

# PAROCHIAL MUSIC CORRECTED.

CONTAINING



REMARKS on the Performance of PSALMODY in COUNTRY CHURCHES, and on the ridiculous and profane Manner of SINGING practised by the *Methodists*; REFLECTIONS on the bad Performance of PSALMODY in *London, Westminster, &c.* with some Hints for the Improvement of it in PUBLIC WORSHIP; Observations on the Choice and Qualifications of PARISH-CLERKS; the Utility of Teaching *Charity-Children* Psalmody and Hymns; the Use of ORGANS, and the Performance of ORGANISTS.

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By WILLIAM RILEY, Principal Teacher of PSALMODY to the CHARITY-SCHOOLS in *London, Westminster,* and Parts adjacent.

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To which are added,

A Scarce and Valuable Collection of PSALM TUNES by the late Dr BLOW, Dr CROFT, and Mr JEREMIAH CLARKE; with a great Number of New Tunes in Three and Four Parts, and of different Measures, Composed on Purpose for this Work, by some of the Principal COMPOSERS and ORGANISTS in *London.*

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Sing ye Praises with Understanding, PSALM XLVII. 7.  
Let all Things be done decently and in Order, 1 COR. XIV. 40.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR, and Sold at his House in *Great James-street, Bedford-Row, Holborn*; and at most of the MUSIC SHOPS.

M DCC LXII.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

Sir ROBERT LADBROKE, Knt. and Alderman,

(One of the REPRESENTATIVES, and FATHER of the City of LONDON)

P R E S I D E N T;

And to the rest of the Worthy TRUSTEES and SUBSCRIBERS to  
the several CHARITY-SCHOOLS within the BILLS of MORTALITY.

GENTLEMEN,

AS Part of the following Essay sets forth the Utility of Teaching  
Charity-Children Psalmody, I have taken the Liberty to address  
it to You, by whose Benevolence those Children are not only instructed  
in the Principles of the Christian Religion, but are also, with some  
degree of Understanding, taught to join in this Part of Christian  
Worship.

By this Practice many Persons, who before used to esteem Paro-  
chial Singing a trifling Concern, have been induced to bear a Part  
in this Angelic Exercise.

As this Religious Duty is greatly slighted in private Families,  
and totally neglected in most public Schools that are not under  
your Patronage; how much more irregular would the Performance  
thereof be in Churches, were it not for the Instructions the Children  
of the Poor receive by your kind Liberality?

Seeing then, that the decent and orderly Performance of Psalmody so greatly depends upon the Children educated in the Charity-Schools, and as it must be allowed that You are the principal Encouragers thereof; these Motives have emboldened me to claim your Patronage and Protection, hoping that You will receive this well-meant Treatise as a Testimony of my Zeal and Regard for so meritorious an Undertaking, in which You have long been laudably engaged.

Though doubtless there are many who (for Reasons easily to be discerned) will ill-naturedly censure this Performance, yet I have great Reason to hope from the repeated Marks of your Approbation I have long experienced, that You will give it a candid Reception, especially as there is nothing therein proposed or recommended but with a View to promote the Honour of Almighty God, Decency and Regularity in his Worship, and the Edification of his Church.

*I am,*

GENTLEMEN,

*With all due Respect,*

*Your most Obedient,*

*Most Devoted,*

*Humble Servant,*

Great James-street,  
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APRIL, 1762.

WILLIAM RILEY,



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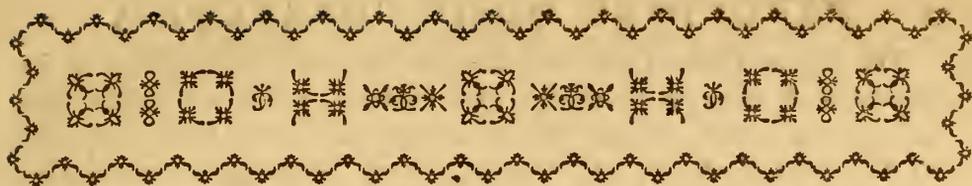
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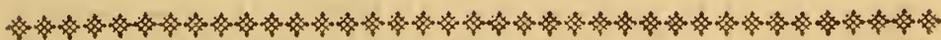
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# Parochial M U S I C Corrected.



## *The Performance of PSALMODY in Country Churches.*

 HE great Neglect and bad Performance of Psalmody, have ever given me much Concern ; and though an Improvement of Parochial Music is rather to be wished than expected ; yet if the following Remarks should in the least contribute to it, they will fully answer my utmost Wishes. I shall therefore, as I proposed, begin with the manner of singing of PSALMS in most Country Churches, which though they are sometimes performed by Persons of tolerable Skill, are nevertheless very improper Tunes for Public Worship, being chiefly the Productions of obscure country Teachers of Psalmody, whose Compositions (as a late learned Prelate \* justly observed) “ are as “ ridiculous as they are new ;” and plainly prove, that such Composers are not acquainted with the first Principles of Harmony, nor even with that Species of Music which is proper for Parochial Singing ; as their Tunes mostly consist of what they call Fuges, or (more properly) Imitations, and are, indeed, fit to be sung by those only who made them.

B

The

\* Bishop GIBSON'S *Directions to the Clergy of his Diocese.*

## 2 PAROCHIAL MUSIC CORRECTED.

The original Psalm-Tunes were composed in an easy Stile, suitable to the Capacities of those for whom they were intended, which are chiefly such as sing only by Ear, and are (as the Title-Page of the Old Version expresses it) *To be sung of all the People together*. That is; those who sing by Ear, should follow the Clerk, who should always sing the Melody; and those who understand Music, should sing the Contra-Tenor, Tenor, or Bass, as their Voices will permit: But the Tunes which are used in Country Churches are too difficult to be remembered, and if they could, none are permitted to sing, unless they join themselves to those who are distinguished by the Appellation of THE SINGERS; who, being placed in a Gallery or Pew, engross this Part of the Public Worship to themselves; which Practice is directly opposite to the original Design and Intention of Psalmody, and deprives many devout Christians of the holy Pleasure they would receive in this Act of Devotion.

Doctor Cave, speaking of the Performance of *Psalmody*, among the Primitive Christians, says thus; \* “ In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a Part, joining all together in a common Celebration of the Praises of GOD.” As it has been therefore thought proper to continue this Practice in all Parochial Churches, till of late Years, it is strange that those whose principal Care should be to guard against all Innovations, should suffer one so great as this to pass unnoticed and without Censure.

I would not be understood, that those who delight to sing by themselves, in different Parts, should be intirely deprived of that Privilege, since that might be a Means of laying Psalmody wholly aside in those Churches; but if they have a Mind to sing an *Antbem*, or *Hymn*, it should be sung in that Part of the Service where the *Antbem* is appointed, or after Sermon; but in the *Singing-Psalms*, which should likewise be constantly used with such Tunes as are sung in *London*, the whole Congregation should join; and then, such as are best qualified would be a Help to those who sing only by Ear.

\* See *Primitive Christianity*, Part I. Chap. IX. Page 177.

*The METHODISTS profane Manner of Singing.*

**I**T may not be improper to make some Observations on the Tunes which are used by the *Methodists*, especially as some of them are creeping into the Churches, being introduced chiefly at Morning and Evening Lectures, where the Congregations, being mostly of that Cast, not only choose such Lecturers as suit their own Turn of Mind, but will also pay the Clerk and Organist to stay away, that Two of their own People may supply their Places; by which Means they have every Thing performed in their own Way: It is true they have not yet ventured to sing Ballad-Tunes, as at the Tabernacle, Foundery, and elsewhere; because by such a Proceedure they would doubtless be forbid the Use of the Church, but the Tunes they commonly use are generally too light and airy for Church-Music; and consequently have nothing in their Composure that may excite a true Spirit of Devotion.

