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THE PSALMODY REFORMER.

A SIMPLE AND COMPREHENSIVE METHOD OF IMPARTING INSTRUCTION IN VOCAL MUSIC,
Illustrated by the New Initial System of Notation.

No. 1.]

Part of a Series of Monthly Numbers, conducted by Gideon Wolaver and John B. Wallace.

[\$1 per Year.

KEY TO THE INITIAL SYSTEM.

NOTATION.—The initial letters stand for the monosyllables of solmization; Thus, F, stands for Fa; S, for Sole; L, for Law; and M, for Mé. The comparative durations of sounds are shown by the different kinds of letters; as indicated by the following lines.

- A large upright letter, two motions demand,
- A large leaning letter one motion of hand,
- A small upright letter a half-motion shorter;
- A small leaning letter perform in a quarter, &c.

TIME.—The mode of time is expressed by fractional figures; the denominator gives the parts of a semibreve; the numerator shows how many of these

parts are taken to fill a measure; thus, $\frac{2}{2}$ indicate that two minims fill a measure; $\frac{3}{2}$ that three minims fill a measure; and $\frac{6}{4}$ that six crotchets fill a measure; or, their equivalents in other notes, or rests.

The velocity is shown by figures, over the beginning of the tunes, which give the required number of motions to be made per minute, by the pendulum and hand, while singing the tune.

METRE.—The figures placed after the names of the tunes show each, the number of syllables in a line of a stanza; with the signs of long and short syllables affixed.

INTRODUCTION TO A NEW AND BETTER COURSE OF TEACHING.

It is generally considered to be a difficult thing for any one to learn to sing scientifically; and that many people are entirely destitute of musical capacity, who can never be taught to sing. These unreasonable and unscriptural notions are common among the people; the very people, who are all commanded to sing; yes, the people of this so called enlightened age, consider their Creator to be a harder taskmaster than Pharaoh; commanding them to do what he has not given them power to do; For, though Pharaoh denied the children of Israel straw to make bricks, he allowed them to gather stubble. Many attempt to learn music, and make a failure. And as nature is not apt to err, it was demonstrated by some, long ago, that the fault must be in the systems of teaching; So, attempts have been made to improve them. Many have thought the fault was in solmization, and so dispensed with it altogether. Some changed it from four monosyllables to seven.

Others supposed the fault to be in the staff, and discarded it. And it appears that more fancied the fault to be in the pendulum, and accordingly threw it away. Their motives might have all been good, but they were all too hasty; like an unskillful Physician, administering the most powerful medicines, at random, without stopping to learn the nature and cause of disease; of course his patient would be destroyed; so, Psalmody is nearly destroyed. Some of its very best appendages are rejected. And many conflicting systems are destroying one another. For instance, THE CHRISTIAN PSALMIST is in three systems of notation, the round, the numeral, and the patent note. By close investigation we have discovered many errors, and plans to remove them. The following are some of the most injurious errors:--

1. The musical phraseology is unintelligible.
2. Instrumental rules are applied to vocal music.

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do not commence at

- 3. The systems of teaching do not commence at the right place.
- 4. The mode of progression is irregular.
- 5. The systems of notation are unnecessarily difficult.
- 6. There are many superfluous modes of time.
- 7. The excellency of the pendulum time is overlooked.
- 8. The rules of prosody are erroneous.

1. PHRASEOLOGY. It is difficult if not impossible to impart a true knowledge of any thing without correct language.

Explanations of technical Terms, with occasional Criticisms.

Music, Walker defines, to be the science of harmonical sounds; this does not give the right idea, because music is not science; its theory is a science; Music is the production of melodious, or harmonious sounds. Written music is a figurative expression, it is only the representation of music.

Melody, a succession of pleasing intervals.
 Harmony, two or more parts together, a succession of pleasing intervals, the distance between two successive sounds.

Chord, the distance between two simultaneous sounds.

Part, a division of the harmony, either bottom, middle, or top. Base; this word is used in a twofold sense, which often leads to embarrassment; it is used for a kind of voice; also, for a part in harmony; these two distinct ideas should not be expressed by the same word: base means bottom; so, we use the word bottom for the lowest part in harmony; and base for the lowest voice.

