



**The Berkshire Organist**

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Reading.

INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION OF  
ORGANISTS - BERKSHIRE BRANCH

SECRETARY : A. H. LUSTY  
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Reading.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT — W. H. ROWE, A.R.C.O.  
Organist of St. Andrew's, Caversham.

The first number of 'The Berkshire Organist' was received with so many expressions of appreciation, as well as requests for copies from many parts of the Country, that the Council feel another number to be fully justified. I am sure it will prove equally interesting and equally valuable in binding together our fellowship of 'organ-grinders'. I hope that those who, for one reason or another, cannot attend all our meetings will find in these pages a means of keeping in touch with us. While expressing this hope may I appeal for even greater active co-operation among our members. By our personal association and in the mutual sharing of our experience we each have something to contribute to the common weal. Our work is very much worth while; but we shall do it very much better if we meet, talk, listen, work - and play together!

Sincere greetings to all for 1949.

### EDITORIAL.

We present the second number of "The Berkshire Organist" in the hope that it may be as well received as its fore-runner. The many messages of congratulation and encouragement have been much appreciated and an attempt has been made in this number to meet some of the suggestions received.

Unfortunately, owing largely to high costs of producing a somewhat comparatively small number of copies, it has been decided that we cannot at present, produce the Magazine oftener than once a year. We feel, however, that this does have the advantage of giving a complete review of the years activities under one cover.

Mr. Stainton-Taylor's unsolicited action in advising members of any other Branch to write for copies has taken the Magazine into a number of places from Weymouth to Glasgow. Unfortunately, owing to this not being foreseen, the last few applicants were too late to receive copies. A copy of this issue is, therefore, being sent to those members to remedy this.

Our thanks are again due to Mr. F. G. Spriggs for the excellent cover design and to Mr. J. Eric Few for much invaluable help in typing stencils and arranging the duplicating, also to all those who have supplied material for this number.

### SECRETARIAL.

The Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner to be held in February will be Dr. J. Dykes Bower, M.A., F.R.C.O., Organist of St. Paul's Cathedral. Attention is also called to the list of forthcoming meetings and special note made of the transposition of the March and April events.

The speaker at the Half-Day Conference will be Mr. Frank Netherwood, the General Secretary of the Incorporation. He will give a talk upon the Incorporation and lecture on "Modern Music" which will be illustrated by Lantern Slides.

Members are urged to keep this date free and so ensure a really good attendance for the visit of the General Secretary to our Branch.

### THE BENEVOLENT FUND.

There is little that can be said which would differ from my contribution to the last edition of this Magazine. May I stress again, however, that most of us are in the happy position of being able to provide for ourselves when illness or misfortune befalls, as it invariably does most people at some period of life, and this does tend to make us forget those, who through no fault of their own, are not so fortunate.

The Benevolent Fund exists for these unfortunate people, and being voluntary, depends entirely upon any support we can give. There are many who, either because of the distance they live or other reasons, are not able to be present at Branch meetings, and to these members especially, but indeed to all members, may I once again appeal for support for this worthy fund.

If, therefore, you are unable to attend our various functions and would care to forward a donation, however large or small, my address is - 13, Hamilton Road, Reading.

ARNOLD WARREN.

(Hon. Steward, Berkshire Branch).



DISCUSSION - "THE PARSON & THE ORGANIST"  
at Palmer Hall, Reading on 20th. March, 1948.

The President (Mr. W. H. Rowe, ARCO.) I wish to emphasize that the title of this discussion is the Parson AND the Organist, and not the Parson VERSUS the Organist. I look on the Parson as the person in charge with the Organist as the Chief Executive Officer for Music. The Service should be one entirety, and there must be sympathy and unity of purpose between the Parson and the Organist, the object of music being to make this unity more effective.

The Revd. R. V. Sellers, D.D., St. Augustines House, Reading. (Anglican).

My relations with Organists have always been happy ones, but I suspect that difficulties sometimes arise when there is a tendency to think of the Parson with a small "p" and the Organist with a large "O". The Parson sometimes requires a little help in his difficulties, especially if he is a young and somewhat nervous Curate expected to maintain his pitch in a sung Litany &c. The Organist should not make his organ and choir a solo effort, and must not force his ideas and his tradition on a Church and choir of a different type. The Vicar has full control of the music. Sympathy and understanding does exist in most cases and Parson, choir, and congregation must be united. There should in fact be a capital "O" and a capital "P" together, always remembering that the word "Opus" so often used by musicians is the first word of "Opus Dei" in which we are all engaged.

Mr. A. Barkus, FRCO. (Trinity Congregational Church, Reading).

