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Publisher: Routledge
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Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41
Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK

Proceedings of the Musical Association

Publication details, including
instructions for authors and
subscription information:
[http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/
rma18](http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rma18)

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Published online: 28 Jan 2009.

To cite this article: W. H. Cummings Esq. (1876) On Henry Purcell and
His Family, Proceedings of the Musical Association, 3:1, 33-44, DOI:
[10.1093/jrma/3.1.33](https://doi.org/10.1093/jrma/3.1.33)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jrma/3.1.33>

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DECEMBER 4, 1876.

JOHN HULLAH, Esq., LL.D., VICE-PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

ON HENRY PURCELL AND HIS FAMILY.

By W. H. CUMMINGS, Esq.

A MOST pleasant and picturesque introduction to the Purcell family is to be found in Pepys' Diary, under date Feb. 21, 1659, where we find this entry: 'After dinner I back to Westminster Hall with him (Mr. Crewe) in his coach. Here I met with Mr. Lock and Purcell, Masters of Musique, and with them to the Coffee House, into a room next the water by ourselves, where we spent an hour or two. . . . Here we had variety of brave Italian and Spanish songs, and a canon for eight voices, which Mr. Lock had lately made on these words, *Domine Salvum fac Regem*, an admirable thing . . . Here out of the window it was a most pleasant sight to see the City from one end to the other with a glory about it, so high was the light of the bonfires, and so thick round the City, and the bells rang everywhere.'

Lord Braybrooke's edition of Pepys has a note which is reprinted in the new one now in course of publication, to the effect that the two gentlemen named in the text were 'Matthew Lock and Henry Purcell, both celebrated composers;' but this is an undoubted error, to which I have called the attention of the learned Editor, the Rev. Mynors Bright. It certainly could not have been Henry Purcell the composer, for although we know that he commenced his musical career at a very early age, he was only one year old at the date Pepys made the entry in his diary; and admitting he might have had a very lovely voice even at that period, I cannot believe he would have been considered a desirable addition to Mr. Pepys' musical party. As no mention is made of the Christian name of Purcell, we must conclude that Pepys met either the uncle, Thomas Purcell, or the father, Henry Purcell.

The uncle was undoubtedly a musician of reputation and ability. Various entries in official and Court records testify to

the numerous appointments he held, such as Gentleman in Ordinary of the Voice and Lute to his Majesty, Composer to the Violins to his Majesty, and Lay Vicar of Westminster Abbey. His compositions are now lost, with the exception of two chants in frequent use in our Cathedrals. A year before his death, probably feeling age or infirmities creeping on, he seems to have retired from active service, for he then executed a power of attorney authorising his son *Matthew* to receive all payments due from His Majesty's Treasury, Exchequer Coffery Office, 'or any other place or office whatsoever.' On his death in 1682 he was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. The power of attorney I have brought for inspection; it is interesting, on account of the autograph signatures of Thomas Purcell and of his niece Frances, the wife of the celebrated Purcell. I am inclined to think that Pepys met *Thomas* Purcell, from the little circumstance that the son of the latter was named *Matthew*, possibly out of compliment to Locke. But it may after all have been his brother, Henry Purcell, father of the great Henry, for he also was a musician of reputation, a member of the Royal Band, a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, master of the chorister boys of Westminster Abbey, and music copyist of the last-named church, an appointment of considerable importance at that time. He is generally accredited with the composition of one chant still in use bearing the name of Purcell. He died in 1664, and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. His wife survived him five years, and although we have no record of their respective ages, it is probable that they were both young at the time of their deaths.

We now come to their son, Henry Purcell, 'the boast and pride of English Musicians,' who was born in St. Anne's Lane, Old Pye Street, Westminster, in 1658.

