

A Practical Discourse on Some Principles of Hymn-Singing

Robert Seymour Bridges



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"Whatever Mr. Bridges writes is worth reading; but in this paper he has done particularly valuable work. He has recognized, as modern critics in all the arts are more and more perceiving, that the basis of all criticism rests in the psychology of the emotions. Beginning with an analysis of the well-known words of St. Augustine with regard to the effect upon him of the music heard in the Portian basilica at Milan, he attempts to determine what classes of hymns express emotions suitable for congregational singing. We cannot give his conclusions here, nor can we follow him throughout his closely reasoned article, a large portion of which is, however, strictly practical, in accordance with its title. He has interesting things to say with regard to the admirable tunes supplied to the French Genevan Psalter by Bourgeois, which were spoiled in their transference to the well-known collection of Sternhold and Hopkins. He passes trained judgments upon the English tunes of the various epochs, and gives sensible advice to all interested in modern church music." - The Churchman

"An admirable article in which we have read with especial pleasure." -The Sewanee Review

"Mr. Bridges ha been well advise in reprinting the admirable paper which he contributed a couple of years ago to the Journal of Theological Studies. His plea for 'dignified melody' will meet with a response from all who are interested in the music of our Church services; the historical sketch with which he illustrates his position will show how much first-rate material is at the present time available for use." -The Oxford Magazine

"Practical indeed. Should not be neglected by anyone connected with Church music." -The Bookman

"Dr. Bridges points out the defects of modern hymn tunes, and modern church music and hymn singing, and lays down the principles in connection with the music of modern hymnody, that 'The music must express the words or sense; it should not attract too much attention to itself; it should be dignified; and its reason and use is to heighten religious emotion.'" -The Scottish Review

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