The partnership between Parson and Organist must be on the highest level. When we consider how to obtain this, think of the partnership of marriage. The Parson and the Organist may pull together in a good direction musically and still be wrong. Direction must be toward the Kingdom of Heaven, and Churchmanship must come before musicianship. There must be give and take, and the Organist must remember that his job is to be a musician in the Church. He should be keen on the work of the Church firstly and a musician secondly.

The Revd. A. Vine, D.D., (Broad Street Congregational Church, Reading).

To be a Church Organist needs qualities difficult to display, needing a sense of proportion and self-forgetfulness and self-restraint. Ability to fit into a scheme of things and not to take the lead. A subsidiary part is always far more difficult than a leading part, and the Organist must remember that he is only part of the whole. An ex-Organist Parson said he always tried to remember that music is no essential part of any service. The service must bridge the gap between Man and God. Music played alone can only contribute by association of ideas, not of itself. Where is the Organist liable to go wrong? His expert knowledge is taken for granted, but he must be careful in choosing the right stuff. A badly chosen voluntary may ruin the whole effect of a service. He should take care of the length, especially of middle voluntaries, and be able to terminate in a few seconds at the right moment. Regarding hymn-tunes, the Parson should keep the balance of requirements and needs of the congregation.

Mr. A. Warren, FRCO., (St. Bartholomew's Church, Reading.)

The duty of the Organist is to enhance the beauty of the service and aid worship. We should always prefer the best aids in music as in other adornments e.g., stained glass windows &c. The music must not override the service but act as a background to help. Why are Organists unhappy? The Vicar should tell candidates for



appointments exactly what is required of them, what kind of music is required, and what scope is allowed for making improvements. Hymn tunes are taken for granted because they have been printed with the hymn, but music is always advancing. Tunes considered good 50 years ago are not necessarily good now. Congregational practices should be held with an explanation of what is being sung. The best music is that which grows on one with repeated hearings. The Vicar should meet his Organist for a talk at least once a month. This enables the Organist to plan ahead and avoids lack of knowledge of each others point of view.

Among the suggestions made in the subsequent discussion was one made by Miss Goodship - "that a new hymn-tune might be played as an opening voluntary once or twice before being used for the hymn".

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TALKS & DISCUSSIONS led by Ernest Connolly, Esq., A.R.C.M.,  
Organist of St. Andrews, Nottingham at the HALF-DAY CONFERENCE.  
held at St. Mary's Church House, Reading on 3rd. April, 1948.

Speaking first on "THE OUTLOOK OF A CHURCH MUSICIAN" Mr. Connolly said we must first consider the various sides of an Organist's work. At the primitive Eucharist the congregation came not to hear Mass but to assist in Mass. The part of the congregation was lost through the insistence on Latin tongue, and private devotions took its place. In the Roman Church through the issue of the Missal with a vernacular translation and the use of English Prayers, the congregation is recovering its part, whereas in the Anglican Church it is in danger of losing it through the vagaries of musicians. The congregation should be able to join in the Creed, Gloria &c., at the Eucharist, and the Psalms and Canticles at other services. Musical conditions vary and there is no one solution. Three types of Church music :-

- (a) Parish Mass sung by the congregation to Merbecke, and Hymns, Matins and Evensong all congregational, with possible occasional Anthems for the choir. No ground for complaint of congregation being deprived of their part. Possibly an Introit at Eucharist to maintain interest of choir.
- (b) Eucharist - congregational Creed and Gloria. Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus more elaborate. Hymns for congregation and Motet for choir. Matins and Evensong - settings for Te Deum, Benedictus or Jubilate to Chants. Congregational setting or plainsong with faux-bourbons for Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. Anthem for the choir.
- (c) Cathedral type e.g., Leeds Parish Church &c. Any reduction in amount or standard of music a retrograde step.

In (a) the congregation must trouble to take part and must accept some new music. A sympathetic Vicar can help much in introducing judicious mixtures of known and unknown. Must root out poor tunes. Agreement on speech-rhythm needed. Bad tradition dies hard. Standard of Church music should compare with that of secular music.

Secondly Mr. Connolly spoke on "THE PROBLEM OF REPLACING RECRUITS FOR CHURCH CHOIRS. (Boys). Parents not always helpful. Difficulty of school homework. Majority of Alto, Tenor and Bass in Church choirs old choir-boys. The future supply must be encouraged. Choir-boys learn team-work, and a renewed effort should be made to reform boys choirs where they have lapsed owing to the war.



TALK by MR. John Russell, LRAM., ARCM., on "EXAMINATIONS"  
at Palmer Hall on 13th. November, 1948.

University Degrees. First of all - what is the purpose of a degree ? I suggest

- (i) To prove to a prospective employer that at some time in his lifetime the holder has been capable of writing 16th. century counterpoint, etc.
- (ii) To organise our musical knowledge and provide a focal point for its concentration.
- (iii) To show proficiency in the science and practice of music - a knowledge of the tools of the trade etc.

