

CHURCH MUSIC.

It is refreshing to find now and then, in the public prints, indications of a disposition to retrace wrong steps—to return to a better way. The following, which cannot, in its general strain, be too much commended, is from the valedictory address of the late editor of the *Choral Advocate*—a paper devoted to matters belonging to Church Music. Such as are entangled, or are in danger of being so, in the meshes of fashionable folly, as it intrudes even into the sanctuary, should read and ponder it.—Ed. Cov.

“The evils which exist in connexion with the psalmody of our churches are numerous, and many of them are fraught with serious danger to the cause of religion. Believing, as we do, that the subject of Church Music is closely related to the dearest interests of Zion, we cannot witness the sad havoc which is every where made of this part of public worship, without a saddening sense of the evil consequences which are visited upon spiritual worship, by this state of things. It is a pity that so powerful an agency for good as that of music—so much ‘akin to heaven’ both in its objects and nature—should be so debased. The work to be done, before our churches will employ this agency aright, is immense. The Christian ministry, and Christian people generally, must be brought to realize the essential difference between music as an act and medium of worship, and music considered merely as an art. On this point, there is a fundamental error abroad in the churches. Go where you will, and you will find pastor and people, to a very great extent, adopting the same principle of action. So far as any attention is paid to the improvement of music, by the establishment of singing schools and choirs, the purchase of organs, the employment of organists and choristers, etc., it will be found that the advancement of music as an art, and for the mere musical satisfaction arising from it, forms the grand motive to effort. Cultivation is urged, continued, and ended, with no higher motive than that which is afforded by the principle of self-gratification. And so powerful and universally prevalent has this principle become, that it is greatly to be feared that the majority of people, both professors of religion and non-professors, listen to the performances of psalms by the choir on the Sabbath, as they would listen to an opera; and that their satisfaction with it depends upon its approximation, both in manner and spirit, to a well-executed opera. This, in plain English, is the fundamental error of the times on the subject of Church Music. And it is high time for Christian ministers and Christian people generally, to awake to a consideration of the subject. A line as distinct as the sunbeams should be drawn between music as employed in Christian worship, and music in the concert room; and every one should feel, when he enters the house of God, that he goes there to worship, and that the simpler the strains of music employed as the medium, the better.”

LATE AT CHURCH.—“Late at Church,” is one sign of a heart not right with God. To say nothing of the indecency of disturbing all the rest of their fellow-worshippers by their noisy footsteps, with what degree of reverence can such individuals regard the presence of the High and Holy One, of whom it may be said, “The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him!”—Take such an insult, and “offer it now unto thy Governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?” No, they would fear to offend a king, but not the king of kings. The manifold sins involved in a want of punctuality in the attendance on God’s house, must make it to be regarded as one of the greatest evils resulting from this bad habit. Their own devotions are hindered, those of others are disturbed; their minister is grieved, their God insulted, and all for what? for a trifling indulgence of sloth or self-will.

VOLTAIRE’S LAST WORDS.—Voltaire was fertile and elegant; his observations are very acute, yet he often betrays great ignorance when he treats on subjects of ancient learning. Madame de Talmond once said to him, “I think, sir, that a philosopher should never write, but with the endeavour to render mankind less wicked and unhappy than they are. Now you do quite the contrary; you are always writing against that religion which alone is able to restrain wickedness, and to afford us consolation under misfortunes.” Voltaire was much struck, and excused himself by saying, that he only wrote for those who were of the same opinion as himself. Tronchin assured his friends that Voltaire died in great agonies of mind. “I die forsaken by gods and men,” exclaimed he in those awful moments, when truth will force its way. “I wish,” added Tronchin, “that those who had been perverted by his writings, had been present at his death; it was a sight too horrid to support.”—*William Seward*.

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.—Six things, says Hamilton, are requisite to create a “happy home.” Integrity must be the architect, and tidiness the upholsterer. It must be warmed by affection, and lighted up with cheerfulness, and industry must be the ventilator, renewing the atmosphere and bringing in fresh salubrity day by day; while over all, as a protecting canopy and glory, nothing will suffice except the blessing of God.

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