Purcell was only six years old when deprived by death of his father's care, but his uncle Thomas, of whom I have been speaking, bestowed on him all the loving devotion of a parent, and immediately placed him where his precocious genius would receive nurture and cultivation. It was an early age to commence life as a chorister-boy in the Chapel Royal, but at that time, and for long after, children generally entered choirs at the age of six or seven. When young Purcell joined the Chapel Royal establishment he had the advantage of instruction from a most able master, Captain Cooke, a man who had won laurels in the battle field fighting for his king, and also in the more peaceful arena of music. He was composer, actor, and singer, and is frequently mentioned by Pepys. On the death of Cooke, his pupil Pelham Humphrey—or Humphries—became master of the boys; and he, a man of considerable genius, must have done much to develop the powers of the young prodigy under his charge. He lived two years to carry on the work, and was succeeded by Blow, also a pupil of Cooke, who doubtless did something toward educating Purcell. At the age of eighteen Purcell, probably through Blow's

interest, was appointed music-copyist to Westminster Abbey, and four years later Blow resigned the post of organist in his favour: from which fact we can imagine how highly he must have estimated the genius and ability of Purcell. Blow was himself a remarkable musician and composer, and fifteen years afterwards, when Purcell died, he was re-appointed organist of the Abbey. Blow must have possessed a most amiable and generous disposition, devoid of jealousy or mean envy, for, in addition to this instance of self-sacrifice on behalf of Purcell, he similarly resigned his post as master of the boys of St. Paul's Cathedral in favour of another remarkable pupil, Jeremiah Clarke. Purcell's triumphs rapidly increased, and we soon find him occupying the distinguished post of Organist of the Chapel Royal, and Composer in Ordinary to his Majesty. He wrote music for the Church, the Court, and the theatre, producing works for each in great number. But, alas! his sunshine was all too short, for at the early age of thirty-seven (a period which has proved fatal to more than one great musical genius) he ceased from his labours and was borne to an honoured grave in Westminster Abbey, beneath the organ which had so often resounded to his divine harmony. This was in the year 1695. I must now retrace my steps to speak of Purcell's married life. He took to himself a wife when twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, about the time he succeeded to the organship of Westminster, and had six children, four of whom died young. I have already referred to the probability that Purcell's parents were short-lived. Coupling these significant facts together—the brief lives of father, mother, son, and grandchildren—we have presumptive evidence of hereditary delicacy of constitution. Purcell's wife Frances survived him eleven years, and, dying in 1706, she found a quiet resting-place by his side in the old Abbey.

I suppose most of you are familiar with the aspersions which have been cast on the memory of Purcell's wife—the idle tale which attributes, with such particularity of detail, harsh and unfeeling conduct, resulting at last in the premature and untimely death of Purcell.

It is always easy to promulgate a scandal, but very difficult to trace its origin, and oftentimes still more difficult to refute it. In this case, I have little doubt, the whole story is a base and wicked invention; but, reflecting as it does on the memory of both Purcell and his wife, I propose briefly to state my reasons for the opinion I have formed. Sir John Hawkins, the musical historian, printed the narrative, and although he doubted its authenticity, and suggested that Purcell might have died of decline, yet he added some grave reflections on Purcell's presumed habits of dissipation, and of the bad company he associated with, particularly the notorious Tom Brown. On Hawkins, therefore, rests a large share of responsibility for perpetuating the slander. Miss Hawkins, his daughter, indignant at some idle stories in circulation respecting her mother's treatment of Sir John, wrote thus:

'Mrs. Purcell, I should conjecture, had other modes of attracting Mr. Purcell, yet *perhaps the whole story may have been as gross falsification as that by which Lady Hawkins is vilified.*'

The late Richard Clarke cannot be considered blameless in this Purcell matter. He was an enthusiastic and kind-hearted man, but wanting in discrimination, and too ready to draw conclusions from unproved and insufficient evidence. His volume of Glee Poetry contains the words of Purcell's catch, 'Jack, thou'rt a toper.' I will read the lines and Clarke's comments thereon:—

Jack, thou'rt a toper, let's have t'other quart;
Ring, we're so sober, 'twere a shame to part;
None but a coward, bully'd by his wife
For coming late, fears a domestic strife;
I'm free, and so are you, to call and knock.
Boldly the watchman cries, Past two o'clock.