As at present conducted, the examination consists in finishing off a scrap of music in harmony and counterpoint, to write a fugue, all of this being synthetic music to be written in a style which may not appeal to the particular candidate. To write in the style of Palestrina. General questions on musical history. A viva-voce on one set work. All of these are snippets which are like some weird drill to be performed in a set time, and the writing of an exercise, which is considered the least important feature of the examination. There is no sound of music anywhere, which is all wrong. The aim of the examination should be to produce a competent musical general practitioner. Perhaps I may be allowed to illustrate my remarks by opening my diary for the next few days.

- (i) Play two movements of a Rachmaninoff Concerto.
- (ii) Lecture on a Mozart Concerto.
- (iii) Orchestral rehearsal of a Dvorak Symphony.
- (iv) Accompany a Parry choral work.

None of this has any connection with the subjects of the examination. It is difficult to suggest an alternative, but the present system of degree examinations will never turn out musicians to put England at the top of the tree. They are too full of academicalism and have no connection with the everyday practical work of a musician. There is uneasiness in the Universities over the present position, and a conference is to be held at Christmas to discuss the matter. May I give you my ideas of the qualifications which should be possessed by i.e., a music master in a public school, lecturer in music, etc. An extensive knowledge of musical literature. A conception of the growth of various styles and the changes and transitional periods. A knowledge of contemporary music gained by listening, reading, and comparing. The ability to compose in a craftsmanly style, included one extended work to be written to time (probably a fugue is most suitable). To pass a viva-voce in general musical matters, not on any particular time or period. A Practical test. The testing of practical work may belong more properly to the Royal Schools of Music as regards virtuosity, but a degree candidate should be able to play a piece of reasonably high standard at sight and to supply an accompaniment from a figured bass, also to extemporise. As an example of the type of question, the candidate should not be asked to quote six fugue subjects from the 48, but to give the subject of a specified fugue from that work. To write an exercise free from any restrictions as to time or style. Every musical G.P. should provide evidence of continually listening to and assessing musical works. He should be able to give an analysis of, say, a 16th. century work, but should not be expected to write his own work in this style. He should have a competent knowledge of contemporary composers. Timed compositions should be limited to one extended work and he should not be "ploughed" for failing to complete a work in a possibly uncongenial style.



DIPLOMA EXAMINATIONS. The paper work and practical tests of the R.C.O. Exams. are excellent but are, of necessity, only open to organists. In some of the R.A.M., and R.C.M., examinations the practical tests are of too perfunctory a nature and the examinations as conducted are not polite to any real musician. Advertisement as an L.R.A.M. or A.R.C.M. implies a higher standard of musicianship than that required for the examinations. The Aural Tests, for instance, are poor, and the possession of the L.R.A.M. Pianoforte Diploma provides no real evidence of musicianship but only the ability to play one or two set works. A candidate may for instance play a Beethoven Sonata sufficiently well to get just sufficient marks to gain the Diploma without having any knowledge of the other 31 Sonatas.

In the Schools Certificate there has been agitation against the requirement of a Grade 5 or 6 Practical Certificate. A general music paper is now accepted as an alternative and the aim should be to cultivate more general dispersed musicality.

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LOCAL POOL.

In response to last year's suggestion of pooling unpublished hymn-tunes and such like, written by local organists, a most interesting assortment of compositions has been received, ranging from chants and Descants to full Services and Organ Studios.

Those who contributed are warmly thanked, and members of the Association are welcome to inspect this collection at any time on application to Mr. F.G. Spriggs, 15, Whitley Park Lane, Reading (Phone 84909); or, if it would be more convenient, at Greyfriars Church.

Unfortunately the immense amount of labour involved in copying out the larger works has been too much for the poor scribe, & future contributors are earnestly asked to send in copies that need not be returned - but please do send anything you have written, so that the collection can be kept up-to-date and comprehensive.

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DEPUTIES.

The following have signified their willingness, as members of the Association, to act as Deputies, and application should be made direct to them :-

Miss E. Alder,	51, Grange Avenue, Reading.	Any C. of E. Service.
Mr. D. Fraser,	123, Brook Street, Basingstoke.	" " "
Miss E. Monger,	99, Wokingham Road, Reading. (Phone 61818 or 4110)	" " "
Mr. A.E. Rivers,	17, St. Bartholomews Rd., Reading.	" " "
Mrs. K.F. Shorter,	148, Kidmore Road, Caversham.	Free Church or simple Anglican. (Mat. or Ev.)
Mr. G.A. Winterton, B.A.,	10, Upavon Drive, Reading.	Any C. of E. or Nonconformist.
Mr. R.A.C. Whitehouse,	112, Basingstoke Road, Reading.	Any C. of E. Service.

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BRANCH MEETINGS - 1948.

