

Our first prescription then for this case of fever is, make choice of a class of tunes that will stir up and fire the popular heart. Never mind the rules of Messrs. Gauntlett, Allon, Feaston, or anybody else. Didactic music will do for didactic hymns, of which the fewer we have in our books the better. A hymn should express or be adapted to produce emotion. So should a tune. People must *feel like singing* to sing aright, and you might as well try to subject laughter and tears to a stiff set of rules, as singing. People will feel like singing, if right tunes are used.

Another bad symptom of this fever, in our view, is, the attempt to teach music by short-hand methods. It is no compliment to the progress and intellectual activity of the age, that a royal road to psalmody is thought necessary. The principles of music, as laid down on the ordinary system, are not abstruse; they are easily enough acquired by any person of ordinary capacity and industry; indeed, we have known very stupid people who were thoroughly versed in them. It may be safely assumed that any one who is really in earnest to learn music, can and will do as by the orthodox method. The tonic sol-fa device always reminds us of a grammar somebody got up many years ago, the plan of which was, that the parts of speech were indicated by various colours: article green, noun red, verb yellow, &c. It taught grammar independently of its principles.

It may be questioned whether there is any need at congregational practice meetings to give instruction in music. There are always a proportion of the congregation already acquainted with musical principles, to whom it is wearisome and a loss of time to be going over the elements. Yet you cannot dispense with the attendance of your musical people at these meetings. Our advice is, teach no elementary principles on such occasions. Sing hymns devotionally. Let the pastor call attention to the subject of the hymns. Brief suggestions can be made to secure harmonious engagement in the exercise. Faults may be corrected and improvements suggested. Instead of attempting instruction in the elements of music, trust to those who understand music to lead the rest. In this way, the real end of such meetings will be secured.

Tame, humdrum tunes have become far more common since the tonic-sol-fa device was introduced. The reason is obvious. A measured, regular style of music, without sudden rises or falls, is alone adapted to such notation. Reform your tunes, attempt no superficial, smattering methods of learning music, make the exercise attractive and pleasant, and gratifying success will be the result.

The above will suffice at least for a first dose. In case of either convalescence or relapse, another prescription may perhaps be written for the patient's benefit.

W. F. C.

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[We are very grateful for the volunteered services of so skilled a physician, but he does not understand the case! We have advocated no abandonment of the "grand old tunes;" we could say for many of them all that "the doctor" says. We cannot, in a note, discuss the *solfa* system; but it has effected too much to be summarily put down. Our brother's idea of a congregational practice-meeting is one of the plans which we have advocated, the one which we personally follow.]