

cated angels. The organ had pale-green pipes, with an ecclesiastical design of otherwise unknown foliage stencilled on them, and contained a Vox Humana of peculiarly bleating tone, which sounded like a sheep that had gone very much astray.

The choir had already gathered, and Mrs. Ramsden was busy distributing music. Morning Service was to be of the ordinary type, without unusual feature, and the special choral effort, which included an anthem, "The valleys also shall stand so thick with corn that they shall laugh and sing," by that amazing musician, T. Ferris, and a *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* by E. Blinkthorn, was to take place in the evening. It was to devote an hour's special practice to these that the choir had assembled.

"We are all here, I think," said Mrs. Ramsden. "We will begin with the anthem, 'The valleys also.' Trebles, please. One, two, three, four."

Miss Armitage emitted a faint scream.

"Organ, please," said Mrs. Ramsden.

Eleanor Ramsden, her stepdaughter, who had not been attending, put down a pedal-note which made Jonah quiver in his mauve whale, and played the grand and satisfying chord of C Major. Half-a-dozen small boys, who would appear in surplices next day, and were of the regular choir, supplemented the efforts of Miss Armitage and other ladies of the auxiliary choir, and gave out a phrase that encouraged the listener to hope that a fugue was to follow. But that was not T. Ferris's way. The altos joined in after two bars, the tenor after two more, and the basses at a similar interval, but they did not repeat the subject. They just sang some simple harmonies. Then the trebles sang, "The valleys, the valleys," and the basses replied, "Laugh and sing, laugh and sing." But this was not all. There was an alto lead next in quavers, "So thick with corn, so thick with corn," which gave the trebles an opportunity (of which they took advantage) to assert that the valleys were still there, and the tenors in major thirds to the basses endorsed the fact that they laughed and sang. A simple sequence of harmonies (T. Ferris was nothing, if not simple) brought everybody into the dominant, and they started off again in the pleasant key of G Major. Then for no apparent reason the valleys began to laugh, so to speak, on the other side of their mouths. From G Major (again simply) they took to E Minor, and laughed and sang in a subdued and staccato manner to the Vox Humana. A modulation in the organ cheered them up and led them to