The Monotone and Speaking Voice in Church

Author(s): J. Frederic Hamlyn

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 20, No. 436 (Jun. 1, 1879), p. 328

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3357314>

Accessed: 27-12-2015 15:04 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Musical Times Publications Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

16 vibrations; this would give 256 for middle C, and of course lower than French pitch.—Yours truly,

J. C. G.

3, Parkside Place, Edinburgh, April 30, 1879.

[The vibration-number of the French diapason normal for A is given at 870 single or 435 double oscillations per second. In consequence of some determinations made by Mr. Alex. J. Ellis, with the help of Appunn's reed tonometer, and which led to the belief that it had in reality 439, the question has been once more examined. It appears that the original standard was very nearly, if not quite, correct. Helmholtz, as quoted by M. Rudolph Kœnig, made it 435.01, only differing by one unit in the second place of decimals from the official estimate. The English "concert pitch" on the other hand has no precise meaning. It exists only in the practice of different orchestras, and even there varies with the individual players and with the temperature. Messrs. Broadwood have obtained a good average, which they issue as the highest of three, the lowest being the French normal, and that intermediate approximating to the standard proposed by the Society of Arts. The highest of these gives about 542 vibrations for C, according to Mr. Ellis's table, which however requires to be corrected for the too high number (about four vibrations per second) at which he stated the French normal pitch. The pitch of 256 for middle C, or 512 for its octave, named by our correspondent, is theoretical. It has the advantage of rising by powers of 2, but I am not aware that it is in actual use, except by Tonic Solfaists; certainly not in the Albert Hall organ, which is very slightly above Messrs. Broadwood's concert pitch.—Ed. *Musical Times*.]

THE MONOTONE AND SPEAKING VOICE IN CHURCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

Sir,—Relative to the above subject, will you kindly allow me space for a few remarks?

In your last issue, your correspondent, Mr. A. C. A. Drought, mentions three different ways in which the service should be performed: (1) Fully choral; (2) monotoned; (3) simply spoken. While agreeing as to the whole service being consistently rendered, and well able to appreciate and enjoy a well-performed choral service, I differ from Mr. Drought in the belief that the "incongruous mixture" of reading the prayers and singing the responses is either disagreeable or distracting.

In the church where I have been for some time a member of the choir and assistant organist, we have what some may be pleased to call a "piebald" service. The clergyman reads his part, but the congregation and choirs sing all the responses and versicles of Morning and Evening Prayer, Litany, and Communion Service; every Amen is sung; the Creeds are always intoned with organ accompaniment (*ad lib.*); and yet I have often been struck by the hearty manner in which the congregation take part in the service.

The difficulties in having a "fully choral" service are twofold:—

(1) It very often happens that the clergyman has no musical talent; and I consider the way in which I have often heard the priest's part sung by unmusical incumbents a great infliction on any congregation. This difficulty is often extended by the smallness of the parish or the poverty of the district, and the consequent inability on the part of the clergyman to obtain a curate, who, perchance, might be equally unmusical.

(2) Some members of a congregation, who perhaps like the singing, and themselves join in it, are very much opposed to a "singing parson;" they seem to cling to the notion that it is the clergyman's place to read, and for them to sing. Now, a clergyman may not be in a position, nor is it always desirable, to disregard entirely the feelings—foibles though they may be—of his flock.

Now, on the principle that "half a loaf is better than no bread," I would rather keep what music we have—for it is worth keeping—than sweep it away because we can have no more. And such a service, far from being disagreeable and distracting, may be conducted "decently and in order," and to the "praise and glory of God."

I remain, Sir, faithfully yours,

J. FREDERIC HAMLYN.

St. James's, Ashton-under-Lyne, May 7, 1879.

GAS-ENGINES FOR ORGANS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

Sir,—In "THE MUSICAL TIMES" of May 1, 1879, "Correspondent" asks, "Are gas-engines being used for filling wind chests of organs, and if so, where can one be seen so applied in or near London?"

In reply, there is an engine (Hugon's patent) at Denmark Hill, Camberwell; another in the Vassall Road, Brixton; another at the Savoy Chapel, in the Strand; and there is a gas-engine of a much more simple construction, which would work an organ-bellows equally well as the three above-named engines, at the Patent Office Museum, South Kensington.

The organ bellows in York Minster is worked by a gas-engine (Hugon's patent)—these engines are a very good substitute where hydraulic pressure cannot be obtained, and are much cheaper in the working.

Probably any of the London engines above alluded to might be seen on a proper introduction.

Yours respectfully,

May 12, 1879.

S. N. BARBER.

A PLEA FOR THE FLUTE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL TIMES."

Sir,—I read with interest the letter of your correspondent, the writer of "A Plea for the Flute," in your number for May, and I in a great measure concur in what he says. But I demur to his advocacy of an instrument tuned on the principle of the equal temperament, and I would ask you to allow me space to urge the desirability of aiming at a higher standard. In point of tone I am with Mr. Poole in what he says in favour of the flute. If in this respect the flute may compare not unfavourably even with the violin, does it not seem a lamentable retrogression that the efforts, in a great measure successful, which were made by Siccama to render the flute capable of as true intonation as the violin, should be ignored?

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

Alvington, Torquay, May 13, 1879.

A. J. CORRIE.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*** Notices of concerts, and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance.*

Our correspondents will greatly oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes that may occur.

Correspondents are informed that their names and addresses must accompany all communications.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Notice is sent to all Subscribers whose payment (in advance) is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed. We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers that, although the music pages are always stereotyped, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

J. A. M.—The Maestro di Capella of St. Peter's, Rome, is Signor Mustafa, the Chief Organist being Signor Meluzzi.

The rate correspondent who writes to us first under the signature of "AMATEUR SUBSCRIBER," and afterwards under that of "SUFFOLK," seems to forget that in peremptorily commanding us to answer his question, he assumes as a right what is merely granted as a matter of courtesy. To prove, however, that we have no desire to imitate the tone of his last letter, we beg to refer him to the paragraph at the head of our Notices to Correspondents intimating that the name and address of the writer must accompany all communications. As he has never thought proper to comply with this condition, we beg again to decline replying to his query, and gently suggest that some slight apology for his omission would have been more likely to produce the result he desires than the terrible threat that if we again pass over his application he will "transfer his patronage elsewhere."

BRIEF SUMMARY OF COUNTRY NEWS.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary, as all the notices are either collated from the local papers or supplied to us by correspondents.

ABERNANT.—A Concert was held at Bethesda Independent Chapel on Monday evening, the 5th ult., by the scholars of the Sunday School and the choir of the chapel, under the conductorship of Mr. H. Thomas. The chair was taken by Mr. William Watkins. The first part of the concert was miscellaneous, and the second part was devoted to a performance of the Cantata *Samuel*, by H. Davies, A. C., Ruabon. The vocalists were Miss Harries, Miss Jenkins, Mrs. Phelps, Mr. William Thomas, and Mr. Henry Thomas. The performance of *Samuel* gave great satisfaction. Miss Phelps and Mr. A. M. James, R.A.M., presided at the harmoniums. Credit is due to Mr. H. Thomas for instructing the choir so well.