

a necessity in schools." It was part of Luther's faith that there were devils about continually besetting men ; and it is interesting to note that music is nearly always given as the prescription for getting rid of these evil spirits. "The devil," says our Reformer, "is a saturnine spirit, and music is hateful to him, and drives him far away from it." Quotations of this nature could be multiplied to almost any extent, but enough has already been said to prove that Luther was endowed with musical gifts of a very high order—such gifts, indeed, as almost entitle him to be classed among the professed musicians of his time. He was certainly something more than a mere *dilettante*, and if he had not been an ecclesiastic it is probable that he might have accomplished such work as would have fully justified his claim to a place among the acknowledged masters of musical art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

As a musical, as well as a religious, reformer, Luther may with truth be said to have come "in the fulness of time." Never was the music of the Church more in need of reform than in the early years of the sixteenth century. As far back as the year 363 the Council of Laodicea had ordained that the laity should not sing in church at all, except in certain simple chants. This rule had continued to be rigidly observed, but the prohibition had long since become unnecessary, as the Latin language in which the ritual of the Church was conducted was now unknown to the great body of the common people. Even if it had been otherwise—if the words of the service had been in the native tongue, and if the congregations had been allowed to take an active part in the music worship—the result would have been practically the same. The music which was at this time employed in the services was of so difficult and intricate a nature that only trained singers could possibly join in it. The majority of the Church composers of the period left altogether out of account the harmonious expression and the poetical meaning of their vocal music, and, instead, indulged in every sort of device which was calculated to show their learning and ingenuity. Even as late as 1549 an Italian author wrote as follows regarding the singing of