As to the *Methodists* singing of Song-Tunes to their *Hymns*, I believe none of them will deny, since Two of their greatest Preachers so strongly recommend it; and as a Book, intitled *Harmonia Sacra*, has been published by one of their own People, containing a Collection of their Hymn-Tunes, among which are the following Song-Tunes, &c. *viz.* *The DYING SWAN. My Bliss too long my Bride denies*, in the Play of *The Merchant of Venice*. *ARNO'S VALE. Busy curious thirsty Fly. Sure Jocky was the bonniest Swain. A Gavot in HUMPHREYS'S Seventh Concerto*, which if danced to, is an *HORNPIPE. A MARCH in the Opera of RICHARD. Come let us agree. A DIALOGUE between Cupid and Bacchus*, set by the late Mr *PURCELL. Tell me, lovely Shepherd, where. He comes, he comes, &c.* In this Book likewise, is an Hymn, wrote in Defence of singing such Tunes to sacred Words; intitled, *The true Use of MUSIC*, which if the

Reader should not have the Opportunity of perusing, I have here transcribed the most remarkable Verse of it.

- “ *Who on the Part of God will rise,*  
 “ *Innocent Sound recover,*  
 “ *Fly on the Prey, and take the Prize,*  
 “ *Plunder the carnal Lover ;*  
 “ *Strip him of every moving Strain,*  
 “ *Every melting Measure ;*  
 “ *Music in Virtue’s Cause retain,*  
 “ *Rescue the holy Pleasure ?*

Whoever was the Author of these Lines, he seems better acquainted with the amorous Strains of a carnal Lover, than with that Species of Harmony which is contrived to take hold of the finest Part of our Affections, and to raise us above the low Satisfactions of this mortal Life ; for, it is plain he cannot distinguish between sacred and profane Harmony, who calls the most *lascivious Music, innocent Sound, and holy Pleasure.*

But it may be necessary to inform such Persons, that it is the principal Concern of all good Composers, to make their Music expressive of the Sense, or Humour of the Words : If the Subject be divine, the Music should be grave, solemn and seraphic ; but if gay, light or wanton, the Compositions are to be the same, and cannot with any Propriety be afterwards adapted to sacred Words ; for the light airy Melodies, usually adapted to Ballads, have no manner of Connection with Divine Harmony ; and a Composer would be thought to have lost his Reason and Senses, who would set a Penitential *Anthem* in the Style of a *Sonnet*, in which a Lover is represented languishing at the Feet of his Mistress ; or a Thanksgiving-Hymn, in that of a Bacchanalian Song.

M. Rameau, in his *Principles of Composition*, very judiciously points out the Business of a Musical Composer, in the following Words. “ DESIGN, “ in *Music*, is, in general, the Subject of all that the Composer proposes ; “ for

“ for a skilful Composer is to propose to himself a Movement, a Key or  
 “ Mode, a Melody, and an Harmony, agreeable to the Subject he would  
 “ treat. But this Term is to be more particularly adapted to a certain  
 “ Melody, which he would have predominant in the Continuance of a  
 “ Piece, either for making it suitable and agreeable to the Sense of the  
 “ Words, or for Fancy or Taste \*.”

There are three different Species of *Music*, viz. for the Church, the Theatre, and the Chamber ; and every Composer endeavours to preserve them distinct and intire, otherwise his Skill in the Science may justly be disputed : For, (as Mr *Avifon* observes) † “ A well-wrought Allegro, or  
 “ any other quick Movement for the Church, cannot, with Propriety, be  
 “ adapted to Theatrical Purposes ; nor can the Adagio of this latter Kind,  
 “ strictly speaking, be introduced into the former : I have known several  
 “ Experiments of this Nature attempted, but never with Success. For  
 “ the same Pieces which may justly enough be thought very solemn in the  
 “ Theatre, to an experienced Ear, will be found too light and trivial,  
 “ when they are performed in the Church : And this, I may venture to  
 “ assert, would be the Case, though we had never heard them but in some  
 “ Anthem, or other divine Performance ; and were, therefore, not subject  
 “ to the Prejudice, which their being heard in an Opera might occasion.”

There is not only a very material Difference in the Nature of the Compositions, but in the Manner of singing them also ; for an able Performer always distinguishes them by their peculiar Expression. *Tosi* informs us, that “ § By the Ancients (by which he means those who lived about  
 “ Seventy Years ago) Airs were sung in three different Manners ; for the  
 “ Theatre, the Stile was lively and various ; for the Chamber, delicate  
 “ and finished ; and for the Church, moving and grave. This Difference,  
 “ to very many Moderns, is quite unknown.”

If then, Composers, as well as Singers of the greatest Skill, both ancient and modern, have made so great a Distinction between the Church and the Theatre,

\* RAMEAU's *Principles of Composition*, Page 147.

† *Essay on Musical Expression*, Page 122.

§ See *TOSI on the Florid Song*, Page 92.

## 6 PAROCHIAL MUSIC CORRECTED.

Theatre, why will People, who know little or nothing of the Science, pretend to pass their Judgment on Musical Compositions; and think, that all Ballad-Tunes, and other Melodies that happen to please their Ears, must needs be proper Subjects for Divine Worship?

Church-Music ought to be grave, serious, noble and divine; to raise the Affections of the Soul, with the proper Passions of Devotion; *viz.* Joy, Reverence and Admiration; and not the rapturous Strains of unhallowed Love, which pollute the Soul, and fire it with a wanton Passion.

A late Reverend Divine, who was well skilled in the Science of Music, thus expresses himself. “\* The Air of Divine Music is contrived to charm the Soul into Sobriety and Gravity, and to fix her with Delight in Meditation upon the most noble Objects. The other is designed to banish all Thought and Scruple, and transport us with the Delight of this World. The one would transform us into Angels, the other into Brutes. The one is designed to improve our Faculties, the other to destroy them. The one is designed to make us serious, the other to make us *merry*, or rather to make us *mad*. The one will exalt us up to Heaven, and the other may sink us down to Hell. So that if we prefer not Divine Music, the Fault is not in the Music itself; but in our vicious Inclinations, which corrupt the Taste of the Soul, so that like a sick Palate it can relish nothing that is wholesome, or indeed savory; but longs for such Things which would destroy its very Constitution.”

I cannot help relating, that one of my musical Acquaintance, on asking a *Methodist*, who is looked upon by those People as a very great Connoisseur in Music, How they could act so inconsistently, and be so profane, as to sing Hymns to the Deity in such wanton Strains? received this for Answer; That “All Sounds are in themselves innocent, unless made otherwise by corrupt or profane Words; which he looked upon to be the Cause with all Ballad-Tunes; but by applying other Words to them, those innocent Melodies are rescued from the Service of Sin and Satan, and lifted into the Cause of GOD and Religion.”

From

\* Reverend Mr BEDFORD'S *Great Abuse of Music*, Part II. Chap. X. Page 218.

From hence we may observe what mistaken Notions those People have imbibed, by relying too much on the Opinions of such superficial Judges, and mere Pretenders to the Science; it may therefore be proper in this Place to present the Reader with the Opinion of Mr *Avison*, who has treated very learnedly on the Effect which Sounds have on the Passions. His Words are as follow: “ \* If we view this Art in its Foundations, we shall  
 “ find that by the Constitution of Man, it is of mighty Efficacy in working  
 “ both on his Imagination and his Passions. The Force of Harmony, or  
 “ Melody alone, is wonderful on the Imagination. A full Chord struck,  
 “ or a beautiful Succession of single Sounds produced, is no less ravishing  
 “ to the Ear, than just Symmetry or exquisite Colours to the Eye.”

In another Place, speaking of the Sympathy between Sounds and Passions, he says thus; “ † The Force of Sound in alarming the Passions is prodigious. Thus, the Noise of Thunder, the Shouts of War, the Uproar  
 “ of an enraged Ocean, strike us with Terror: So again, there are certain  
 “ Sounds natural to Joy, others to Grief or Despondency, others to Tenderness and Love; and by hearing these, we naturally sympathize with  
 “ those who either enjoy or suffer. Thus Music, either by imitating these  
 “ various Sounds in due Subordination to the Laws of Air and Harmony,  
 “ or by any other Method of Association, bringing the Objects of our  
 “ Passions before us (especially when those Objects are determined, and  
 “ made as it were visibly and intimately present to the Imagination by the  
 “ Help of Words) does naturally raise a Variety of Passions in the human  
 “ Breast, similar to the Sounds which are expressed: And thus, by the  
 “ Musician’s Art, we are often carried into the Fury of a Battle, or a  
 “ Tempest; we are by Turns elated with Joy, or sunk in pleasing Sorrow;  
 “ roused to Courage or quelled by grateful Terrors; melted into Pity,  
 “ Tenderness and Love; or transported to the Regions of Bliss, in an  
 “ Extasy of divine Praise.”

