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"Ad profectum sacrosanctæ matris ecclesiæ"

## THE PLAIN SONG OF THE CHURCH.

In our last number we referred to the objection of some persons against the Plain Song of the Church, that it is too plain. Some object to hymns in public worship on the ground that they would prefer to sing "the Psalms of David," and complain of the present infrequent use of the metrical psalms in public worship as if Messrs. Tate and Brady rhymed by heavenly inspiration. The truth is that the Psalms are much more sung where the Plain Song is used than they were in the "good old days" of the parson-and-clerk duet, but they are sung—not in the language of human rhymesters, but, in the very words of our English translation of the Hebrew original. The Plain Song is so plain and easy that persons with a very moderate musical capacity can, with its help, sing the words of their Bible itself. Dean Close, an impartial witness, says—"In the chanting of the Psalms a person little skilled in music may soon find pleasure and profit in modestly joining in chants, the air of which is for the most part easy and pleasing." And if this is true even of the Anglican Chant, how much more of the Gregorian? Elaborate chants for the Psalms would never be sung by the congregation, but Plain Song is very soon heard from all parts of the church in which it is constantly used. Who has not observed the love of the labouring classes for devotional singing, and their preference for the old plain tunes? If they were taught to sing the very words of their Bibles, and were thus enabled to make the services of the sanctuary pleasing and profitable to themselves, may we not say that many would likely be found in God's house who now have no relish for the continual *reading* of the services, and therefore spend their Sundays in idleness or sinful pleasure?

But another objection to the Plain Song is that it is popish. If everything used by the Roman Catholics is necessarily popish, King James' answer to the same objection in the mouths of the Puritans showed that shoes and stockings must no longer be worn by consistent Protestants. We must indeed discard the cardinal doctrines of our religion, on the same ground, and no longer use the Collects of our Prayer Book, seeing that they are also to be found in the Roman Missal. Singers must discontinue the use of the syllables to which they sing the gamut because they were substituted for the first seven letters of the alphabet by Guido Aretin Darezzo, a Benedictine monk of the Convent of our Lady of Pomposa, about the year 1013. *U, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si*, are simply the first syllables in each successive line of the first strophe of a Romish Latin hymn for St. John Baptist's day, but the syllable *Do* is now used instead of *U*, for the sake of euphony. The truth is, the Gregorian Tones, though first arranged by St. Ambrose in the 4th, and amplified and improved by Pope Gregory in the 7th century, were taken from