

Founded, as this movement was, to gratify the inordinate vanity of a few disappointed parties, it has indeed proved to be, for the Church, a "blessing in disguise" since it has not only more closely brought together all true Churchmen, but it has hastened the work of elimination of the noxious weeds which was choking out the life of the Church. The much persecuted and reviled Ritualists have become accustomed to the cry of "Popery" and "Jesuitry," falsely raised against them by their enemies, and need have no fears for the future, for the great Church revival is marching on with gigantic strides, and ere long, their work will be done, and the Church will be freed from Puritan innovations, even as our Early Reformation Fathers delivered Her from the bondage of Rome.

RITUALIST.

MUSICAL.

The Philharmonic Society's Concert will take place in the Rink on Monday, 14th October. The Committee seem determined to give the public no excuse for withholding their support from this society, and have, with laudable enterprise, engaged some of the first artists of the day to sustain the solo parts. Mrs. Osgood is to be the prima donna, and we need hardly say that a better selection could hardly have been made. Mrs. Osgood's performance of *The Messiah* is still fresh in our memory, and we rejoice that we are to hear such an artist once more before her departure for Europe. The part of "Eve" is particularly well suited to her fresh and beautiful voice. Mr. W. H. Stanley, the tenor, though well-known in England, is a comparative stranger on this continent. He has been travelling in the United States with the Kellogg Opera Company, and sings here for the last time before returning to England. Our readers will be pleased to learn that the services of Mr. M. W. Whitney, the great American Basso, have been secured, and that he will sustain the part of "Adam" at this concert. This gentleman's reputation is very great on both sides of the Atlantic, he is universally acknowledged to be one of the greatest artists of the day, and created quite a *furor* in London, some years ago. Such a combination of artists has never appeared in Montreal before, and we feel sure that the Committee will find that whatever extra expense they may have gone to will be more than repaid by the increased attendance at the concert.

We are glad to learn that the new organist of the Cathedral, Mr. Barnes, is determined to place the music of that Church on a first-class footing, and to introduce full choral service, with a complete choir, thoroughly trained. Tallis' pieces will be used, and though we doubt whether the esteemed Rector will intone the versicles; yet, it is, so far, a step in the right direction, and one that will commend itself to all who love the sublime ritual of the Anglican Church. Mr. Barnes is about to form a special choir out of all the city church choirs, to celebrate "Full Choral Evensong" every Sunday afternoon in the Cathedral; this will, of course, necessitate performing the Litany service in the morning, but that difficulty, we have no doubt, will be easily overcome. We will then be able to go to the Cathedral to hear good church music, which, for the past few years, has been sadly neglected by the authorities.

Dr. MacLagan gave his fifth organ recital on Monday evening. It seems to us he is taxing himself too much; his playing throughout evinced a lack of spirit, and was, in consequence, somewhat dull. The programme was fairly selected, and contained some very fine *morceaux*; others were not only insipid, but even childish. Miss Wilkes sang "Flee as a bird" in a pleasing manner; she has a rich contralto voice, and sang in a truly devotional style. Mr. Delahunt essayed Favre's "Palm branches," but whether he sang in French, Greek, or Latin, is impossible for us to decide, his pronunciation being very indistinct. The organist made a capital *crescendo* at the close, but, as Mr. Delahunt dropped his voice at the same moment, the effect was lost altogether. We have heard it remarked "What more can we expect for fifteen cents?" Our answer is that we expect the performers to do their best, no matter what is charged for admission, and of this we are certain, that on this occasion, at least neither of the gentlemen mentioned above did their best. We look for a more careful performance, if the same audience which attended last Monday evening is expected at these recitals.

We are glad to learn that the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, of Boston, intend this year to again visit and perform in Montreal. We welcome to our city all artists who have any real pretensions to merit, but especially do we extend the right hand of fellowship to this company, since we consider they have had a great deal to do with the cultivation of a taste for really good music in our city. This Club has for so long a period as twenty-nine years given concerts of high order throughout the continent of America, and with ever-increasing popularity. We understand the instrumentalists are as follows:—S. E. Jacobsohn (Violin), Gustav Dannreuther (Violin), Thomas Ryan (Clarinet and Viola), Edward Heindl (Flute and Viola), Rudolph Hennig (Violoncello), Ludwig E. Manoly (Contra-Basso). They propose to perform in Montreal on Oct. 10th.

HOW TO SING A SONG.

BY WM. H. CUMMINGS.

"Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing."