The late learned Doctor *Sherlock*, after having proved the great Effect which Sounds have on the Passions, makes this Inference. “ § Now if  
 “ there

\* *Essay on Musical Expression*, Page 2.

† *Ibid.* Page 3.

§ Sermon on St *Cecilia's* Day.

## 8 PAROCHIAL MUSIC CORRECTED.

“ there is a natural Sympathy between Sounds and Passions, there is no doubt  
 “ but true devotional Music will excite or heighten our devotional Passions;  
 “ as we daily see and complain, that wanton and amorous Airs are apt to  
 “ kindle wanton Fires. For Nature will act like itself, whether we apply  
 “ it to good or bad Purposes. If there is no Force in Music to give a  
 “ good or bad Tincture to the Mind, why do Men complain of wanton  
 “ Songs? If Music doth no Hurt, they may blame the Poet, but neither  
 “ the Composer nor the Singer; but if such Music doth Hurt, we ought  
 “ certainly to turn the Stream, and apply the Science to that which is  
 “ Divine, which will have as great an Influence upon a devout Mind to  
 “ make it better, as the other hath upon a bad one to make it worse.”

I have indeed heard it urged by some of those People who know nothing  
 of Music; That, “ *if they sing with a good Heart, it is no Matter what the*  
 “ *Tunes are.*” To which I answer; that since it is a Matter of Indifference,  
 they may as well not sing at all, or at least they may as well sing the Tunes  
 that are used in Churches. But People of weak Minds are fond of Novelty,  
 and this frothy Way of Singing seems to be of a piece with the flighty  
 Method of Preaching adopted by their Teachers.

However, it is certain that such Tunes, instead of strengthening Devotion,  
 will naturally tend to weaken it; for a serious Mind is disturbed by airy  
 Compositions, as they dissipate the Thoughts, and call the Mind off from  
 the solemn Praises of GOD, to attend on a Variety of ludicrous Sounds;  
 and the Passions they excite generally flow from such silly and absurd Occa-  
 sions, that a Person is ashamed to reflect upon them seriously. And though  
 a Person may happen to be so unmusical, as, that a Song-Tune may not  
 affect him either one way or the other: yet how must his Soul be at once  
 discomposed, and his Devotions frustrated, if by Chance he should call to  
 Mind the Words to which such Tune was originally composed?

The Singing of Ballad-Tunes in Public Worship, is not only ridiculous  
 and profane, but also a very great Impropriety; they being only airy  
 Melodies with thorough Basses for the Harpsichord, and sometimes Ac-  
 companyments for Violins, or other Instruments, as the Composer thinks  
 most proper, which accompanying Parts, being peculiar to the Instruments  
 for

for which they are designed, are by no Means suitable to the Voice; and therefore none of them can be sung, but only the Melody itself: which, on Account of the great Variety of Notes into which it is divided, is therefore rendered very difficult for Practitioners in plain Psalmody, and consequently more so for those who sing only by ear, but especially for a large Congregation to sing together. But Psalm-Tunes are adapted to the meanest Capacity, and are contrived more for the Sake of Harmony than Melody; and those who by solfaing are capable of learning the Melodies, may by the same Rule learn the other Parts also. And even those who have nothing more to direct them than a tolerable Ear, may learn the Melodies by the least Attention imaginable.

It has indeed been objected, that our Psalm-Tunes are Compositions of too dull and heavy a Nature to answer the End proposed; but this Objection might easily be removed by singing them faster, and making use of the *Appoggiatura* \* more frequently, which would greatly enliven them, and make them appear quite another Kind of Performance; an Improvement of this Sort had been much to their Credit, but for their pretended Reformation in singing, I think they cannot be sufficiently censured.

How this ludicrous Manner of hymning the Deity crept in among those People may perhaps with Difficulty be accounted for, unless they had the Example from *Italy*, where, (as Mr *Galliard* informs us) “ The Church-  
“ Music, far from keeping the Majesty it ought, is vastly abused the other  
“ Way; and some Singers have had the Impudence to have other Words  
“ put to favourite Opera-Airs, and sung them in Churches †.”

The ancient Fathers have complained of this Abuse, and General Councils have likewise condemned it; one of which hath these Words: “ § We  
“ command, that the Musical Singing in the Churches be distinct and  
“ different, moving the Heart to Devotion and Compunction; and there-  
“ fore those Things were not to be heard in Churches, under Pretence of

C

“ Musical

\* For a full Explanation of this Word, read *TOSI* on *The Florid Song*, Chap. II.

† *Observations on the Florid Song*, Page 119.

§ *Concilium Senonense*, Can. 17.

“Musical Singing, which were wanton and lascivious.” And the Council of *Trent* likewise decreed, that “\* All impure, lascivious, amorous, and “secular Music, favouring of Levity and Folly, should be excluded the “Church.” The Church of *England* at the Reformation seems greatly to approve this Canon, by the Joy expressed in one of our Homilies †, that so profane a Practice was laid aside, and also by the Tunes which were then composed for the Psalms in Metre, which, though nothing but plain Counterpoint, are full of Harmony, to which such light Ballad-Tunes must always give place.

Whatever Improvements then in religious Singing those deluded People, called *Methodists*, may pretend to have made; I am persuaded that what has been said to the contrary must have Weight with all judicious and well-meaning People, who doubtless will condemn such Practices as profane and irreligious, or, as the wild Chimeras of a distempered Brain.

Since Music then is capable of being made acceptable and well-pleasing to GOD, and an Help to Devotion, I hope the Established Church will never follow the Example of these frantic Enthusiasts, in *stripping the carnal Lover of his MOVING Strains and MELTING Measures*; especially as there is such a Variety of Compositions which are far more suitable to the all-pure Worship of Him, who will not accept of that which is devoted to his Enemy.

I shall conclude this Head with some Lines wrote by an Organist in the City, (on hearing the *Gloria in Excelsis* sung in the Opera Stile) which, together, with a Psalm-Tune of his Composition he sent me, with Leave to print them.

*Let no unballowed Airs presume  
T'approach this awful Place!  
(Th' accustom'd Levities of Rome,  
Devoid of Sense and Grace:)  
Let solemn Hymns of sacred Praise  
To solemn Notes be join'd:  
They then Devotion's Flame will raise,  
And elevate the Mind.*

\* *Concil. Trident. Sess. 22.*

† *Homily of the Time and Place of Prayer.*

*The bad Performance of PSALMODY in London, &c.*

AS the finging of improper Tunes in Public Worship is attended with such Consequences, let us consider whether the irregular Performance of our own PSALM-TUNES, has not in a great Measure been the Occasion of it.

The Psalm-Tunes then, though the most plain and easy of all Musical Compositions, are nevertheless, in general, performed in a very shocking Manner, particularly in small Congregations, where there is no Organ, an unskilful Clerk, and no Charity-Children, or perhaps such only as are not regularly taught; here the Melodies are constantly used, without so much as the Addition of one single Part, (unless by Accident) with numberless disagreeable Tunes and improper Graces, and falling from the Treble to the Bass, which last Instance may be almost constantly observed, particularly in *Windsor Tune*, in the first and third Lines of which, instead of falling a Semitone on the last Note, they usually fall a Fourth, and sing the last Line entirely wrong, as likewise the third and fourth Lines of *Southwell*, and the cXLVIII<sup>th</sup> almost throughout; and indeed I cannot recollect any one of the old Tunes that is sung correctly. The appointing of Tunes suitable to the different Subjects of the Psalms, though very material, is however very little regarded; and it is often observed that Tunes in *flat* Keys have been sung to *Thanksgiving Psalms*, and those in *sharp* Keys to *Penitential Psalms*; both which are very improper when thus adapted, because those Keys operate very differently on our Passions, the former produces in us a melancholy Disposition of Mind, the latter a cheerful one. This Impropriety mostly happens where the Clerk leaves the Choice of the Tunes to the Organist, for which (if he is diffident of his own Judgment) he is to be commended, provided he likewise acquaints him what Psalms he intends to sing, that the one may be suited to the other; otherwise if he should happen to set a *Thanksgiving Psalm*, and the Organist play a Tune

in a flat Key, such a Contradiction must appear very absurd to every judicious Person; and though it may not be taken so much Notice of by others, yet it is certain that it cannot have its proper Effect, neither is it possible it should contribute to that *Decency and Order*, so necessary to keep up the Dignity of Religious Worship.