Psalmody, sacred vocal music.

Semibreve, a note to be performed during two motions.

Minim, a note to be performed in half the time of a minim.

Crotchet, a note to be performed in half the time of a crotchet.

Quaver, a note to be performed in half the time of a crotchet.

Octave; this word, without any variation, has two distinct ideas; which makes it difficult to understand; Walker did not understand it, he says it is an interval of eight sounds; this is as intelligible as a valley of eight hills, or a space of eight lines. Interval means the distance between two sounds; the empty octave means eighth, is an interval of seven degrees: the filled octave means seven seconds ascending, or the same descending.

2. Instrumental rules are applied to vocal music. This is like trying to regulate the sun to suit a timepiece. Instrumental music is natural, and instrumental, is artificial. Instrumental music is justly called an accompaniment to vocal music; yet acknowledges the voice to be the standard; the voice and instrument, have each a different way of coming at the music; and many rules for singing are in the instrumental way; so the voice is compelled to try to do what it never was made to do, and never can do alone; which the instrument may do with ease. We

refer chiefly to the accidentals. Many persons have been discouraged from learning to sing, by accidentals. We have discovered nature's laws in this respect, and have formed rules, accordingly, which shall be given elsewhere; but suffice it here to say that the accidentals in this work are not for the singer's use, but for the instrumental performer.

3. The systems of teaching do not commence at the right place. All kinds of learning should have a starting point, and a regular gradation of advance. One of the first things a skilful teacher will do, is to ascertain the amount of his pupil's knowledge; and so, commence with him, where he finds him; and if the pupil knows nothing, the teacher will commence at the beginning. According to the present systems of teaching vocal music, Accords are made repeatedly which the pupil cannot imitate nicely, he is condemned for having no musical talent; we have taught hundreds of this kind to sing well, by making the ear the starting-point instead of the voice. The ear rules the voice by the power of the organ of tune; which, when cultivated will bring the voice right, without any effort. He that can speak plainly, and cannot sing, has no deficiency in his voice; and if he can hear well, there is no deficiency in his ear, but the organ of tune lacks cultivation. This organ like its cephalic neighbors, cannot thrive without cultivation; and will become inactive if too long neglected. It would be unreasonable to suppose that this organ, which is a musical one, is more deficient naturally than others; while all people are highly commanded to exercise it.

4. The mode of progression is irregular. A person's knowledge is like a tree, which begins at the root, then rises and ex-

pands. As there are no other means of teaching, than by what is already known to the learner; so, it follows that every particle of latter knowledge, must be linked to the former; For example; When a child is learning to read, he is taught to proceed from the alphabet, to put two letters together; then to read short sentences of the simplest monosyllables, before he learns longer words. In this mode of proceeding the greatest ends are accomplished; the child's understanding is exercised; his memory strengthened; and greatest of all, his courage is excited, when he knows that he can read. Progress depends much upon courage; without it nothing can be done. That this is the best method of teaching every thing, few, or perhaps none will deny. But how is the science of music taught? The scholar is required to perform the most difficult exercises, in both pitch and time, before he is allowed to attempt to sing a tune by note. Many of these lessons are much harder to perform than any tune. The system-makers could not have taken a more effectual way to baffle and discourage the learner, than that which they have taken. They have collected all the intervals, they could find, to put in the way of the learner; but luckily for him they did not find them all; if they had found them all, they would probably have fixed it so that no one would ever learn to sing by note; all that would sing at all, would sing like a parrot by rote; as many now do. The difficulties of learning are so magnified, that numbers lose all their courage; and can never more be induced to attempt music. Scholars do not presume to be wise above what is written in musical books, they take for granted, that the fault must be in nature: the ideas are held out, that the musical capacities are rare; and

music is as difficult to learn as the Greek or Latin language. One evil, if not removed, produces more: teachers found by experience in the Pestalozian System, that the student's patience would not last through the tedious process; so they taught their scholars occasionally, to sing ditties, and light secular music, by ear, to keep up their courage; thus they taught two pernicious errors at once. The teacher should at all times watch that no nonsensical trash enter his school of sacred music, and he should strive to prevent his scholars from singing by ear; for when this habit is contracted, it will be very difficult to remove.