These doggerel lines, affixed by William Byrde to some songs published 300 years ago, are true and applicable to our times. The author gives the following brief reasons for persuading every one to learn to sing:

"1. It is a knowledge easily taught and quickly learnt, where there is a good master and an apt scholar.

"2. The exercise of singing is delightful to nature, and good to preserve the health of man.

"3. It doth strengthen all parts of the breast, and doth open the pipes.

"4. It is a singular good remedy for a stuttering and stammering in the speech.

"5. It is the best means to procure a perfect pronunciation, and to make a good orator.

"6. It is the only way to know where nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voice; which gift is so rare, as there is not one among a thousand that hath it; and in many that excellent gift is lost, because they want art to express nature.

"7. There is not any music of instruments whatsoever comparable to that which is made of the voices of men, where the voices are good, and the same well sorted and ordered.

"8. The better the voice is, the meeter it is to honor and serve God therewith; and the voice of man is chiefly to be applied to that end."

Quaintly as this is put by Master Byrde, one cannot help thinking of Shakespeare's dictum, "Much virtue in it." Of course, if an apt scholar with the rare voice of one in a thousand study with diligence under a good master, the result is a foregone conclusion; but believing as I do, that 999 out of 1,000 people may have passably fair voices, and sufficient natural musical capacity to be able to experience a never-failing delight and solace in the exercise of singing, if properly directed, I propose to say a few words on the subject of "How to sing a song." I choose the word *song* as an inclusive term, which may be very readily understood to embrace sacred or secular song or ballad, the one condition being that the composition is some ditty for a single voice, which can be sung with accompaniment, and in some instances without; for it must not be forgotten that a great number of our old-fashioned songs, including those of Dibdin, were originally intended to be sung without the extraneous aid of an instrumental accompaniment of any kind.

It may serve to encourage those who are gifted with *silver voices* and *nightingale throats*, to be reminded that many of our best exponents of song have possessed but insignificant physical powers, and have therefore acquired their fame and celebrity by dint of persevering vocal study and mental cultivation; and it is also equally true that many singers in every age,

endowed with the most exquisite voices, have wholly failed to command attention or to ravish the ears and hearts of the listening throng, simply because they lacked refinement and cultivation. Rossini was once asked what were the requisite qualifications to make a singer, and it is said that he answered, "Three—a voice, and a voice, and a voice." This was of course true so far as it went, for without some capital or foundation to commence with, progress would be impossible. I, however, very much doubt whether the young of either sex are ever wholly deficient of musical ability; certainly our ordinary and common observation abundantly demonstrates that the voiceless are extremely rare. Of course if people live through the bloom of youth and the prime of life without ever attempting to exercise their vocal faculties musically, they may possibly attain the unenviable condition of losing the desire and the power of attempting to join in the concord of sweet sounds. Infants have naturally the powers of locomotion, but it is only from teaching and practical perseverance that they acquire the art of walking. If, then, you have never taken the first steps in singing, and are anxious to try your powers, you will find nothing more simple or improving than a slow scale of eight sounds, sung gently, ascending and descending. Commence on some sound easily produced, and be careful that neither the highest nor the lowest sound needs any strain or undue effort. The voice must grow naturally like a plant upwards and downwards, and it is folly to force it in either direction.

In considering the question, "How to sing a song," the primary difficulty is in the choice. People go to a concert and hear some popular singer vocalize a song, perhaps a good one, and not impossibly a very bad one; and forgetful of the fact that the singer, with reputation at stake, has been studying for weeks how to "make the song go down," the listener is pleased, thinks it easy and effective, and believes that it is only necessary to buy the song and sing it, and produce an equally favorable result. How often is this done, and how often does disappointment ensue?

In choosing a song, select something with at least sensible words; the better and more interesting they are, the greater will be your chance of success. Be careful to get a song wholly within your vocal powers, for if you attempt something too high or too low you will probably subject yourself to ridicule. Having chosen your song, study the words carefully, that you may fully comprehend the sense and sentiment; popular singers make it a practice to learn the words by heart—a habit worthy of all commendation and imitation. When you thoroughly understand the words, you may attempt them in conjunction with the tune or music, and in doing so endeavour to arrange breathing-places. These should be fixed so as to aid the sense, or at least not to mar the meaning and intent of the poetry. When you have decided where to take breath, mark the places with a pencil, and be careful in studying to observe those marks. As a general rule, unless a phrase of the poetry commences with the first beat of the music bar, we shall find that a bad place for breathing.