Clarke informs us that the 'Jack' apostrophised as a 'toper' was Dr. John Blow, and goes on to say: 'There is a tradition that Purcell's death was occasioned by a severe cold, which he caught waiting for admittance into his own house. It is said he used to keep late hours. He appears to have spent much time with Tom Brown, who wrote the words of most of his catches. The wits of that day used to meet at Owen Swan's in Bartholomew Lane, and at Purcell's Head in Wych Street. His wife had given orders to the servants not to let him in if he came home after midnight. Unfortunately his companions had got hold of this and had kept him late, as usual, which was the cause of Tom Brown writing the words of the above catch, which Purcell set to music before he went home. Being refused admittance at home, he sat down on the step of his own door and fell asleep, and through the inclemency of the night contracted a disorder of which he died. This but ill agrees with the expressions of grief she makes use of in the *Orpheus Britannicus*, for the loss of her dear lamented husband.'

These interesting particulars are so precise that it would seem to be almost impossible to controvert them, but fortunately they can be shown to be untrue from beginning to end. The words of the catch were not written by Tom Brown, and are, of course, not to be found in his works; moreover, instead of Brown having written most of the words of Purcell's catches, it is tolerably certain that Purcell never set a line of Brown's poetry.

In the year 1768, Dr. Arne gave a concert at Drury Lane Theatre, the programme consisting of glees and catches, and for that concert he published a book of the words, which I have here. In it we find Purcell's 'Jack, thou'rt a toper,' with the following note: 'The words of this last catch are said to be written by Purcell, wherein it is obvious that he meant no elegance with regard to the poetry, but made it entirely subservient to his extreme pretty design in the music.' 'Jack, thou'rt a toper' is

to be found in Purcell's opera 'Bonduca,' composed by him the year before he died. The libretto was an adaptation from the play of the same name by Beaumont and Fletcher, but the alterations and additions were made anonymously; it is therefore highly probable that Arne is correct in assigning the words and the music of that particular catch, 'Jack, thou'rt a toper,' to Purcell.

Now let us deal with Purcell's alleged intimacy with Tom Brown. In the year 1693, about seventeen or eighteen months before Purcell died, Brown wrote and printed some very complimentary verses addressed to the great musician, which he headed thus: 'Lines addressed to his *unknown* friend, Mr. Henry Purcell.' These were reprinted after Purcell's death without note or addition, and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Purcell and Brown never became acquainted. Brown's lines are too long to quote *in extenso*, and the following must suffice:

What praises, Purcell, to thy skill are due.
 Who hast to *Judah's* monarch been so true!
 By thee he moves our hearts, by thee he reigns,
 By thee shakes off his old inglorious chains,
 And sees new honours done to his immortal strains.
 In thy performance we with wonder find
 Corelli's genius to Bassani join'd.
 Thus I, *unknown*, my gratitude express,
 And conscious gratitude could do no less.
 This tribute from each *British* muse is due;
 The whole poetick tribe's oblig'd to you.
 For where the author's scanty words have fail'd,
 Thy happier graces, Purcell, have prevail'd.
 And surely none but you, with equal ease,
 Could add to David, and make D'Urfey please.