February 28th. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at Palmer Hall, Reading.

The Officers were re-elected and Mrs. H. Warren, LRAM., and Miss E. Alder were elected to vacancies on the Council. Miss Goodship & Messrs. Lusty & Pratt were appointed as delegates to Congress. The meeting was followed by a Members Evening. A short paper was read by Mr. A. Warren, FRCO., and impromptu speeches on subjects drawn for were given by Mr. R. Brewer, Mr. Pratt, Mrs. Warren and Mr. Fawcett. Un-rehearsed quartettes were sung by parties of the members.

March 20th. DISCUSSION - "THE PARSON & THE ORGANIST" at Palmer Hall, Reading.

Introduced by the following :-

Revd. R. V. Sellers, D.D. (Anglican), Revd. A. Vine, D.D., (Free Church)  
Mr. A. Barkus, FRCO., (Trinity Cong. Church) & Mr. A. Warren, FRCO.,  
(St. Bartholomews Church).

April 3rd. ANNUAL HALF-DAY CONFERENCE at St. Mary's Church House, Reading.

Short talks by Mr. Ernest Connolly (St. Andrews, Nottingham) on :-

- (a) "The outlook of a Church musician".
- (b) "The problem of obtaining recruits for Church choirs".

These talks were followed by a discussion, during which a resolution was adopted to be submitted for consideration at the Congress in August -

"That this Conference recommends that Church Authorities be approached regarding the adoption of a pointed standardised Psalter for congregational use".

Mr. Connolly also gave a short appreciation talk on the items to be played at his recital, which, after tea, took place in St. Mary's Church.

Programme :-

Fantasia in B minor	- Bach.
Cantilena & Ricercare	- Rheinberger
A Fancy & Toccata for Flutes	- John Stanley
Choral Prelude - "Croft's 136th"	- Parry.
An Elegy	- Thalben Ball
Reflections (No. 1)	- Whitlock
Toccata	- Dubois

May 29th. VISIT to NEWBURY PARISH CHURCH. Recital by Mr. G. A. SELLICK,  
FRCO., FTCL.

Programme :-

Andante cantabile	- Widor
Andante in D (Diapason Tone)	- Hollins
Placidamente	- E. J. Hopkins
"My inmost heart doth yearn" (from Cantata 161)	- Bach
Andante	- Macpherson
Cantilena romantica	- T. F. Dunhill
Chorale in A minor	- Cesar Franck



June 26th. SUMMER OUTING to CLEVELAND LODGE, DORKING. (Residence of Lady Jeans).  
Demonstration of Clavichord, Harpsichord, 2 manual Baroque Organ and 3 manual  
Concert Organ by Lady Jeans. Organ Concerto by Lady Jeans (Organ) and  
Frank Wright (Harpsichord). Instruments kindly placed at disposal of members.

July 21st. VISIT to "RAEWYN", SONNING COMMON (by invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Brewer)  
Social half-hour (with Treasure Hunt) in garden, followed by a programme of  
Madrigals, Part-songs and Rounds in Sonning Common Hall, presented by the  
Peppard Madrigal Group (Conductor - Miss Storrs). Proceeds in aid of the  
Benevolent Fund.

October 16th. PRESIDENTIAL SERVICE & RECEPTION at St. Andrews Church, Caversham.

Recital by THE PRESIDENT (Mr. W.H. Rowe, A.R.C.O.) at 4.15 p.m.

Programme:-

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|--|---|---------------|
| Organ Concerto No.5 (2nd.Set) 1st.Movement | - | Handel.       |
| Choral Preludes -                          |   |               |
| (a) Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott.         | - | Bach.         |
| (A safe stronghold is our God)             |   |               |
| (b) Wer nun den lieben Gott lasst walten.  |   |               |
| (If thou but suffer God to guide thee)     |   |               |
| Chorale Improvisations -                   |   |               |
| (a) Rejoice greatly, O my soul.            | - | Karg Elert.   |
| (b) O world, I e'en must leave thee.       |   |               |
| Pastorale                                  | - | Cesar Franck. |
| A Meditation on 'Brother James' Air'.      | - | Harold Darke. |
| Soliloquy                                  | - | Alec. Rowley  |
| Cantilena Romantica                        | - | T.F.Dunhill   |
| Sonata No.1 (Last movement)                | - | Borowski      |

Reception and tea. Evensong - (Preacher : Revd.H.H.Nash, M.A.,)  
Rector of Caversham.

Nov. 13th. TALK by MR. JOHN RUSSELL, LRAM., ARCM., (Leighton Park School)  
on "EXAMINATIONS", followed by discussion at Palmer Hall, Reading.