Many singers never dream of prearranging the places for taking breath, and this fact alone would suffice to account for much of the bad singing we hear. In one of Horsley's glees the bass voice has to sing alone the line, "Mista! black terrific maid;" and when the vocalist, as often happens, takes breath after "black" instead of after "Mista," the effect is truly comical, making the line sound like "Mr. Black, terrific maid."

Every word should be pronounced distinctly, even more so than in ordinary conversation. We sometimes miss the aspirate "h" when listening to a careless reader, but the loss is felt with greater force when words are allied to music. I have heard a line from "The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington" sound like "Before I give you a penny sweet-tart," simply because the singer had forgotten to give fully the "h" in "sweet heart." Again, the letter "r," which the English almost ignore in common talk, should certainly be observed in singing. How otherwise are we to know, in such a song as "The Message," what is meant on the long holding notes by the word "farther?" The absence of the "r," as too commonly sung, produces "father"; and so we get the line, "I heard it float father and father." These remarks as to the words have all been made in reference to English. Of course we ought not to attempt any other language before we know that we have acquired a proper control over its special pronunciation and accent, and then we should be careful to acquaint ourselves with the meaning and sentiment of the words before we venture to sing them for others to hear, and possibly to criticise.

So much for the words; we now turn to the music, and the first caution we have to give is as to singing the notes in their integrity, not only as regards pitch and intonation, but also as regards the length of the individual sounds. A familiar instance of the unconcerned manner in which a popular song is often murdered occurs to me. The charming melody from the opera "Faust," "Quando a te lieta," is a great favorite with young ladies, but not one in ten sings it correctly. To produce the effect intended by the composer, Gounod, each note should be made exactly the length indicated in the text; but almost invariably the fair vocalists introduce numberless dots after the notes, thereby destroying all the charm of the song. Turns, cadences, shakes, and trills should not be introduced into music. The day for the display of musical fireworks is past—at least for a time; fashion, in its strange turnings, may bring them back again, but that will certainly not be for long years to come. Ornaments and embellishments which have been inserted by the composer should be practised until they can be accomplished perfectly and with ease.

All the marks of expression in the song should be carefully observed and regulated, from the softest *piano* to the loudest *forte*, remembering never to allow the latter to degenerate into a shout. In singing, the golden rule as to tone should be "quality, not quantity."

Something must be said about the accompaniment for a song. We may take it, as a rule, that this will be played on the domestic orchestra, the piano-forte; and probably the singer will need to play his or her own accompaniment, and therein lies a great danger, for many a tolerably correct and pleasing vocalist utterly ruins the song and singing by injudicious and perhaps false and vicious accompaniment. It is indispensable that the accompaniment of a song should be studied and mastered quite independently of the song or melody. When this is accomplished, the two may be practised together, care being taken that the harmonies set down are not added to or altered in any way, and still greater care that the foot be kept away from what is commonly called the loud pedal. This should not be touched excepting by thoroughly efficient pianists, for, if it be held down during the transition from one harmony to another, the effect is somewhat similar to that produced by a school boy, who, immediately he has finished writing a copy, wipes it all over with his sleeve. The accompaniment, as its name implies, should always be subordinate to the voice. The last, but not the least important, requisite of "How to sing a song" is nerve. If the singer allow nervousness to get the mastery, it is impossible that the song can be well sung. Of course, some degree of nervousness is natural and desirable, as evidence that the vocalist possesses both soul and sensibility; but nervousness must be controlled, and the best antidote against it is the consciousness that the singer has well studied the song, and knows that he or she can render it competently and correctly; and I may add that the singer must not be discouraged if the first attempt at singing a well studied song should not prove as successful as it ought to have done. The second trial will probably right matters; the old mottoes, "perseverance," and "try, try again," are as applicable to singing as to all other undertakings. I cannot better conclude than by recording a tradition of John Bartleman, the most celebrated singer of the last century. He was described as "small of stature, but a leviathan in intellect," and, it is said, used to declare that he "never sang a song in his life before the public until he had studied it, the words more especially for twelve months." We may allow for the gradual exaggeration of the story by passing from one narration to another, and also something for the slow pace of olden days; but even then the anecdote gives us a hint which we ought not to be too dull to profit by.—From *Orpheus*.

THE close relation often found existing between things and persons far apart, suggests, not so much the smallness of the world as the possible importance of the least things done in it, and is better explained by the grander teaching of Carlyle: "That causes and effects connecting every man and thing with every other, extend through all space and time."—John Foster.

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