

comforted, finding sometimes more enjoyment and more profit in the service of praise than in any other part of the sanctuary worship.

Sacred song thus serves a two-fold purpose: It is a means by which God is directly worshipped; and it is also a means by which spiritual benefits are communicated to the worshippers, and is intended to instruct, edify, and bless them. As a part of the service of the sanctuary sacred song thus stands related, on the one side, to God as an act of homage, and, on the other, to the worshippers as a means of grace.

This two-fold purpose which sacred song is intended to serve must be distinctly borne in mind when it is sought to determine the manner in which it should be rendered.

As a constituent part of public worship it should be engaged in by the whole body of the worshippers. There should be no silent voices in God's house. Where a choir or select few sing and the rest merely listen, this important part of worship is degraded to the level of a mere musical entertainment, in which the sanctuary becomes a concert room, the choir the performers, and the assembled worshippers an audience met to enjoy the entertainment.

Little argument will be needed to show that the service of song in the sanctuary should be rendered intelligently. The subject-matter of praise is Divine truth. If, therefore, this part of worship is to be properly rendered, the people must understand what they are singing. If they do not, if the words they sing have little or no meaning to themselves, they might just as well be using the words of an unknown tongue, and they certainly make this part of worship an empty and meaningless service.

The service of song should also be rendered intelligibly. The psalm or hymn should be sung in such a manner as to present the truth which it contains as clearly and forcibly as possible. The Apostle Paul sets this in clearest light (I. Cor. iv.), and shows that in worship, the preaching, praying, and singing should be such as to be easily understood, otherwise there could be no edification to the Church. That the singing may be rendered intelligibly, the words must be so clearly and distinctly enunciated that an individual could easily follow them even if he had no book and had never heard them before. The singing that might be taken for Italian or German as readily as English may do for fashionable frivolities but not for worship in God's house.