Dec. 11th. RECITAL at 11, Erlleigh Road, Reading by :-

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|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Muriel Bowman-Smith, ARAM., LRAM. | - | Pianoforte. |
| Alice Warren, LRAM.,              | - | Vocal.      |
| Mr.R.E.Taylor, ARCM.,             | - | Violin.     |

Programme :-

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|-------------|---|------------------------|
| Violin &    |   |                        |
| Pianoforte. | - | Sonatina in D major    |
|             | - | Schubert.              |
| Vocal       | - | Gentle Shepherd.       |
|             | - | Pergolesi.             |
|             | - | Dewy Violets           |
|             | - | Scarlatti.             |
| Pianoforte  | - | Bourree                |
|             | - | Bach (arr.Saint Saens) |
|             | - | Rhapsody in G minor    |
|             | - | Brahms.                |
| Violin and  |   |                        |
| Pianoforte  | - | Rondo                  |
|             | - | Mozart.                |
| Vocal       | - | The age of innocence   |
|             | - | Lower Rhine Folk Song  |
|             | - | Brahms.                |
| Pianoforte  | - | Cathedral Engloutie    |
|             | - | Jardins dans la Pluie  |
|             | - | Debussy.               |
| Vocal       | - | The Harvest of sorrow  |
|             | - | Go not happy day       |
|             | - | Rachmaninoff.          |
|             | - | Frank Bridge.          |
| Violin and  |   |                        |
| Pianoforte  | - | Canzonetta             |
|             | - | D'Ambroise.            |



THE ORGAN of READING UNIVERSITY.  
(by Professor H.C.Barnard,D.Litt.)

In October, 1906, Reading University was transferred to a new site in London Road. One of the chief buildings already erected was the Great Hall, a feature of which is the fine apse at the South end behind the orchestra. It was natural that a movement should soon be set on foot to place in this apse an organ worthy of the acoustic properties of the Hall. A fund for the purchase of an organ was inaugurated by a Committee of past and present students about the time when the building of the Hall was begun. In May 1909, Dr. Allen, (afterwards Sir Hugh), the Director of the University School of music wrote to Messrs. J.J. Binns to enquire whether "the foundation of a three manual organ and pedals of about 20 speaking stops could be laid, including some stops for immediate use".

It was decided that the case should be made of cedar wood provided by the College itself and cut from a tree which had stood on the site of the Hall. The contract was signed on March 16th. 1911 and the work of erecting the organ was carried out during July and August, 1911. The formal opening took place on October 21st. 1911 at which Dr. Allen gave a recital - the organ consisting of two manuals and pedals, the Choir keyboard only being inserted.

On Whit-Saturday, May 30th. 1925 the news was announced that the College had been granted a Royal Charter and had become the University of Reading. As a method of celebrating this event, it was proposed to complete the organ by the addition of the Choir and the provision of balanced Swell pedals to the Swell and Choir Organs. The pitch of the organ was raised one-eighth of a tone to Normal Diapason, and a new pedal board supplied of the Wesley-Willis pattern. The work was carried out during the long vacation of 1929.

In 1938 when Dr. Reginald Jacques was Director of Music, a double-acting Great-to-Pedal pedal was fitted.

With the advent in 1946 of Dr. O. Peasgood as teacher of the organ, an attempt was made to overcome some of the defects of the instrument. The former Harmonic Flute & Flautins were taken out from the Great and replaced by a Principal and Fifteenth. An estimate for this work was obtained from Messrs. Smith & Foksett of London, and at the same time the Rev. Noel Bonavia Hunt most generously put his knowledge and skill at the disposal of the University. He visited Reading while the work was in progress and re-voiced several of the stops and generally overhauled the tonal balance of the instrument. It may justly be claimed that the University now possesses one of the finest small three manual instruments in its' neighbourhood. A few notes on the organ as it now stands may suitably sum up what has just been said.

On the Great there is a fine round-toned Open which leads on to a Principal of a scale to match, and a strong but not shrill Fifteenth. The Dulciana has been re-voiced and now has much the quality of a small Open. Flutes are represented by the Bourdon which gives a good foundation without being muddy, and the Gedackt which is clear and liquid. The Trumpet makes a very fair solo stop though it is on the same wind pressure as the rest of the Great. The Geigon on the Swell is, in effect, a small Open and of very beautiful quality. It blends well with the Rohr Gedackt which has a fine clear tone. The Viol d'Orchestre is stringy and rather rough. The Salicet has a silvery tone and the two-rank Dulciana Mixture, which was taken in hand by Rev. Bonavia Hunt, adds just the right amount of brilliance. The Cornopean has a broad & powerful tone.



The Choir organ is one of the most effective parts of the instrument. There is a delightful small Open Diapason. The Hohl Flute is a little louder than the Godact on the Great and sufficiently contrasting in quality to add considerably to the flute resources of the instrument. The Salicional - the softest stop on the organ - is of beautiful quality, and the Flauto Traverso has also its own importance. There are Swell Sub. & Super Octaves, and also Swell-Sub. and Super-Octave to Great, also a Swell Tremulant.