In Churches which have no Organs, or on Days in which they are not played, some Clerks find a great Difficulty in pitching the Tunes properly, for want of knowing their Compass of Voice: To such I would recommend the Use of a Concert Pitch-Pipe as a sure Guide, by which, though they do not understand Music, they might be taught, in one Hour, to begin every Tune in its proper Key, that is, so as not go higher than E, or lower than D, which, indeed, should be the Compass of all Psalm-Tunes. The Method is so very easy, as well as useful, that I have taught it with great Success at several Charity-Schools, at which Places, though the Children could sing the Psalm-Tunes very well, yet they could not pitch them with any Certainty, till at my Request their Trustees had furnished them with Pitch-Pipes, and which they now constantly use, when they sing Psalms in their Schools, at Morning and Evening Prayer. This prevents the many Inconveniencies which attend such as are not skilled in Psalmody, because it gives the very same Sound that an Organ should, and which none can mistake that has a tolerable Ear. But when a Tune is pitched at random by an unskilful Person, it is a very great Chance if he does not begin above, or below the proper Key, (for a Mistake of this Kind is sometimes committed even by a Person whose Judgment in every other Respect might be depended upon, if his Voice be a Contra Tenor, or a Bass) by which Means the Tune will generally be found to be out of the Compass of most Voices; and the People, rather than sing in Pain, will sometimes leave off in the Middle of a Verse, and let the Clerk go through the Remainder as well as he can by himself, who, being out of Breath, and quite hoarse with straining, does it with great Difficulty, and is then obliged to begin the next Verse either higher or lower, as the Case requires, and then perhaps is as much out of the Key as before.

Now

Now if those who sing in Country Churches, being chiefly tolerable Proficients in Psalmody, will not attempt to begin either Psalm, Hymn, or Anthem without first receiving the Pitch from a Pipe: I wonder how a Person can presume to stand up in a Parish-Church, and exhort the People to *sing to the Praise and Glory of God*, when he, (whose Business it is to lead them) so far from knowing the Note on which he should begin, is often at a loss for a Tune; the Consequence of which is, the People are obliged to guess at his Meaning, so that three or four Tunes are often sung at one Time. No Person, however qualified, can sing till the Clerk has begun some Tune or other, and many who (though not qualified, but having good Ears) might perform very well, are obliged to remain silent for want of an intelligible Leader.

It may here be objected, that the introducing of any Thing new or uncommon, might give many People Offence, and from such as were not acquainted with the Intent or Use thereof, it might extort a Smile, or be made a Jest of; but these Objections could be made by such only, whose Ears being unmusical, look on the Performance of Psalmody as a Matter of Indifference, and who perhaps would be better pleased if there was no singing at all, unless to keep up the old Custom, for which People are too often greater Advocates than for Things of more Consequence: And in my Opinion, those who lead the People wrong, by the repeated Blunders they commit in this Particular, are more liable to be the Subject of Ridicule, than those whose modest Diffidence obliges them to be governed by the certain Sound of a Pipe.

Let it not be supposed that a Pitch-Pipe in a Parish Clerk's Desk, would be a new Thing, because I have known them to be used by several of my Acquaintance; and there is one in the Clerk's Desk at *St Peter's, Cornhill*, to pitch the Tunes by when the Organ is not played, which sounds by the Wind it receives from small Bellows, both which are out of Sight, and can be heard by few beside the Clerk; such a one as this I would recommend. A Pipe is likewise constantly used in the Chapel of the *ASYLUM*, or House of Refuge for Orphan Girls, near *Westminster-Bridge*, at the Instance of one of the Governors, a Gentleman who looks on Psalmody

Pfalmody as a principal Part of Divine Service, and therefore takes care to have it performed in a regular and decent Manner.

The Reading of the Psalm Line by Line, is a very ancient Practice, and has formerly been recommended by many Reverend Ministers, for the Benefit of the Illiterate ; and it has been as much condemned by others, as a very absurd Custom, because it sometimes occasions the Clerk to lose not only the Key in which he is singing, but very often the Tune ; for this is certainly the most difficult Part of a Clerk's Duty, as it requires a very good Voice, and more Judgment than ordinary, two Requisites rarely to be found in one Person. Each Line should be read distinctly and audibly, in one continued solemn Tone, after the Manner of chanting the general Confession in Cathedrals, but rather more deliberate ; and in reading each Line, the Tone should be sometimes varied, and that according as the first Note rises or falls, and sometimes a Third, Fourth or Fifth above, or below it, as shall appear most musical in the Judgment of the Singer : And though this would contribute much to the Regularity of the Performance, yet, in order to preserve Decency, Sense and Harmony, it is much to be wished, that this irregular Practice was intirely laid aside, and that we might sing like the foreign Protestants. I acknowledge there might formerly be a Necessity for reading every Line before it was sung, by which the Ignorant received both Instruction in their Duty, and Improvement in their Devotion : But in this enlightened Age, there are so many Charity-Schools, in which the Children of the Poor are taught to Read, &c. that it is now become altogether needless ; and if the Illiterate are so much to be considered in this Part of Worship, I think it should be performed in every Church alike, especially since it may be more commendably practised with an Organ than without ; for it is certainly as proper for the Organ to stop while each Line is read, as it is for the People, while the Organist is making a long Shake, or breaking the Connection of the Lines by a tedious Interlude, though both are equally bad : And though we have an Instance of Pfalmody being thus performed with an Organ in *White-Hall* Chapel, yet, I hope it will spread no farther, since, (as the late ingenious Dr *Watts* justly observed) so “ many Inconveniencies must always attend  
“ this

“ this unhappy Manner of finging.” Unhappy indeed, for I know no other Purpose it now answers, than to spoil the Sense of the Words and Harmony of the Tune; to embarrass the Clerk, to protract the Service, and to render the Peoples Books useles, which is indeed unnecessary, for they are already too apt to neglect the Use of them in this Part of Worship.

There is a Custom, which, though a very prevailing one, is certainly very absurd, as it either occasions many good Tunes to be very little used, or several of the Psalms to be too often repeated; and this is by confining several Tunes to certain particular Psalms in common Measure, such as the XVIII<sup>th</sup>, the LXXXI<sup>st</sup>, &c. both which Tunes I believe are seldom if ever sung to any other Psalms, being known only by the Names of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> and the LXXXI<sup>st</sup> proper; which signifies, that they are proper to be sung to those Psalms only; so that if a Person wants to hear the LXXXI<sup>st</sup>, it being a great Favourite, he asks the Clerk to oblige him with the LXXXI<sup>st</sup> Psalm, by which Means the same Psalm is constantly sung to that Tune, or else, where the Tune is not so much regarded, that Psalm is seldom sung, whereas the Tune may be sung to any other Psalms in common Measure, provided they consist of Praise and Thanksgiving.

In order therefore to render this Tune more universal, I have printed it with other Words, and have likewise taken the Liberty to dedicate it to *St Paul*, that it may no longer be confined to, or known only by the Name of the Psalm to which it has been hitherto constantly sung, but distinguished by a general Name, like every other Tune in that Measure.

I cannot help taking notice, that in Opposition to the Opinion of many good Judges of Music, there are several Clerks who still continue the Use of some Psalm-Tunes, which are really very bad Compositions, such as *London Old*, *Martyrs*, &c. which have nothing more to recommend them than their Antiquity; and I must say, that a Psalm can be hardly more abused, than when sung to one of those Tunes.