Our manner of progression in teaching we labor to make as regular as possible—from the most easy to the most difficult—that it may be in accordance with all kinds of proper teaching and common sense.

INTRODUCTION.

All who are capable of talking, are capable of learning to sing, if they are properly taught when young. We will commence with the weakest capacity for music, (idiots excepted), and fix the course of teaching, so that the teacher may know how to commence with learners in all stages and abilities.

Sounds are varied four ways, viz. in pitch, time, quantity, and quality. Accordingly the theory may be divided into as many portions, and kept separately; but there cannot be much practice without the union of them all. Time is the principal element in Music, but Quality is the first to be attended to, in teaching. Qualities of voices differ as much as people's countenances; perhaps no two were ever alike. An acquaintance can often be recognized as

well by the quality of his voice, as by the sight of his face. Though voices naturally differ so much, yet they can be changed so as to be greatly improved in quality. This must be done principally by imitation. It is therefore of great importance that the teacher's voice be of a pleasant quality. If the learner have a treble voice, it will be necessary for the teacher to raise his voice to the falsetto, that it may be in unison with the learner's voice. A female teacher should be preferred for this part of the teaching. Some use an instrument. A good instrument produces sounds of a fine quality, which is desirable for tuning the voice. But it will be more apt to make mistakes than the voice, unless in the hands of a skilful performer; and being destitute of articulation, cannot be recommended, except to accompany the teacher's voice.

The best way of tuning the voice is by attraction. The peculiar nature and great power of the organ of tune, when cultivated, is such as to incline the voice to produce unison or octave, with any sound that is louder than its own; on the same principle that larger bodies attract smaller ones.

COURSE OF TEACHING.

Learners should be taught separately, until they can sing the filled octave and beat time.

The cultivation of the Organ of Tune, which is improperly called the cultivation of the Ear.—First process. Let two sounds be made differing very much in pitch, and let the learner tell which of the two he thinks is the highest. Then let him be told whether his answer is right or not. This should be repeated; sometimes with the low sound first, and sometimes with the high; first, till he

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can answer correctly every time. Next, let two sounds be made differing less in pitch than the former; and let the learner be interrogated as before, until he can always give the right answer. Next let other sounds be made still nearer together,—and so on until he knows the difference between two sounds one degree apart.

Second process. Let the teacher produce a sound, and let the learner attempt to imitate it. If the learner cannot produce unison with the teacher, the teacher will produce unison with the learner. After making a long sound together, the teacher will raise or lower his voice, one degree; the learner still keeping his first pitch. This will produce a second, which is one of the worst discords. So, one of the most pleasant, and one of the learner which pleases him contrasted. The teacher will ask the learner which is the concord and the best. He will also tell the learner which is the concord and which is the discord. This will need to be repeated until the learner can distinguish the perfect concord from the worst discord. The teacher will next proceed to other chords, and use them in the same manner. The learner may still keep his first pitch, till he can distinguish a perfect concord from an imperfect; and an imperfect concord from a discord. The learner's organ of tune by this time will be sufficiently cultivated to begin to sing.

The next work to be done is to cultivate the voice. Every voice should be trained in its own pitch. Visible notation should be used as soon as the learner begins to sing. At first every note should be pointed at, that he may always look at the right one. The Blackboard is very necessary in teaching vocal music, as well as other branches of education. The characters may be made larger on the blackboard than in books. And the larger the characters are, the greater impressions they will make upon the mind.

The eye is one of the main organs for conveying intelligence to the mind. Hence the indispensable utility of the staff, for it shows distinctly, the pitch of every note. So to throw away the staff would be to lose the greater part of the power of the mighty organ of sight in music. And to call it sight singing would be hypocritical. The teacher will next commence at the filled octave. He will produce a sound for imitation and pronounce it *fa*, pointing at the first note. The learner attempting to imitate it, may produce a sound, higher or lower; if so, the teacher will not baffle him, by striving to force his voice into unison with his own; but will produce unison with him.