Strictly speaking there are only two pedal stops - a Contra Bass with plenty of "punch", and a soft wooden Sub-Bass. Both of these are extended for one octave so as to produce an Octave 8ft. & a Flute Bass 8ft. There is also a quinted Harmonic Bass of 32ft. tone - a dull and rather muddy contraption which adds little to the value of the organ.

There are four composition pedals for Great and Swell. The second of the Great compositions was arranged by Rev. Bonavia Hunt to produce a "Baroque" effect. It brings on the Bourdon, Godact, Dulciana and Principal - where the foundation is really the 4ft. Principal.

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#### GENERAL POINTS TO BE OBSERVED IN CHOIR TRAINING.

(by Dr. W. H. Harris - a lecture given at the  
Royal College of Organists on 15th. May, 1928).

It is unfortunate that we know so little of "quires and places where they sing" of past generations. We wish that the gramophone had been earlier, that we might hear performances of the works of Byrd and Gibbons, the anthems of Blow and Purcell, and of the great and perhaps somewhat underrated Boyce. It certainly would be interesting to compare the boys of that day with the boys of our own time. Nowadays there would seem as many methods of training boys voices as there are of damaging one's reputation. In our journeyings we hear many many varieties of tone, from the gentlest of dove-like cooings, to the lustiest of lusty chest notes. Now and again we hear what seems an ideal tone - a balance between two extremes, and shall want to know how to produce it in our own choir. It will be sufficient if we are content to let boys sound like boys and not women. The rather impersonal "disembodied" tone so characteristic of the boys voice is worth striving for; it can be developed into a very expressive instrument. There is no doubt that each Choirmaster must be guided by his own feeling for what is beautiful and appropriate. He will, after reading various treatises on choir-training make experiments, and if not wide awake make a 'fetish' of the word "tone". If he be musician enough to leave his organ loft and go and hear other forms of music, he will realise that production of tone is but a means to an end; and that end interpretation and expression.

Spadework is necessary, and the Choirmaster should cultivate feeling for the beauty of the words. Vowels and semi-vowels and consonants must be studied; for while vowels give colour, so do the consonants give life and character to the words. (It should be unnecessary to protest against the exclusive use of the vowel "oo". A hooty boys voice is an abomination, but there is still much "hootiness" about).

Lifeless and uninteresting singing results chiefly from lack of inflection - of proper attention to the stress of various syllables - of "longs and shorts". Study some special phrase of an anthem and try to get its right feeling. Add the words and study their sense and meaning.



Let everything you attempt MEAN something. Explain the curves, shape, and other beautiful features, and let the boys enjoy the gradual building of a climax. Phrasing will lend wings to the music. The more interested your boys become in music as music, the less need will there be to give them yards and yards of dull technical exercises. You may make exercises very easily out of difficulties, and incorporate all the awkward intervals, leaps, runs, etc., in merry little tunes of your own making. Above all, you should show your boys the things that appeal to you. If you yourself are keen there will be little need to worry about discipline and attention. That will depend largely upon you and what you want; what you want, and how much you want it.

In dealing with the full choir you will often be discouraged in your efforts to obtain a good balance and blend. There are voices that will stand out, and they often belong to exceedingly nice people; they are sometimes tenors. Very careful listening on the part of all is essential, and much tact and judgement needed. Some excellent solo voices may not possess blending qualities. You have probably heard appalling examples of quartet singing from singers of world-wide reputation. Good choirs are often made out of unpromising material where the individual voices are not first-rate. Your choir should be trained to be independent of organ support. Help your choir when you are at the organ as tactfully as possible - support them when they need support, and accompany them more often. The general rule is: "The maximum of support with the minimum of organ tone". There are times when the best choir in the world, either through slackness, an overheated or airless Church, or some other reason is quite "off its form". Then is the time for watchfulness and skill in your playing. By your careful phrasing, sense of rhythm, choice of stops and general alertness, you can do much to help matters. There are times, of course, when the organ should be "all out" and "on-top". An organ accompaniment should never sound anaemic. Your playing of the Psalms must not be fantastic, neither must you encourage melodramatic renderings of the Psalms.

A friend of mine lamented the fact that in certain churches it was no longer a pleasure to listen to the chanting as there was a tendency to turn almost everything into a three-act drama! The essential beauty and simplicity of the Psalms must be preserved, and this cannot be done by incessant shifting or changing. Discretion in these matters is necessary. There is a real danger at the moment with so formidable an array of new psalters, that the means will defeat the end, so that elaborate settings of the Psalms will carry us too far. If so, the sooner we get back to Plainsong the better.