There are likewise some, whose Singularity in the Performance of Psalmody in their own Churches, is the Occasion of much Confusion and Disorder, which is, by singing some Tunes in Triple Time, which were originally composed, and have been sung ever since till very lately in all Churches within the

Bills of Mortality, in Common Time, and likewise by making a Repetition of the last Line in each Verse of the CIV<sup>th</sup> Psalm: Such Innovations, instead of improving Parochial Singing, will naturally render it very difficult, unless such Alterations were made general, because as most People sing by Ear, it is scarcely possible that they should be capable of singing one Tune two different Ways; for suppose a Man with a very strong Voice, who has been used to sing those Tunes in Triple Time, should go into a Church where a small Congregation are singing one of the same Tunes in Common Time, he, for want of an Ear capable to distinguish the Difference, begins to sing the Way he has been accustomed to, and so misleads one half of the Congregation, and even those Congregations (which indeed are not many) who have made such Alterations, may often feel the Effects of their Singularity; for if only five or six Persons from different Parishes where they sing such Tunes in Common Time, should come in, while these Tunes are singing, which may often be the Case, though perhaps they may not have the Strength of Voice sufficient to put a large Congregation entirely out; yet I am sure such Discords will arise from their unequal Ways of singing, as must render such a Performance extremely disagreeable, and indeed shocking. And therefore it would be more adviseable, where People are fond of Variety of Tunes, to make choice of a Set of new ones, that will stand the Test of Judges, and perform the old Tunes as they were originally composed.

It may not be amiss here to take notice of the tedious Manner of singing the Psalms in most Churches, which is very near as slow again as they were at first intended; by which Means, the Air of the Melody being lost, such People, whose Ears are but indifferent, often strike into a different Tune.

The Clerk, by this idle Practice of drawling out the Tunes, is likewise often put to his Shifts to find proper Portions of Psalms, of convenient Lengths, being confined, according to the Custom of most Churches, to sing no more than four Verses for their longest Psalm; whereas, if the Tunes were sung in Alla-Breve Time, as designed by their Composers, we might sing seven or eight Verses in as little Time, and with much more Ease.

Dr *Watts*, in his Preface to his *Paraphrase on the Psalms*, remarks with much Concern the Absurdity of this Custom. His Words are as follow :  
 “ \* It were to be wished that we might not dwell so long upon every single  
 “ Note, and produce the Syllables to such a tiresome Extent with a constant  
 “ Uniformity of Time; which disgraces the Music, and puts the Congre-  
 “ gation quite out of Breath in singing five or six Stanzas : whereas, if the  
 “ Method of Singing were but reformed to a greater Speed in Pronunciation,  
 “ we might often enjoy the Pleasure of a longer Psalm with less Expence of  
 “ Time and Breath; and our Psalmody would be more agreeable to that  
 “ of the ancient Churches, more intelligible to others, and more delightful  
 “ to ourselves.”

Though a general Reformation of this Sort seems rather impracticable, while People act in Opposition to every Attempt that can be made for the Improvement of Psalmody : yet, in some Churches, it may be effected, but this must be where the Clerks know their Duty, and, in Conjunction with the Organists, by frequent Repetition, bring the Congregations to it by Degree; and where there are Charity-Children, some previous Instructions for this Purpose, being absolutely necessary for them, will greatly facilitate this Undertaking.

The Custom of singing Psalms in Public Worship not being so frequent as formerly, I suppose may be one Reason why People seem so indifferent and so little affected with it, and in general sing so badly; for as the constant Use of this Exercise must naturally tend to make it familiar and easy; so must every Omission of it gradually render it difficult and strange, since it is chiefly performed by Ear. The Title Page of the Old Version of Psalms directs them to be sung “ before and after Morning and Evening  
 “ Prayer, also before and after Sermon, and moreover in private Houses  
 “ for their godly Solace and Comfort.” How far this last Part of the Direction is complied with, is not my Business to inquire here; but it is too well known what little Regard is paid to the former, since (whatever has been formerly practised) there is now no singing, either before Morning or Evening Prayer, nor any after the Morning Sermon, in most Churches.

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\* See *Preface*, Page 29.

And in the Afternoon, the *Gloria Patri* is often thought sufficient to be sung after Sermon: In some Churches this Practice is settled by Custom, in others it is only occasional; but both with a View to shorten the Service, while at the same time the Length of the Voluntaries and Interludes are not considered, but the Organist is permitted to play sometimes more than a Quarter of an Hour before the first Lesson, and the Giving-out, with the Interludes of two Psalms, often take up Ten Minutes more, so that near Half an Hour is too often spent in amusing our Ears, which ought rather to be employed in Psalmody, as being recommended to us in holy Scripture as one special Means of Edification. The Use of it is likewise much neglected at Daily Prayers, and between the Services on Saints-Days; which I suppose has been chiefly owing to the Indulgence of Ministers to such Clerks who have not been capable to set a Psalm without an Organ, or the Assistance of Charity-Children. This is a great Pity, since at such Times with a good Clerk the greatest Improvements might be made; for it must be acknowledged, that a small Congregation is much easier to lead than a large one.

I cannot but likewise observe, that though Psalmody has ever been reckoned a very material Part of Divine Worship, both in the Jewish and Christian Church, and particularly in the Church of *England*: that it is now performed with as little Devotion as Judgment, and even treated with the greatest Contempt by many who affect Politeness, and who think it beneath the Dignity of a Person of Fashion to join in this heavenly Exercise in Honour to their Creator. Others there are, who though they do assist in this high Act of Devotion, do it with the utmost Indifference; and while they sing the Praises of their *G O D*, or address him in the most solemn Psalm of Prayer, irreverently sit, as though they sung only for their Amusement, or to pass away a few idle Minutes while the Minister ascends the Pulpit.

The late Reverend Dr *Warren*, in his Discourse of *Reverencing God's Sanctuary*, writes thus; “ Whenever we read, or sing *G O D*'s Praises, “ contained in the Psalms of *David* and other holy Men, let us not refuse “ to stand; *standing* being the most proper Posture for Thanksgivings “ and Lauds.” To this End we read, Psalm II. ver. 11. *Rejoice unto*  
*him*

*him with Reverence.* And Psalm CXXXIV. *Praise the Name of the LORD STANDING in the Courts of the LORD's House.* And in the Second Book of *Chronicles*, the seventh Chapter and sixth Verse; *All Israel stood when the Priests and Levites praised the LORD.*

And as in Conformity to these Parts of Scripture the Rubrick appoints the *Psalms* to be read by the Congregation *STANDING*, we may therefore reasonably suppose that the same Decency and Reverence should be observed when they are *sung*. In short (as a late ingenious Author observes) “ \* to “ see this fairest Daughter of Devotion, and darling of Protestants beyond “ Sea, so slighted amongst us, is not much for our Credit; our great “ Decay in Piety, and Growth in Profaneness, having been imputed by “ eminent Divines, in no small Measure, to our Neglect of and bad Per- “ formance in Psalmody.”

*The Choice and Qualifications of PARISH - CLERKS.*

**H**ERE it may not be improper to make some Observations on the Choice and Qualifications of Parish-Clerks, who are intended as Leaders of the Congregations, and on whom the decent and orderly Performance of this Part of our Public Devotions chiefly depend; for which Reason the Ninety-first Canon of our Church expressly enjoins, that they shall be Persons not only “ of honest Conversation, but sufficient for their “ Reading, Writing, and also for their competent Skill in Singing.” Which Canon, (says the late Bishop of London †, in his *Directions to the Clergy of his Diocese*) “ was made on Purpose to guard against the Indecencies “ that Parish-Clerks who are not duly qualified always bring into the “ Public Worship.” This is certainly a very just Observation, for an unskilful Person not only commits many Irregularities, but is also the Occasion of so much Indifference among many People towards the singing of Psalms,

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\* *An Essay for the promoting of Psalmody*, Preface.

† See Bishop GIBSON's *Directions*, &c.

who for want of a proper Person to lead them, will rather shut their Books and remain silent, than join a harsh Jargon of inharmonious Sounds; while others, whose Ears are less capable of distinguishing, are led into the most ridiculous manner of singing, who with the Assistance of a Clerk properly qualified, might otherwise have made a tolerable Proficiency in most of the Tunes that are used in Parish-Churches.