After sounding in unison a short time, the teacher will point to the second note *so*, and sing it; and when the learner can follow, or step with ease, the first three may be sung in rotation ascending and descending. When these three can be performed with facility, the fourth and fifth may be attempted. The teacher's voice will need to increase in loudness as it ascends, so as to attract the learner's voice, from the pitch which it had, to that which he wishes it to take. When the filled fifth is gained it will be necessary to practice it much both ascending and descending, before the remainder of the octave is attempted. It will generally be necessary to change the pitch of the tonic; as the voice of the learner may not yet be capable of performing the whole octave together. To change the pitch, the teacher may point at the dominant *so*, and sing it in the same pitch that the tonic was in before. And when the learner produces unison with him, they may raise by steps to the next octave. And in like manner descend. When the learner can sing the octave in two pieces with ease, he may sing it altogether. The teacher will frequently have occasion to change the pitch of the to-

nic to suit the learner's voice. He will soon discover the middle sound of the learner's voice. Then he may point at the dominant sole, and sing it in this middle sound, and lead the learner's voice up and down through the whole octave. The learner is now far enough advanced to begin with Time.

Time.—*To Beat Common and Compound Time.*—The elbow should rest against the side, the hand kept open, with the back of it up, and only the wrist joint allowed to bend. This will be sufficient for all, except teachers, who may bend the elbow joint instead of the wrist. There are two beats in a measure of these modes—the first down, the second up.

To Beat Triple Time.—First, let the ends of the fingers fall (upon something). Second, let the heel of the hand fall. Third, raise the whole hand. Three beats in a measure: The first and second Down; the third Up.

Explanations of Technical Terms, according to their Meanings in this Work.

Time, the proportion of the duration of sounds and rests; the velocity of music.

Common Time, binary, or equal time, expressed thus $\frac{2}{2}$ to be performed two motions per Measure. $\frac{3}{2}$

Triple Time, three-fold, expressed thus $\frac{3}{2}$ to be performed three motions per Measure. $\frac{6}{4}$

Compound, or Double Triple Time, expressed thus $\frac{6}{4}$ to be performed two motions per measure. In all kinds of $\frac{4}{4}$ Time the principal accent fall on the beginning of each measure, and a secondary accent on the beginning of every rising beat.

Velocity, celerity, rate of speed; expressed by figures placed over the beginning of a tune or strain.

Pendulum, a body suspended to motion the time by vibrating. Da Capo, or D. C. Return to the beginning of the tune.

Measure, in music, the distance between one bar and the next. Measure, in poetry, a foot, a metrical division of a line.

Space, the distance between one line and the next.

Place, a line or space on the staff; location where a note or sound may be situated.

Degree, the distance between one place and the next.

Pitch, the state of music, or of a sound, respecting its gravity, or acuteness. *v.* To produce the first sound of a tune.

First, a single sound.

Second, an interval, or chord of 1 degree.

Third, an interval, or chord of 2 degrees.

Fourth, an interval, or chord of 3 degrees.

Fifth, an interval, or chord of 4 degrees.

Sixth, an interval, or chord of 5 degrees.

Seventh, an interval, or chord of 6 degrees.

Eighth, an interval, or chord of 7 degrees, the empty octave.

Unison, two or more sounds alike in pitch.

Tonic, the most powerful place in the octave.

Supertonic, the first place above the tonic.

Mediant, the second place above the tonic; the middle place between the tonic and dominant.

Subdominant, the third place above the tonic.

Dominant, the fourth place above the tonic, and the next in power to it.

Submediant, the fifth place above the tonic.

Subtonic, the sixth place above the tonic, and the first place below it.

Accidental, an accidental sharp, or natural, at the left side of a note, to show the instrumental performer that the sound must be elevated a semitone, to agree with the voice; the accidental also affects notes that immediately follow in unison.

Point, a dot at the right side of a note or rest, to make it half as long again.

