

musical arrangements to be based, he can as a rule trust to his organist to do the rest. If he chooses the hymns let him do it in good time, and not (as is often done) bring in a programme at a final practice, and expect new hymns to be learnt for the next Sunday. Moreover, in voluntary choirs, he might very often swallow his objections to some of the music, and allow the choir a little liberty, as long as the music is worthy of the purpose for which it is intended. As a rule, the services of a parish church, are not very interesting, looking at the matter from a musical point of view, and it is often expedient to allow little flights which injure nobody, and vary the monotony of the round of church music.

3. Congregations are not willing to spend enough money on the music. They pay their clergy and other officials, and spend money on decorating their churches, but they seem to think that music should cost next to nothing. Even the allowance made for music, etc., for the use of the choir, is ridiculous, when compared with the share the choir have in the work of making the services bright and attractive.

In these days of advance the thoughts of people "starting" a new church, or re-organizing an old one, turn towards surpliced choirs. A male choir, if it is once established on a firm footing, is certainly the most satisfactory form a choir can take. The attendance is usually regular, the "esprit de corps" strong, and general results most satisfactory. Boys are not very sensitive, and sing in a somewhat mechanical way, which tends to do away with the small jealousies which distract mixed choirs. A good choir of boys assists very materially in attracting young people to a church. The best foundation for such a choir is loyal churchmanship, and if all the men are communicants (as they should be) the choir is bound to do well. At the same time I think a good mixed choir is better than a poor male choir, and where the supply of boys is limited a surpliced choir is a very questionable experiment.

Before starting a surpliced choir, all the difficulties and inconveniences should be carefully considered. The mere fact of putting a boy into a surplice, does not make him a quiet, well behaved boy, or a singer. Boys in surplices will skylark in Church, or out of Church, as much as boys who are not in surplices. Their continual association strengthens their capabilities for noise and mischief by organizing them. The familiarity with the Church, which arises from the constant use of the vestries, &c., tends to make them feel at home, and to conduct themselves accordingly. I have as a rule found that the boy who was noisy outside, was most useful inside, and was as ready to use all his energies in singing as he was to use them in shouting. The "good" boys, who never give any trouble, are, as a rule, useless in Church. A clergyman should insist on good behaviour in Church, and no excuse should be made for talking, laughing, &c. He should also make allowance for a natural tendency to become somewhat uproarious after

service. Keeping boys quiet for an hour, or an hour and a half, and then letting them go, produces much the same effect, as letting off the cork of a ginger ale bottle. The results in both cases, are perfectly natural, and equally unpleasant. A clergyman, while maintaining his position, should interfere as little as possible with the authority of the choirmaster. Boys, as a rule, are happier under an absolute despotism, and are not easily manageable when the authority is divided. If the choir is to be made attractive, the boys in it should have privileges which are not allowed to other boys. If a boy, after joining a choir, finds that he occupies precisely the same position as he did, before joining it, and that the only difference is, that he has to come to Church oftener, the chances are that he will not be an enthusiast on the subject of choirs. When we remember that the boys have to attend church twice every Sunday, and sometimes two practices a week, it is evident that they deserve some special consideration. Boys are not moved by that sense of duty which often leads older people to join a choir, and as a rule they are not fond of going to Church. There is an old story of a boy being asked, which part of "The Burial of Sir John Moore" he liked best? He replied, "Few and short were the prayers we said."

We might, at this point, remark that when a surpliced choir is organized, they might as well be put into cassocks at once. Sooner or later, the cassocks will come, and although a clergyman may think he does not care for them, he gradually comes to the conclusion, that their addition would considerably improve the appearance of his choir. The struggle which generally attends the introduction of a surpliced choir, will usually cover the cassocks, whereas if the cassocks are delayed, the struggle is often repeated.

*Continued.*

## THE DYING PUGILIST.

Good morning, Parson, I'm glad you're come; I reckon I'm going fast, My seconds have got me up once more: the next round 'll be my last. Death had me over the ropes that time, and the knock down blow was square,

Another like that, and I guess you'll see my sponge go up in the air. Time was this fist like a hammer would bruize, and cut like a razor, too; Now look at it lying here weak as a babe's, with bones a'most coming through.

Death's champion now, and no mistake; when he sends his challenge in, There's no backing out, you've got to fight, and at last he's bound to win. I hate those whining canting chaps, wot was here the other day, And talks and talks, and won't never hear wot a feller has to say, Leastways not unless he cants like them, but you're summat like a man; You lets a poor cove say just what he feels, and say it as best he can. I went with the rest as a young un, and larned what they teach at Sunday School,

And remembers bits of it even now, so I aint altogether a fool. But, bless yer, the things they told us there, didn't take no hold on me then;

Poorcritters! they seemed to mean business, but they wasn't my notion o' men.

Why! a big feller one day was kicking a little chap half his size, So I gave him a wunner wot sent him to grass and blackened both his eyes; And a long-tongued, saller skinned super, never axed about wrong or right, But jawed away the whole afternoon how wicked it was to fight.