That great Prelate aforesaid, being truly sensible of this, farther says, “ In Conformity to which Canon it is to be hoped, that as there shall be  
 “ Occasion, Ministers (setting aside all private Regards and Applications)  
 “ will choose such Persons to be their Clerks, as are known to be of honest  
 “ Conversation, and of Ability to perform the Part that belongs to them  
 “ decently and laudably.” It were therefore to be wished, that both the *Canon* and his Lordship’s *Directions* were more strictly observed, as well by Ministers as by such Parishes as choose their own Clerks; and till they are, we must not expect to have Psalmody performed skilfully or even decently; but especially while the Practice of Ministers choosing their Curates into this Office so commonly prevails, who though sometimes are very sufficiently paid by what arises from the Parish-Clerk’s Salary, Fees and Perquisites, are, notwithstanding, displeas’d with their Title, which some of them have changed, and assume the Name of *Clerks in Orders*. It is true, the Parish-Clerks were anciently of the Clergy, as their Name imports, but as this Office has, for Time immemorial, and doubtless for good Reasons, been supplied by the Laity, (who are called in the Canon, *Parish-Clerks*) I cannot see that the Clergy have now any sort of Right to it; especially since they are ashamed of the Title. And as the Dignity of their Order exempts them from officiating as such, they of Necessity must have Deputies, who are often chosen from the menial Servants of the Church, as it is pretended to serve them, by adding something more to their Salary, who, as they are much employed in the Business of the Parish, accept such Places upon lower Terms than perhaps any other Persons would; which, in all Probability, is the chief Thing intended; while the Qualifications enjoined by the Canon, and so strongly recommended by the Bishop, are not in the least considered; so that by this modern Method  
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of deputizing, a Parish is feldom well ferved in the Office of a Clerk, though it is obliged to pay him *his accustomed Wages, without Fraud or Diminution*, (as the Canon enjoins) which in some Parishes are very considerable, and might often be a Means to induce Persons extremely well qualified (such as now adorn the Cathedrals) to become Candidates for fuch Clerkships when vacant, provided Merit was to take Place, but this alas very feldom happens; for when a Parish has it in their own Power to choofe their Clerk, they commonly beftow it on a decayed Inhabitant, who perhaps feldom frequented the Church in his Profperity; and as for learning of Pfalmody it had never once entered his Head, fupposing it to be a Qualification unnecessary for any other than Parish-Clerks, &c. which Office, he had never expected to be reduced to the Necessity of petitioning for; but upon hearing of the Clerkship being vacant, instantly becomes a thorough Churchman, and would willingly be thought the beft Pfalm-Singer in the Parish. But after his Election (if it fo happens) he takes no other Opportunity of improving himself, than to attend now and then the weekly Meeting of Parish-Clerks at their Hall, where they fing Pfalms, accompanied with an Organ, for about an Hour.

Now though this Custom is in itself very commendable, as it not only promotes brotherly Affection, but is alfo one Means of Pfalmody being performed in most Churches alike: yet if he has not had fome Instructions previous to fuch Meetings, he will be very little, if any thing, the better for his Attendance; for there he only follows the Organ, and thofe who fing, which is eafy enough to one whose Ear is good; but when he comes to his own Church, he is there obliged to be the Leader, and frequently without an Organ, which requires not only a competent Skill, but a powerful Voice. However, as thofe who elected him are quite indifferent with regard to his Performances, he has no Business to find Fault with himself, and fo fits down fatisfied with his Income, and contented with being capable of Blundering over one or two Pfalm-Tunes, which, perhaps, he is obliged to do every Day.

It is very poffible that I shall incur the Difpleafure of fome whose feccular Views may be a little frustrated by what I have faid, but I cannot help relating

relating Facts as they are, and I do declare that through such partial Elections, I have known *York Tune* to be sung fifteen Times in a Week at one Church; in another, the *Gloria Patri* sung to *Windfor Tune*; in a Third, the CIV<sup>th</sup> Psalm sung on King *Charles's* Martyrdom, and on *Ass-Wednesday*; and in a Fourth the CXVII<sup>th</sup> Psalm sung constantly to *London Old Tune*. Therefore those Parishes would do well to consider, that though by such Election, they alleviate the Distresses of a Parishioner, yet by the same Means, this divine and heavenly Exercise is made subject to the highest Degree of Ridicule and Contempt, to the Dishonour of Almighty GOD, and the Scandal of Religion; and that if they would do a meritorious Action, by regulating their Workhouses, and making a separate Provision between Housekeepers, who have largely contributed to the Maintenance of the Poor, and those who claim a Right to the Parish only by Servitude, &c. then such decayed Inhabitants would have no Occasion to press their Fellow-Parishioners, to bestow on them a Place for which they are by no Means qualified.

To give a poor Inhabitant the Sexton's Place-(for which little more than the Knowledge of the right Hand from the Left is a sufficient Qualification) is not only a Point of Justice but of Charity; but to make a Man Parish-Clerk, who has nothing more to recommend him than his Poverty, is extremely absurd; and by the same Rule, they might make him Organist, and he might put in a Deputy, as those Organists do who have more Places than one.

I doubt whether any of those charitable Persons would take a Servant into their own Houses, whom they knew was not capable of performing the Duties required; then why should they not take the same Care in the Choice of Servants for the House of GOD, in which every Thing should *be done decently and in Order*. However, where they are determined to make Choice of a poor Parishioner, let them at the same Time show an equal Regard for the decent Performance of this Part of the Public Service, by choosing an Assistant to be in or near the Desk, and to begin the Psalm for him, after he has named it; the Expence of which would be very trifling, where they sing only on *Sundays*; and this I have known to be done

done in several Parishes, both in Town and Country, by which I think they have in some Measure atoned for their misguided Charity.

It is a great Scandal to the Established Church to have so essential a Part of our Public Devotions so wretchedly performed, when other Congregations (the Dissenters in particular) so very much excel us. But this is easy enough to be accounted for, since they commonly choose such Persons to be their Clerks as are not only capable of performing their Duty with Decency and Propriety, but of teaching others to join with them; for which Purpose it is a Custom with many of them to give great Encouragement to their Clerk, by causing the younger Part of the Congregation to meet him weekly in their Vestry-Room, where they are taught to *sing Praises with Understanding*. This Practice is truly laudable, and worthy our Imitation, for as it tends to promote the Honour of GOD, so it likewise promotes the Edification of his Church, and is also a great Inducement to young People to be more constant in attending Divine Service.

As therefore a regular and decent Performance of this Part of Worship depends so greatly on the Parish-Clerks, it is highly necessary that a strict Regard be had to their Qualifications, especially in Churches which have no Organs; for there indeed the Abilities of the Clerks are still more requisite.

Before I quit this Head, it may be necessary to observe, that the Parish-Clerks have been a Company about Five hundred Years, and were first incorporated by King *Henry the Third*, who distinguished them by the Title of *The Brotherhood of St Nicholas*. They were then held in great Esteem, even by Persons of the first Rank, because they excelled in the Performance of Church-Music, and made it a principal Part of their Study. Their Charter was again renewed by King *Charles the First*, who incorporated them by the Name of *The Master, Wardens and Fellowship of Parish-Church-Clerks of the City and Suburbs of London, and the Liberties thereof, the City of Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and the Fifteen Out-Parishes adjacent*. This Charter grants them very ample Privileges, which would be of much Benefit to the Company in general, and each Member in particular, did they more strictly abide by it. However, I shall only mention

one, and that because it exactly coincides with the Canon relating to the Choice of Parish-Clerks, which is much to this Purpose; *viz.* *That every Person who is chosen Clerk of a Parish, shall first give sufficient Proof of his Abilities to sing, at least the Tunes which are used in Parish-Churches, to the Master, Wardens and Court of Assistants of the Company of Parish-Clerks.* Pity it is that so material a Part of their Charter is now no longer insisted on; by which, they would not only avoid the many Reflections they are now subject to, but prevent the Abuses which are daily committed, through the Incapacity of unqualified Persons.

*The Utility of Teaching Charity-Children* PSALMODY.