Purcell, in his last will and testament signed on the day of his death, bequeathed to his loving wife Frances all his estate, real and personal, for her sole use, and also nominated her executrix. We cannot find evidence here of anything but mutual affection and confidence. Many of you can call to mind how differently Shakspeare treated his wife in his will.*

Purcell's widow made frequent public reference to the dear memory of her husband, and the following extract from her last will is especially interesting, as it shows how mindful she was of his wishes, and also that Purcell himself did not cultivate convivial society to the neglect of his family and their worldly interests. Mrs. Purcell says: 'According to her husband's desire, she had given her dear son Edward good education, and

* Subsequent to the reading of this paper, a friend directed my attention to Knight's able remarks on Shakspeare's will, satisfactorily proving that Shakspeare's widow was well provided for, and that the special bequest to her, which has commonly been regarded as a slight, was, on the contrary, an additional indication of favour and regard. I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my regret for the injustice done to the memory of Shakspeare.

she also did give him all the books of music in general—the organ, the double spinett, the single spinett, a silver tankard, a silver watch, two pairs of gold buttons, a hair ring, a mourning ring of Dr. Busby's, a larum clock, Mr. Edward Purcell's picture, handsome furniture for a room, and he was to be maintained until provided for.'

I have now said sufficient respecting Purcell's domestic life, and will only add that his fellow-pupil, Dr. Tudway, has borne written testimony to the studious habits of Purcell, and of his constant endeavours to excel in every branch of his profession.

Let me now direct your attention to the portrait of Purcell kindly lent for this occasion by that admirable and benevolent institution, the Royal Society of Musicians. This interesting picture has somewhat of a romantic history attached to it, which has never before been made public. A parchment deed in possession of the Royal Society of Musicians runs thus: 'Redmond Simpson having presented the portraits of Handel, Corelli, Geminiani, and Purcell to the Directors of the Ancient Concerts (now held in Tottenham Street), of which Sir Watkin William Wynn, Baronet, is Treasurer, so long as the said concerts shall continue, upon condition that when the same shall break up then the portraits are to be given and delivered over to the Royal Society of Musicians, to be by them kept for ever after. In witness and testimony whereof the said Redmond Simpson and Sir Watkin William Wynn have hereto set their hands this 25th day of April, 1785.' Mr. Simpson, the donor of the pictures, left a statement in writing that the portrait of Purcell was painted by Closterman in 1694, and was many years in possession of Purcell's son Edward, who said it was very like his father, but that the latter had grown very thin before he died. From the son Edward the picture passed to the grandson Edward Henry, who sold it to Dr. Boyce, from whom it was bought by Mr. Simpson, and at the dissolution of the Ancient Concerts it came to the Royal Society of Musicians.

I have only time to say that the son, Edward Purcell, became an organist—report says, of moderate ability—and that *his* son, Edward Henry, was educated in the Chapel Royal under Bernard Gates, and succeeded his father in his organ appointments. So much for the family of Purcell, musicians, as we have seen, for four generations.

Purcell was pre-eminent above all his predecessors and contemporaries—a composer of vocal and instrumental, orchestral, harpsichord, and organ music—sacred, secular, and dramatic. He was an accomplished organist and also a finished vocalist. How early he commenced the practice of composition we cannot tell, but I will now play a little melody or song, 'Sweet Tyranny,' of his, published when he was only nine years of age.

To be able to appreciate the value of his work we must first consider what was the state of music *just prior* to his day. The civil wars and the Protectorate had destroyed organs, music-

books, and dispersed and banished choirs so effectually that at the Restoration of Charles music had to be composed for men's voices only, or if soprano parts could not be dispensed with they were played on cornets, for there were no treble boys capable of singing. Dramatic music there was none; it is true Locke had attempted something in that line, but the very piece on which his fame has been chiefly sustained was really not his at all, but the composition of Henry Purcell when a youth. I refer to the well-known 'Macbeth music.' This music, however, sinks into insignificance when placed in comparison with later works of Purcell's. Take, for instance, his little Opera 'Dido,' composed when he was twenty-two years of age—not nineteen, as stated by Sir John Hawkins. This Opera is complete, with recitative, solo, and chorus—not one word of dialogue,—it is full of beautiful music, and one of the airs, 'When I am laid in earth,' although constructed on the confined limits of a ground bass, is most touching in its pathos. It may be noted in passing that S. Bach has used nearly the same ground in his B minor Mass for the chorus to the words of the 'Crucifixus.'