Concord, a pleasing production of two simultaneous sounds.

Discord, a disagreeable union of sounds.

Tenor, the middle male voice.

Falsetto, the artificial male voice.

Treble, the voice of females and boys.

Hold, an extra motion of time. Where the sign of it occurs, in or at the end of a triple time measure, it should be beaten as two common time measures. And where the sign occurs in or at the end of a common time measure, it should be performed as a triple time measure. The sign of a hold is placed over or under a note or rest, which requires a motion of time more than the measure will naturally contain. It is also used where an extra motion is required between notes, where it serves as a rest. It serves the purpose of a rest when placed over or under a bar.

Slur, a curved mark, to show how many notes are to be performed to a syllable, [when singing by word], where more than one is required.

Vocal, relating or belonging to the voice.

Notation, the act or practice of recording music by characters; signification, or representation of music.

Solmization, the application of monosyllables to the places of the octave; moveable by transposition.

Transposition, the changing of the pitch by flats or sharps.

Sound, that which can be heard; musical sound, a sound that can be associated with another, so as to produce a cord or interval.

Motion, one vibration of the pendulum; one movement or beat of the hand.

Beat, a motion of the hand to mark the time when singing.

Mode, form or manner.

Note, the sign or representation of a sound.

Rest, a character representing silence; a stop in music.

Tune, a series of musical notes, or sounds.

Metre, measure of verse.

Line, in poetry, a metrical division of a stanza.

Line in music, a constituent of the staff.

Stanza, a metrical division of a poem.

Staff, five horizontal parallel lines, with their spaces, for musical notation.

Bars, marks across the staff, or staves, to divide the time into equal portions, according to the accent.

Accent, that which makes one syllable louder than another.

Prosody, that which explains the nature of poetry.

Poetry, language in metre.

Voice, sound uttered by the mouth.

Triplet, three notes of one kind, accented on the first, and connected by a figure 3, to be performed in the time of 2. This is a fragment of compound time.

Repeat, a passage to be performed twice in succession.

Close, a character to show the end of a tune.

Solo, one part.

Duette, two parts.

Triu, three parts.

To earth thou art gone, but we will not deplore thee, Tho' sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb, For the Saviour has pass'd thro' the'

portis before thee, The lamp of his love is thy guide thro' the gloom. The lamp of his love is thy guide thro' the gloom.

VENISE SECOND

To earth thou art gone,
 We no longer deplore thee,
 Nor tread the rough path
 Of the world by thy side;
 For the wide arms of Mercy
 Are spread to enfold thee,
 And sinners may hope,
 Since the Saviour hath died.

MORNING. C. 8, 6, 8, 6.

54

T
 Thou Lord hail in the morning hear, My voice ascending high; To Thee will I direct my pray'r; To Thee lift up mine eye, At God's right hand where Christ has gone,

M.
 Thou Lord hail in the morning hear, My voice ascending high; To Thee will I direct my pray'r; To Thee lift up mine eye, At God's right hand where Christ has gone,

L.
 Thou Lord hail in the morning hear, My voice ascending high; To Thee will I direct my pray'r; To Thee lift up mine eye, At God's right hand where Christ has gone,

To plead for all his saints, Presenting at his Father's throne, Our songs and our complaints.

To plead for all his saints, Presenting at his Father's throne, Our songs and our complaints.

To plead for all his saints, Presenting at his Father's throne, Our songs and our complaints.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

If I had tongues of Greece and Jews, And nobler speech than Angels use, If love be absent I am found, Like noisy brass, an empty sound.

And tho' endued with prophecy, And secrets all were known to me; And faith the mountains to remove; I still am nothing without love.

T.

M.

B.

So fades the lovely blooming flow'r, Frail smiling solace of an hour! So soon our transient comforts fly, And pleasure on-ly blooms to die.

T.

M.

We all, O Lord, have gone astray, And wand'ring from thy heav'nly way; The path of sin our feet have trod, And gone astray from Thee our God.

*German Hymn, like Josiah, Martyrdom, &c. is in the Chcerful Mode, according to rule; yet there is so much solemnity in it, that it admits of plaintive words.

