, a medical man of some note, was a prominent member of the Purity Association. Texts of two violently anti-organ speeches from 1882 and 1884.
- 142           Aberdeen, 1891. 9pp.  
The Present State of Church Music in Scotland, by H. J. Wotherspoon, in *Transactions of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society, 1891, pp.36-44.*  
Contains observations on why congregational singing has declined despite the introduction of organs.
- 143           London, 1892. 9pp.  
Of Instrumental Music (chapter 4, pp.51-59, of "The Place of Music in Public Worship"), by Henry Cary Shuttleworth.

Comments on use of organs in the C of E, and suggests a return to other instruments.

144

Edinburgh, 1895. 7pp.

Church Music and Choirs, by Hely H. Almond, in *The Divine Life of the Church - Scottish Church Society Conferences, 2nd. series, pp.206-212.*

Echoes Wotherspoon's points (see 142, above).

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