IN this Place it may be proper to take Notice of Charity-Children, who are of great Use in this Part of Divine Service, when due Instructions are given them for that Purpose. And this comes strongly recommended in the *aforefaid Directions* of the late Bishop of London, as follows. “ \* And “ to the End the Psalms may be sung in a more decent Manner; it is further to be wished, that the People of every Parish, and especially the Youth, were trained up and accustomed to an orderly Way of singing; since that is the proper Season of forming the Voice, as well as the Mind, and the Regularity into which it is then cast with great Ease will remain with them during Life.” Hence it is plain, that his Lordship thought it as necessary for these poor Children to be taught to sing the Praises of their bountiful Creator, as those who are blest with a higher Birth, Education and Fortune. Besides this Duty can be no where supported by such Authority as in these Schools, as the Ministers of Parishes, (being generally Trustees) have a far greater Power and Opportunity to introduce this Exercise in them, than among their Parishioners. For how many thousand Children of both Sexes, belonging to other Schools, are never taught to sing Psalms, either by Ear or otherwise, their Parents giving themselves no manner

\* See Bishop GIBSON'S *Directions*, &c.

manner of Concern about it, thinking it a Matter of little or no Importance, or a Qualification too mean and unpolite for Children of superior Condition; who though they are very often taught the Harpsichord, are, notwithstanding, seldom, if ever, permitted either to play or sing a Psalm-Tune, because that cannot so well shew the Abilities of their Children, as in playing or singing a Song. Thus a Contempt for Psalmody is commonly very early contracted, and young People are apt to imbibe the Opinion which is spoken in the Character of the Page, in Mr *Otway's* Tragedy of the *Orphan*; who being ordered by his Lord to go, and employ himself in singing of Psalms; very pertly answers him, that “Boys that go to School sing Psalms; but Pages, that are better bred, sing “Lampoons.”

This Opinion too frequently grows up with them; so that between those who are not taught, and those who think it mean to employ their Talents this Way, this Exercise is almost totally neglected; and were it not for Charity-Children being taught Psalmody, the Performance would be very indecent indeed, especially in Churches which have no Organs, and unskilful Clerks.

How delightfully might Psalmody be performed, if every one would contribute all the Assistance in their Power? First, Let those in Authority choose such Clerks as are fit for their Office, and where there are Charity-Children, let the Master who teaches them to sing by Ear, learn them to sing the Psalm-Tunes very plain, and not with the usual disagreeable Turns, likewise a little faster than common, and not quite so loud. How excellent would the sweet Female Trebles likewise render the Performance, if young Ladies, who learn to sing and play on the Harpsichord, could be persuaded to join. What pity is it that they should be so bashful and ashamed of doing their Duty to GOD; when if asked to sing at Home, it would be looked upon as a Breach of good Manners to refuse.

Those young Gentlemen who have likewise learnt the Harpsichord, or other Instruments, by which they have gained a tolerable Notion of Singing, would also be of great Use, and more so when arrived at the Age of Ma-

turity, by finging the other Parts, which would render the Harmony quite complete.

I have already mentioned that the Youth in the common Pay-Schools are not taught Psalmody; by which Neglect, when they grow up, they are intire Strangers to it, and so cannot join in this Exercise at all. If therefore they were taught only as the Charity-Children are, it would become both familiar and delightful to them, and prevent the many idle Excuses which are usually made for their Inattention and Silence in this Part of our Public Devotions. The Expence of which would be so trifling, that People even of the lowest Class might comply with it.

However, as we may naturally conclude from the Indifference of People in general towards Psalmody, that such a Proposition will never succeed; it ought therefore to be made a Parochial Concern; and a Person be employed at the Expence of each Parish, upon the same Terms as at the Charity-Schools, to teach all the Servants and Children; who should be sent to their Parish-Church on a fixt Day and Hour, every Week, for that Purpose.

As one Part of my Employment is to teach Charity-Children the Hymns, which they sing on the Days of their Collections, and as this Practice has been objected to by several Gentlemen; I shall endeavour to answer some of the most material Objections that have been made: *viz.* “ That it makes them proud, and sets them above their Condition. That it makes them Songsters and fond of Company, consequently bad Apprentices and Servants.”

To the first Objection I answer, that there is nothing in this Kind of Instruction that may make them prouder than Children generally are, whose Genius is superior to their Schoolfellows, either in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, or any other Branch of Learning. And in this Particular their Capacity is the principal Thing, for they are not taught to sing by the Rules of Music, as that would be a superfluous Qualification for those who are intended for laborious Trades and Services, and in all Probability might render them incapable of answering the good Purposes intended,

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by setting them above their Condition. Therefore in this Respect they have nothing more to make them vain, than what pure Nature has endowed them with.

To the Second, I answer; That as Nature has furnished some of them with good Ears and Voices, they are naturally inclined to imitate every thing they hear that is musical. I have observed Children in the Street, while Bells have been ringing, to hit the Sound of every Bell, with the greatest Nicety imaginable; and others to imitate some of the most difficult Changes in a very surprizing Manner. And such Children can no more help learning of Tunes which they hear played in the Streets on Fiddles, Cymbals, or Box-Organs, than they whose Talents are for Arithmetic can help learning farther than their Master either chooses or has Orders to teach them. But the greatest Misfortune is, they are apt to learn every Song they hear from the Ballad-Singers, with which our Streets at this time most shamefully abound. Their Subjects are generally profane or vicious, and naturally *tend to the nourishing of Vice, and corrupting of Youth*, though not so well understood by Children. And, as the Reverend Mr *Bedford* observes, “ \* The Time of their Youth is the Time when they are most musical, “ when they have no other Cares to divert their Thoughts and encumber “ their Minds. They generally learn these Things before the Mind can “ be seasoned with any Sense or Knowledge of Religion; so that the Devil “ hath the Advantage of the first breaking-up of the Ground to sow his “ Tares. They have at this time no Understanding to discern between “ Good and Evil, and therefore take in all without Distinction. They “ are delighted with Singing, Play and Merriment; and therefore greedily “ catch at all these Things, when nothing that is grave, solid or serious, “ can be admitted without Reluctancy. Besides, as for Love, they know “ not yet what it means, and therefore learn the most scandalous, smutty “ Love-Songs, and many times sing them in Company, without the least “ Concern, thinking them to be the most inoffensive.” Now these they

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would

would learn, (their Ears being musical) in spite of all Opposition, though they had never heard or sung an Hymn in their Lives; for I have known several Children, who from their Infancy being fond of Music, have at length turned out Songsters, (as they are called) who were never taught to sing by Rule, nor brought up in Charity-Schools, consequently were never taught to sing Hymns by Ear.

As for such of the Charity-Children as are taught Hymns, they are always those whom Nature has furnished with good Ears and tunable Voices, who, as aforesaid, learn every thing they hear. It is true they cannot learn Hymns, unless they are taught, but the Teaching of them Hymns does not instruct them in the singing of Songs, because they are not taught by Rule. Their learning of corrupt Ballads then by Accident, may probably one time or other prove very prejudicial to them; but their learning of Hymns, at the same time that they please the Ear, they implant in their tender Minds the strictest Notions of Virtue and Religion. Now were those Hymns sung to the common Psalm-Tunes, they would not be altogether so inviting to a musical Ear; but the Melodies being suited to the Words, in a pleasant easy Style, afford at once an innocent Amusement, and a Lesson of Instruction. As I have gone into some Schools, where Part of the Children have been employed in braiding of Nets, winding of Silk, or other industrious Employments, I have stood and listened on hearing them sing while at Work, and found, that they were not singing a Song but an Hymn. This has afforded me inexpressible Pleasure, and I could not but call to Mind that Passage in Dr CAVE'S *Primitive Christianity*, which tells us, “ \* That Religion was instilled into  
 “ the ancient Christians betimes, which grew up and mixed itself with  
 “ their ordinary Labours and Recreations; insomuch that the most rude  
 “ and illiterate Persons, instead of profane and wanton Songs, which  
 “ vitiate and corrupt the Minds of Men, used nothing but spiritual and  
 “ divine Hymns, so that (as St *Hierom* relates of the Place where he lived)  
 “ you

\* See *Primitive Christianity*, Part I. Chap. IX. Page 174.

“ you could not go into the Field, but you might hear the Plowman at his Hallelujahs, the Mower at his Hymns, and the Vine-dresser singing *David’s Psalms.*” And this, in my Opinion, was a principal Motive for the introducing this Exercise into Charity-Schools.

Among the many Advantages then, which these Children may possibly reap from their learning of Hymns, there is one which I cannot help mentioning, and which I can with the greatest Truth assert from my own Observation of near Twenty Years. That in Schools where this Practice has been most encouraged, there Psalmody has been always the best performed.

