

"CANADIAN SPECTATOR" PROBLEM TOURNEY.—The following is a list of the competitors in this Tourney:—

1. Motto: "The Amaranths."..... R. H. Seymour, Holyoke, Mass.
2. " " "Orange Blossoms."..... J. G. Nix, Tucker's Cross Roads, Tenn.
3. " " "Fortis et Hospitalis."..... M. J. Murphy, Quebec.
4. " " "Now I will believe," &c..... Jonathan Hall, Boston.
5. " " "Muskoka."..... A. P. Barnes, New York.
6. " " "Strategy," (2nd prize)..... W. A. Shinkman, Grand Rapids, Mich.
7. " " "Problematic Characters."..... "Marc," Bronson, Mich.
8. " " "Gladstone."..... H. F. Lee, Brantford, Ont.
9. " " "A Happy Thought."..... J. Wibray, New Orleans.
10. " " "Sic est Vita."..... F. A. Knapp, Montreal.
11. " " "Ginx Baby."..... Bert. Berry, Detroit, Mich.
12. " " "Gemini," (1st prize)..... W. Atkinson, Montreal.
13. " " "L'échec n'empêche pas," &c..... Wilhelm Droysen, Danzig.
14. " " "Insuperabilis."..... J. H. North, London, England.
15. " " "Ars est celare artem."..... F. W. Markwick, Brighton, England.
16. " " "Sua cuique voluptus."..... H. W. Butler, Brighton, England.
17. " " "Thrift, Thrift, Horatio!"..... L. Von Bilow, Echede, Hanover.

I have great pleasure in tendering my thanks to these gentlemen for their contributions and the trouble they have taken to render the Tourney a success. A copy of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR of October 23rd, containing the Judge's Report, has been sent to each, and also a copy of this paper. Those not receiving them will please communicate with me.—
C. S. BAKER, CH. ED. CAN. SPEC.

Musical.

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

We revert once more to this well-worn topic, our mind being directed thereto principally by an address delivered in the Central Methodist Church on Thanksgiving Day by the Rev. Mr. Johnston. That gentleman evidently knows the value of music as an accessory to public worship, and deserves credit for the efforts he has made to introduce it largely into the services at his church. We would, however, venture to make a few critical remarks concerning his discourse, not in a carping or fault-finding spirit, but because we disagree with the Rev. gentleman on one or two points, and are anxious that a subject in which almost everyone is deeply interested should be intelligently and largely discussed.

First of all, we take exception to the specimens of hymnology adduced by the lecturer, "The God of Abraham praise," which he puts forward as a model hymn; this is of faulty construction, and altogether unfit for rhythmical setting. There are many such in almost all our hymn-books; but we opine that all except those to which a regularly accented tune may be put should be expunged. Then Mr. Johnston evidently wishes his congregation to join in the singing, as he says it is the duty of the choir "to lead" them.

Now, what are we to understand by the word "lead"? Is it that the choir shall sing each successive note *before the congregation*? If so, we will certainly not attend the Methodist Church. Yet what else *can* it mean? If the choir does not go ahead of the body of singers, how are the latter (not being musicians nor having music) to know what to sing? The fact is, the Rev. lecturer talks, like hundreds of others, without quite understanding his subject; hence the ridiculous propositions we hear daily about "congregational singing," which, as things now stand, is altogether an anomaly.

Let us take the matter in a general light. Music is an art which requires a certain amount of talent, tuition and years of practice for its due rendition. Not one in fifty of those who form our congregations can sing even tolerably a simple hymn-tune, while the more elaborate ones are a complete mystery to them. Yet they are invited to take part, *at a moment's notice*, in a hymn which the choir can barely perform decently with all the benefits of cultivation and practice! Is not the thing absurd? How would the Colonel of an infantry regiment feel, if, after his men had practised some movements requiring precision and steadiness, the General commanding invited the public to participate in the evolutions without a day's drill? Yet the position of a church Choir-master is precisely similar every Sunday in the year. He practises the hymn carefully with the choir, worrying himself and his singers in his anxiety to render it in a proper manner; and when Sunday comes, and the choir is about to elevate the congregation with a truly devotional performance, lo! the people are invited to "join in heartily," (*i.e.*, to make as much noise as possible,) and so the practice and ability of both organist and choir go for nothing.

It may be supposed that we are writing against congregational singing *per se*, but such is not the case. We well know and appreciate the effect of a number of voices in concert, and do not see any reason why the people should not join in the singing, were they competent to do so. As matters stand, however, we think it wonderful that musical people ever go to church; it was our misfortune once to occupy a seat in the front of a congregation (between two fires) and the unpleasant effect of the singing is still remembered.

In order to make congregational singing even fairly successful we should have:—

- 1st. People willing to learn.
- 2nd. An embargo placed on all others.
- 3rd. Classes for instruction in singing and musical notation.
- 4th. Harmonized tune-books in the notation taught.
- 6th. A CONDUCTOR to beat time for organist, choir and people.
- 6th. Periodical rehearsals for the whole church body.

When these things are instituted in every church (and not till then) will we have congregational singing. In the meantime would it not be as well for congregations to remain silent and not to spoil the (oftentime excellent) singing of those who understand what is required, and attend to it?

THE Episcopalians celebrated the Harvest Thanksgiving on Wednesday evening in the Cathedral, when there was full choral evensong. The Rev. Mr. Dixon intoned the pieces, the remainder of the service being taken by Rev. Mr. Baylis. Tours Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis were sung, also Barnby's Harvest Anthem, "O Lord, how manifold." It was intended to have had a union of choirs, but it was impossible for most of the parish choirs to attend rehearsals, so that very few were present besides the regular choisters of the church. The music, however, (with the exception of the Nunc Dimittis, which was unsteady) was effectively rendered. There was an immense congregation.

Dr. Davies has been appointed organist of Zion Church, and will shortly preside at the organ in the Queen's Hall, whither the congregation are about to remove. We welcome the doctor back to Montreal, and hope his stay amongst us may be permanent.

A Musical Union has been formed in connection with St. George's Church.

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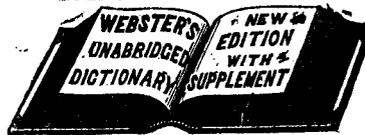
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