Purcell was gifted with a soul for melody, and possibly it was the unwonted exhibition of this heaven-born faculty in his works which first attracted and captivated the public ear, for before his time we English, as a nation, had cultivated madrigals and part-songs with diligence and success, but in all solo-songs, till those of Purcell appeared, the chief effects were produced by the words, not by the melody. As for the airs, 'they were, till this time, in general as unformed and misshapen as if they had been made of notes scattered about by chance.' This last quotation, from Burgh's 'Anecdotes of Music,' is too sweeping. Dowland had printed some most melodious songs in 1597. Morley, his contemporary, and other names could also be cited as melodists, but the Puritans had probably swept away both the memory and practice of all such compositions, and Purcell's immediate predecessors were not remarkable for tunefulness. As a scientific musician and harmonist Purcell was equally great and successful. At the age of twenty-four years he published a set of 'Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins and Bass, with Organ or Harpsichord.' From that work I have selected a fugue, which I will now play. One of the favourite exercises of learned musicians in his time was canon-writing, and you need only examine the four volumes of his sacred music, collected and edited by Vincent Novello, to see that Purcell was not a whit behind the most accomplished of his brethren in that cramped and fettered school. The volumes published by Novello contain 123 sacred compositions, chiefly anthems, and there are many still remaining MSS. Purcell's harmonical progressions were so remarkable that they may truly be termed discoveries; so much in advance of the age were they, that I have frequently heard foreign musicians, to whom his works were previously unknown, exclaim on examining them, 'Oh, that is Schumann; that is Beethoven,' &c. There are some remark-

able harmonies in Purcell's Latin Psalm, 'Jehovah quam multi.' When you hear them you may possibly doubt their authenticity, but as I enjoy the friendship of the present owner of the original autograph MS., I can vouch for their correctness.

Purcell wrote more music than we can ever hope, after these long years of neglect, to recover. Still, fresh material is turning up in various quarters, and I trust before long it will be possible to point to a considerable series of his published compositions. I have made a catalogue or list of works for which he composed music, and it includes 47 operas or dramas, 28 odes, and 202 short fugitive pieces of various kinds, vocal and instrumental. I have spoken of his skill as composer, organist, and vocalist. In the latter capacity he assisted in the choir at the coronation of James II., and there is a quaint record of his having sung one of his own songs at Stationers' Hall with 'incredible graces.' We must not forget, also, that he stood at the head of his profession as a teacher. One of his pupils—his brother Daniel, older than himself, was no mean composer, but he has suffered partial eclipse by the superiority of the genius of the younger Henry. Another pupil, Weldon, is renowned for his exquisite compositions. Witness his anthems 'Hear my crying' and 'In thee, O Lord.' Purcell's 'Lessons for the Harpsichord' formed the model for most of the succeeding writers for that instrument, and his treatise on 'The Art Descant' is remarkable for its clearness and conciseness.

Dr. Crotch has said of Purcell: 'He was the greatest master this country ever produced, and the greatest composer of the latter part of the seventeenth century. Eminent both in the sublime and the beautiful styles, and blended with them a considerable proportion of the ornamental, he composed for the Church, oratorio, stage, and chamber, and thus rested his character both on his individual and on his collected talents. His productions are sometimes simply beautiful, but are generally in a great degree pathetic and scientific, and that without any apparent effort; but when he manifestly endeavours to exert all his powers of expression and to show the whole depth of his learning, then indeed he surpasses all his rivals.' I wish we had the means at hand for immediately proving the truth of this eloquent passage—that is, of course, impossible; but I trust before long frequent opportunities will be afforded of hearing Purcell's music with the colouring of orchestra and chorus. To make this practicable, publication is the first and chief necessity. To rescue and publish what remains to us of this master-musician—described by all who have had the opportunity of judging, as the greatest we ever possessed,—is a work which commends itself to the sympathy of all: to us Englishmen in particular, for the honour of our Fatherland, and to the universal nationality of musicians generally, for the glory of their art, which alone has the power to

Dissolve us into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before our eyes.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN said he should like to ask if there was any record of the kind of voice Purcell possessed.