This Custom then, however objected to by some, has been found of great Advantage to the charitable Collections; many People having been observed to weep while the Children have been singing, and in all Probability have been moved to contribute more than they at first intended. The ingenious Author of the *SPECTATOR* corroborates this Opinion in the following Letter: “ Sir, I was last *Sunday* highly transported at our Parish-Church; the Gentleman in the Pulpit pleaded movingly in behalf of the poor Children, and they for themselves much more forcibly by singing an Hymn; and I had the Happiness to be a Contributor to this little religious Institution of Innocents; and am sure I never disposed of Money more to my Satisfaction and Advantage\*.”

With regard to such Children turning Songsters, and being enticed into Company to sing; I must beg leave to observe; that People in general, however injudicious, can partly distinguish between a good Voice and an indifferent one; consequently a Person who has but an indifferent Voice, is very rarely solicited to sing. Thus then it is with Children in general, who though their Voices be ever so good when they are young, yet when they break, (which is always the Case with Boys) it is a Matter of Doubt whether they ever settle to be even tolerable; but if they turn out good, it is very extraordinary indeed.

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\* See *Spectator*, Vol. VI. N<sup>o</sup> 430.

It has been remarked that some of the finest Treble Voices that the Cathedrals have produced, notwithstanding the Advantage of a musical Education, have (when broke) turned out extremely bad. What then can be expected in Charity-Schools, where they are not taught any Rules to regulate their Voices by? In the Course of my teaching this Way, I believe I have taught about Five Hundred Children to sing the Solos and other particular Parts of the Hymns, who are always selected from the rest for this Purpose; among whom, I solemnly declare that I have not had more than Five whose Voices were remarkably good, whereas most of them were capable of learning their Hymns so fast, that I have been astonished; and the Ears of some have been so extremely nice, that I have taught them to sing in three Parts, to the great Wonder of all musical People that have heard them. Should any of those Children then hereafter turn out Songsters, it cannot be reasonably attributed to their Instruction; and to suppose that every Youth that Nature has endowed with a good Voice or Ear, must consequently fall a Sacrifice to the Love of Pleasure, I think, is rather uncharitable.

### *The Performance of ORGANISTS.*

I Cannot conclude without taking Notice of the Duty of Organists, which, if decently performed, adds greatly to the Solemnity of the Worship, heightens Devotion, and keeps the whole Congregation in Tune; but the false Taste in Music, too often practised by some of them, intirely overthrows the good Intent of such Parishes who, for the better Performance of this cœlestial Duty, have furnished their Churches with Organs; for in giving out the Psalm-Tunes (in order to shew their Finger as well as their Taste) they make such tedious Variations in every Line, that it is often difficult for any but themselves to know what Tune they are playing. The original Design of playing the Tunes before the People begin to sing,

was intended to direct such of the Congregation as perform by Ear, how they should be sung; therefore it would add much to the Reputation of the greatest Master, to condescend even to the meanest Capacity, by giving them out as plain as possible, with only a few necessary Graces, since the Design of it is to instruct, and not to amuse.

In the same Manner likewise should they play while the People sing; for it is no uncommon thing for a Congregation to be put intirely out of a Tune by an ill-timed Flourish, and great Regard should be had to the Loudness of the Organ, for the Full Organ is too loud for Congregations in general, which not only overpowers the Voices, but is also too apt to mislead them; therefore the same Number of Stops should not always be used, but such a Quantity only as are proportionable to the Bulk of the Congregation, and to the Size of the Fabrick; for Art is intended only to assist Nature, and not to overbear it. I mention this because I have known some who, in this Particular, have made no Distinction between a Congregation where not above Four-score People usually sing, and one of Five or Six Hundred, besides an Hundred Charity-Children.

The making of a Shake at the End of every Line is also very often improper, because the Sense is not always complete in single Lines; in this Case the succeeding Line should begin without a Shake, rather than disturb the Sense. The following Verse will shew the Impropriety of shaking at the End of every Line.

*The LORD's Commands are righteous, and  
Rejoice the Heart likewise;  
His Precepts are most pure, and do  
Give Light unto the Eyes.*

In this, and many other Verses of the Psalms, a Shake cannot be properly introduced, but after the two first Lines; and yet I have sometimes heard not only long Shakes but Interludes, while the People have impatiently waited to sing the second Line, in order to render the Sense of the First complete. Both Shakes and Interludes are extremely useful, as they  
give

give the People some Relief, who are often tired and out of Breath, by that idle Custom of holding out every Note so excessively long; but then they should be introduced at the End of such Lines and Verses only where the Stops will admit of them.

The Custom of playing Interludes in Common Time, to Psalm-Tunes in Triple-Time, I cannot think is altogether regular, because they are not of a Piece with each other; and common Hearers are apt to be at a Loss for the Time when the next Verse begins; and this often happens to be the Case by closing the Interlude on the first Note of the Tune; whereas the making of a final Cadence in the Key, seems to be a much surer Guide for People who sing by Ear; and by this Means, as the Time is more strictly preserved, it certainly appears more musical to common Ears, so that they are the better prepared to begin the next Verse, especially when the Interlude is played on the Chair-Organ or Swell; but when it closes on the first Note of the Tune, which does not always happen to be the *Key-Note*, the People are disappointed; and the Organist, instead of beginning the Tune with an odd Minum, is obliged to hold it out the Length of three, before the People are acquainted that he has begun the next Verse; and this is often the Occasion of their making so little Distinction between Tunes in Common Time and those in Triple Time, which naturally renders it the more difficult for the Organist to accompany such irregular Performers. This Opinion however is most freely submitted to the superior Judgment of every eminent Performer on that Instrument.

With regard to the Stile of Interludes, as well as Voluntaries, it should be such as becomes the Sanctity of the Place; but sorry I am to observe, that this is too often neglected; and that while we are addressing the Divine Majesty, with Grace in our Hearts and Melody on our Tongues, our Devotion is suddenly interrupted with an Interlude in a loose profane Stile, to which the Divine Harmony must give Place, till the Organist thinks proper to begin the next Verse. At this the more grave and devout Part of the Congregation begin to blush, and appear in the utmost Concern, as well they may, at such irreligious Practices being blended with the Public  
Worship

Worship of GOD; while the more Gay, with a Smile of Approbation, applaud the Organist, and think him a good Performer.

This Levity of Stile has been very justly condemned by most Persons who have wrote on the Subject of Church-Music. The late Reverend Mr *Bedford*, in the Tenth Chapter of the Second Part of his *Great Abuse of Music* has fully exposed the Folly and Wickedness of this Practice. And the SPECTATOR, in Vol. V. N<sup>o</sup> 338. with much Concern laments, “ That after having heard a good Sermon, and a Psalm proper to the  
 “ Subject, culled out by the judicious Clerk; his good Thoughts and Dis-  
 “ positions have been in a Moment dissipated by a Jig from the Organ-  
 Loft.” Mr POPE likewise, in one of his *Ethic Epistles*, inscribed to the Earl of BURLINGTON, has justly and ludicrously satyriized such Performances in the following Lines; *viz.*

*Light Quirks of Music, broken and uneven,  
 Make the Soul dance upon a Jig to Heaven.*

However these Abuses are not so frequent as formerly; and though we may always expect to find some giddy Performers, who neither consider Time, Place, nor the Intent of Church-Music; yet I am very sensible that there are many eminent Professors of that Instrument, (whose Names I avoid mentioning to prevent a Suspicion of Flattery) who would scorn to abuse the Public Worship of their GOD with Practices so impious and irregular. Therefore let it not be supposed, that what I have wrote on this Head was done with a View to calumniate or ridicule the whole Profession, since such a Charge would be equally false and scandalous; however, it must be acknowledged, that if they were to lay their Deputies under greater Restrictions, by confining them to play nothing but *approved Set Voluntaries*, &c. there would be still less Cause of Complaint.

I shall only still farther observe, that as all Church-Music should be for THE GLORY OF GOD, as also for the Edification of the Hearers: So ought the Organist, as the ingenious Author of the SPECTATOR very properly hints in the aforesaid Letter, “ to keep to the Text as much as

“ the Preacher ;” by which Means he would not only excite their devo-  
tional Passions, but at the same time set aside all the Objections which some  
Party-Cavillers usually make against that delightful Instrument in this Part  
of our Public Devotions.

F I N I S .