It is important that choir practices be held, as a rule, in a room where everybody can feel perfectly at ease, unhampered by the fact that they are in Church and must behave. Rehearse new music, and so doing keep the choir out of ruts.

It is a heartbreaking business saying "goodbye" to your best boys, if indeed, choir-training is not altogether a heartbreaking business. The young Choirmaster need not be discouraged. The junior boys have, as Sir Hugh Allen once said, "an extraordinary way of lapping up responsibility", and it is very amusing when one gets behind the scenes, to realise how wholeheartedly the juniors long to see the seniors out of the way. Everything seems to go on in spite of these reverses; no boy is indispensable. All is well if only a cheerful, sympathetic soul is at the helm - a Choirmaster who is a human being, with patience, and the saving grace of a "sense of humour".

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NEWBURY NOTES.

The Newbury Branch opened the year with a Committee Meeting early in February, to decide meetings for the Spring, and to conduct any business. Mr. & Mrs. Scruton kindly offered their hospitality again and a gramophone recital was held at 70, Northbrook Street, Newbury, later in the month. We had a very enjoyable evening listening to selections from Mr. Scruton's library.

In April the Secretary arranged an organ recital on the organ of St. Michael's Church, Basingstoke - a fine Walker two-manual. Unfortunately there was a very small attendance, but Mr. Anstey the organist, demonstrated fully the resources of the instrument to those present. Afterwards members were able to try the organ for themselves.

In May, Newbury and Reading Branches combined for an organ recital given by Mr. G. A. Sellick, FRCO., FTCL., in Newbury Parish Church. Although the weather was terrible there was a very good attendance, and Mr. Sellick gave us ample repayment for our journey by his well balanced recital.

Early this year our Treasurer (Mr. Taylor) had to resign his duties owing to ill health. We miss him greatly from our circle.

Membership has remained fairly constant throughout the year. One or two have had to resign, but we have two new faces among us we are glad to see.

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A P P O I N T M E N T S.

Mr. R. W. Jackson	-	Dunsdon Parish Church.
Mr. E. P. Paskins	-	Theale Parish Church.
Mr. F. G. Spriggs	-	Greyfriars Church, Reading.

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"THE ORGANIST"

(by J. Eric Few - with apologies to all Poets).

Who is it joins the organ trade,  
And hopes repute may there be made,  
Sometimes not wanting when he's  
Weighed?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it keeps enormous stocks  
Of music, cat'logues; always looks  
His organ, stands so many shocks?

THE ORGANIST.

Who thinks his choir is awfully sweet,  
And that his rivals can't compete,  
But soon is saying - "they're dead meat"?

THE ORGANIST.

Who, when the organ functions not,  
And makes of trouble quite a lot,  
Oft gets the blame when he should not?

THE ORGANIST.

Who, when he asketh those who blow,  
That wind might in the bellows go,  
Is called a "doubtful so-and-so"?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it hears with "interest"  
Boys voices shrill, as they do vest,  
And try to drown them does his best?

THE ORGANIST.

On whom do worshippers rely,  
No matter just how hard they try,  
And praise his playing to the sky?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it knows where flies do flee  
In winter time - (inside pipe 'C'),  
And sends them buzzing merrily?

THE ORGANIST.

Who thinks the organ sounds so fine,  
When, maybe, its an awful whine,  
Forgets his heels and "toes" most lines?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it teaches pupils all,  
But finds the last one there was tall,  
Has havoc played with stool and all?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is mechanic, engineer,  
Whene'er a cypher doth appear,  
And comes out dust from toe to ear?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it when winter hath come  
With ice and snow - and little sun,  
Finds buses stopped, then has to run?

THE ORGANIST.

Who is it may go "UP" - not "DOWN",  
If so'll learn harp and 'string' around,  
No cyphers, 'bust' strings - I'll be bound?

THE ORGANIST.



MUSIC RECEIVED.

The following numbers of the OXFORD MUSIC Series have been received from the Oxford University Press :-

- A Harvest Meditation (Robin Milford). Based on "Marcham". Includes a fff climax. Time about 4 minutes.
- A Christmas Prelude (Wilfrid J. Mory). Based on "This Endris Night". In a quiet style. Time 2 minutes.
- Pastorale on "Now thank we all our God." (Heinrich von Herzogenberg - 1843-1900. edited by Henry G. Ley). Contains good deal of semi-quaver passage work. Time 2 minutes.
- Bourree (Organ Concerto in B flat) Time 3 minutes.
- No. 1, 3rd. Set, Handel, arranged by S. Drummond Wolff.
- Impromptu for Sir Edward Bairstow In 5/4 time. Brilliant semi-quaver passages, including pedal. 5 mins.
- On his 70th. birthday. (Francis Jackson)
- Christmas Overture (Ralph Greaves) Frequent changes of time. 6 mins.