T.

M.

When thinking of the wond'rous cross, On which the Prince of Glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.

B.

T.

M.

Come sinners to the Gospel feast, Let ev'ry soul be Jesus' guest; There need not one be left behind, For God has bidden all mankind.

B.

HIDING PLACE. L. 8, 8, 8, 8.

Plaintive on A. 61

Musical score for 'Hiding Place' in 2/4 time, key of G major. It features three parts: Tenor (T.), Middle (M.), and Bass (B.). The lyrics are: 'Hail sov'reign love, that first began The scheme to rescue fallen man; Hall matchless free eternal grace, That gave my soul a hiding place.'

HEAVENLY UNION. 8, 8, 8, 8, 7.

Cheerful on G.

Musical score for 'Heavenly Union' in 4/4 time, key of G major. It features two parts: Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.). The lyrics are: 'Come saints and sinners hear us tell, The wonders of Immanuel, He saves us from a burning hell, And takes our souls with him to dwell, And gives us heav'nly union.'

LIVONIA. 8, 8, 8, 8, 8.

Plainive, on E.

Think, mighty God, on feeble man! How frail his life! How short the span! Between the cradle and the grave;
 Can man secure his vital breath,
 Can man secure his vital breath,

Can man secure &c.
 Can man secure &c.
 Can man secure his vital breath, Against the bold demands of death, With skill forsy or power to save
 Can man secure &c.

T.

M.

B.

With songs of honor sounding loud, Address the Lord on high: Upon the winds he spreads a cloud, And waters veil the sky. And waters veil the sky.

And waters &c.

S.

And corn &c.

F.

He makes &c.

P.

sky. He sends his showers of blessings down, To cheer the plains below. He makes the grass the mountains crown, He makes, &c. And corn in valleys grow. And corn &c.

He sends &c.

Musical staff for Soprano (S.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

Musical staff for Alto (A.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

Musical staff for Bass (B.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

Behold the sure foundation stone, Which God in Zion lays, To

To build our heavenly

Musical staff for Soprano (S.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

Musical staff for Alto (A.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

Musical staff for Bass (B.) in 2/2 time. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The piece is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *m*, and *f*.

To build &c. And his eternal praise.

build our heavenly hopes upon, And his eternal praise. To build our heavenly hopes upon, And his eternal praise.

T.

M.

B.

T.

M.

lyer Their land from error's chain.

B.

T.

M.

O brightest hope of perfect love. It lifts me up to things above. It bears on eagles' wings; It gives my hungry soul a taste. And

B.

CONTINUED.

59. NEW JERUSALEM. C. 8, 6, 8, 6. — Cheerful on G. (INGELS) 71

Musical notation for the first system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

makes me for a moment feast, With Christ, the King of kings.

Musical notation for the second system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

Musical notation for the third system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

The New &c.

Musical notation for the fourth system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

From heav'n above, where God resides, That holy happy place, The New Jerusalem comes down, A.

Musical notation for the fifth system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

Musical notation for the sixth system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

The New &c.

Musical notation for the seventh system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

down'd with shining grace.

The New Jerusalem comes down, Adorn'd with shining grace. Adorn'd with shining grace.

Musical notation for the eighth system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

The New &c.

Adorn'd &c

Musical score for 'NEW DURHAM' in C major, 2/4 time. The score includes vocal parts for Tenor (T.), Soprano (S.), and Bass (B.), and piano accompaniment (P.). The lyrics are: 'How vain are all things here below, How false and yet how fair. Each pleasure hath its poison too, And ev'ry sweet a snare. Each pleasure &c.'

54. NORTHFIELD. C. 8, 6, 8, 6. —

Cheerful on C.

Musical score for 'NORTHFIELD' in C major, 2/4 time. The score includes vocal parts for Tenor (T.), Soprano (S.), and Bass (B.), and piano accompaniment (P.). The lyrics are: 'Let all the hands with shouts of joy, To God their voices raise; Sing psalms in honor to his name, And spread his sounding praise And spread &c.'