Mr. CUMMINGS said his voice was alto, though he sang bass at the Coronation of James II. The fact might account for the great number of alto solos to be found in Purcell's works.

The CHAIRMAN said there was also a great number of excellent bass songs, which might have led to the inference that he was a bass singer.

Dr. STONE asked if Mr. Cummings thought that Lulli had any influence upon Purcell.

Mr. CUMMINGS said there could not be much doubt that Purcell was slightly influenced by Lulli, but more, he thought, by Bassani. He was not a copyist of Lulli, and the character of his works was most distinct. Matthew Locke's music was in the style of Lulli when he attempted dramatic composition, but Purcell's was totally dissimilar.

Mr. STEPHENS asked if the fact of the music of *Macbeth* having been written by Purcell was well authenticated, because it had not only been attributed to Locke, but also to a bass singer of the period named Leveridge, who sang at Sadler's Wells.

Mr. CUMMINGS said Leveridge was a singer at the Duke's Theatre, not at Sadler's Wells. He had under him the management and arrangement of the music for *Macbeth*; the whole of it was under his care, and copies could only be obtained with his permission. Hence it came to be supposed that he was the author; but he was in possession of an autograph letter by Leveridge, written on a piece of the music of *Macbeth*, which plainly showed that he had nothing to do with it.

Mr. STEPHENS said he thought Purcell was very little credited with the authorship of this music.

Mr. CUMMINGS said Dr. W. Hayes, Dr. P. Hayes, Dr. Arnold, Joseph Warren, and others, had always attributed it to Purcell. It was Dr. Rimbault who started the notion that it was Leveridge's. He found that it was not Locke's and therefore came to the conclusion that it must be Leveridge's, because his name was put on the theatre bills as composer of the music. He was, however, simply composer of music to the theatre, and when Dr. Rimbault saw the letter which had been referred to, written on a piece of the *Macbeth* music, believed to be in Purcell's own handwriting, Dr. Rimbault replied, 'You know we antiquarians live to learn and unlearn,' and he quite gave up the idea that Leveridge was the author.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that Dr. Rimbault had stated in his memoirs of music that it was by Leveridge.

Mr. CUMMINGS said that was in 1845, and it was only in 1856 that Purcell's MS. and Leveridge's letter came to light. Mr.

Cummings further stated that he had it in Dr. Rimbault's own handwriting that he renounced the Leveridge theory.

The CHAIRMAN said there was nothing else in existence of Leveridge which would give countenance to such an idea.

Dr. BRIDGE asked if there was any record of Purcell having written any theoretical works?

Mr. CUMMINGS replied that he wrote the 'Art of Descant,' and also an instruction book for the harpsichord.

Dr. BRIDGE said his 'Art of Descant' was published by Playford some years after Purcell's death, and he did not know whether he was really the author of it.

Mr. CUMMINGS said Playford's book went through about twenty-two editions. The 'Art of Descant' being printed in 1694, no one had ever suggested a doubt of its being Purcell's work;—he died in 1695.