These pieces are well up to the standard of this series. They are all playable on two manuals although three manuals with good solo stops are necessary for the last two pieces to be fully effective.

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FUTURE EVENTS.

Please see Syllabus which has been circulated to all members.

N.B. - The events arranged for March & April, 1949 have been altered to read as follows :-

- Mar. 19th. ANNUAL HALF-DAY CONFERENCE at St. Mary's Church House. 3 p.m.  
(Speaker Frank Netherwood, FRCO., Genl. Sec. of the Incorporation)
- Apl. 23rd. MEMBERS EVENING at Palmer Hall, Reading. 7.15 p.m.

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TOWN HALL ORGAN.

The Council have been successful in obtaining the use of this instrument by members at the reduced rate of 3/6d. per hour, on production of Membership Card, i.e., Syllabus.

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The Editor has again prevailed upon Mr. J. Eric Fow to supply another page in lighter vein, as so many have said they enjoyed his reminiscences in our last issue -

Due to broadcast an organ recital at Gibraltar in 1943, I was asked 20 mins before going on the air if, "instead of  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour, could I make it 1 hour" ? Hurriedly searching out more music this was agreed, strongly emphasising that I could not guarantee where I should exactly be in any one piece at the time of the broadcast ending, as only the first  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour had been properly timed. Imagine my amazement and delight when, reaching the last two pages of music of the last piece there was only one minute to go. The Engineer signalled his intention of fading out the programme with four bars to go, but as to the last bar which was to have been - but wasn't - there is quite a little story.



Having arrived upon this bar, up came the Officer i/o Broadcast, who gave me a resounding slap between the shoulders yelling out - "grand timing old boy" - knocked me off balance and off the stool where I landed on the lower registers of the Great keyboard with the result, no doubt, that anyone who might have been listening would have thought I had started on "The Storm". Luckily the Engineer had saved the day with a quick switch and we all had a good laugh - but what a reward for one of the luckiest pieces of timing?

Another laugh at a broadcast there was when the R.A.F. were giving an hour of light entertainment. After playing the piano with a five-piece dance band they gave a very important part to me in a short sketch which followed. During the course of this sketch the heroine "popped off" the villain. To me was given the great opportunity to fire the shot, the effect being obtained by hitting an upturned chair with a walking stick. At the appropriate place I fired a real bulls-eye, giving the chair a grand "whank" with the stick, but - consternation from all, especially myself - the round seat fell out, bounced on the floor of the studio (no carpets laid, only wood), went careering round hitting every chair-leg it could, then subsiding in a noisy spin to silence. And what a silence! How the laughs were held back we never quite knew, but the Engineers were somewhat wild because, evidently the listeners at their loudspeakers, instead of hearing a revolver shot, with one bullet in the villain, no doubt thought she had set off a complete Aladdin or London barrage, which is quite understandable I suppose.

Again at Gibraltar we found we were not getting good wind pressure and an examination revealed that the bellows had a hole quite 5 inches long in them. Being cut off from the world - so to speak - we had to rely on our own resourcefulness to mend it. The hole was only accessible when the bellows were fully inflated, and several methods of mending it met with failure. That eventually we did succeed was, I think, one of my funniest experiences out there. The Padre produced an honestly brand new pair of kid gloves, and amid protests at this wanton waste, they were duly scissored to produce a magnificent patch. Ordinary Secotine was also brought forth and everyone (it took four people!) went to "action stations". The bellows were inflated, the hole appeared, the patch was slapped on by me, the wind switched off, someone laid hands arduous on the organ which was set at full, making a horrible chord, but getting rid of the wind as quickly as possible. Twice before the bellows had deflated the patch blew off, passed out through the door into the chancel and landed in the choir-stalls. A third attempt was made, and this time the Padre decided to kneel down and give a hand at close quarters. Again it blew off - and what screams as it went slap, sticky side on, clean on the Padre's nose and mouth and what is more, stuck there! The fourth time - we never quite know how - it stuck over the hole, and for the further 9 months I was there we never had trouble from that source again. I often wonder if, after another 6 years, the same patch is still doing justice. The crude but successful way it was mended must have been a sight worth seeing and I'll always smile when I remember twice we thought the hole was conquered, a patch went whizzing past like a huge butterfly (and the comments which followed it!) past our ears, and how once a perfect effort almost sealed the Padre's lips for ever!

And now to end - for surely it is someone else's turn to write this page next issue? - in Belgium with frost and snow and army boots, I possessed terrible chilblains. Playing pedals was impossible with boots on, so played Evensong without boots, having  $\frac{1}{2}$  doz. handkerchiefs borrowed from Choirmen tied round my feet - three on each. Who can beat this experience? Maybe the next issue of this Magazine will reveal even stranger stories - who knows?