Professor MACFARREN said he desired to record his thanks to Mr. Cummings, not only for the very interesting particulars of Purcell's life, and the insight into his genius, which he had given that evening, but also for having set on foot the Purcell Society, by means of which the publishing and, he hoped, the performing of Purcell's works would be accomplished, for he believed it was entirely owing to Mr. Cummings' suggestion that that Society had come into existence. He considered it a matter of very great consequence that Purcell's merits should be known and acknowledged. English music had been long under a stigma from which he believed the present time was freeing it, for people were now beginning to admit that Englishmen could not only admire the music of others, but that there had been some amongst them who could add to the treasures of musical art. If one could suppose a person to be born at Christmas at the North Pole who never saw the sun, it would be to him a vain expectation that there could ever be daylight, and if we were born in this country with the idea that there never had been good English musicians, it would be almost a hopeless aspiration to dream of becoming such. But now that it could be proved that before the darkness set in there was such a light as Purcell, it might, perhaps, be an encouragement to aim at the new dawning. He was convinced that Purcell was a very remarkable genius, and the more remarkable because of the hard circumstances by which he was surrounded. Mr. Cummings had, perhaps, done one little injustice to English music at and before Purcell's time, when he said that the faculty of melody was not possessed by previous musicians. He could not but think of the beautiful songs of Henry Lawes, which were gems of melody, and of those of his brother William. Henry Lawes might have known Purcell, but he was his elder, and going still farther back there were part-songs, to be sung by a solo voice when the other three were not there, some of which were more remarkable for the melody than for the harmony. One in particular was scarcely known in its original form, namely, Ford's 'Since first I saw

your face,' which was tuneful enough for any country. Then, again, there were the songs of John Dowland, which contain most acceptable melodies, and many of them had had great popularity, as, for instance, 'Now, oh now, we needs must part.' Reference might also be made to the long string of National melodies which in number and variety would hold their own with the National music of any other country; however, the great merit of Purcell was not in being the first of our countrymen to write tunes, because others had done that before him, but in his harmonies, many of which the speaker considered prodigious as being really in anticipation of the harmonic progressions of modern times, and showed him to have had a complete insight into the beautiful, and to have felt the principles of harmonic construction and harmonic derivation in a manner which he could only have done by possessing the most keen sensitiveness to musical propriety. It was a great glory, not to our country only but to the art of music, that at this early period, preceding the works of Handel and Bach, there was a man writing music which amazed one even now with its beauty and its likeness to modern compositions. Many instances of what seemed to be deep research into the acoustical derivation of chords appear in Purcell, and showed him to be a most original thinker, and although he made some experiments which were not so successful, there was a character of beauty in his music which justified the highest admiration. There was, however, one quality in Purcell more remarkable than his beautiful melodies or his wonderful anticipation of modern harmony, and that was his very grand power of musical declamation and strong dramatic feeling. The form of operas in his days very narrowly restricted his dramatic powers, it being then the habit to construct dramas for speaking, in accordance with the prejudice set forth by Dryden, that it was incompatible with dramatic action to have persons sing their words, and that the music of the stage should for the most part be restricted either to supernatural beings or to madmen. Purcell had such strong dramatic feeling as would have made him a great master in this kind of music, had dramas then been constructed to give him such an opportunity. Nothing could be more picturesque than the 'Frost Scene' in 'King Arthur,' and nothing could be more expressive than the pathetic music in several of his pieces. For instance, in the two great scenes in his opera of 'Don Quixote,' one the song of Cardenio when he is mad and thinks of Lucinda's eyes as the only light that can warm him in his coldness, and the other the soprano scene from 'Rosy bowers.' It was very pleasing to think that there had been such a great pre-eminent English musician, and they could not be too grateful to Mr. Cummings for having given them so much information about him.

Mr. CUMMINGS said it might be interesting to know, especially after what Dr. Macfarren had said, that some years ago he had shown almost prescience with regard to some of Purcell's music.

In editing *Dido and Æneas* for the Musical Antiquarian Society, he spoke of certain places where he imagined there ought to be some more libretto and music, and recently the original libretto of the opera had turned up in the library of the Sacred Harmonic Society, which Mr. Cummings examined, and found the Professor's surmise correct. Thus encouraged, Mr. Cummings searched on all favourable occasions for the missing music, and had the gratification last September of finding in the library of Sir Frederick Onseley a considerable portion of that which was wanting. This showed the marvellous instinct of Dr. Macfarren in having felt that something was needed.