

School of English Church Music

QUARTERLY NEWS SHEET

Edited by a Committee appointed by the CHURCH MUSIC SOCIETY and issued from the office of the SCHOOL OF ENGLISH CHURCH MUSIC, COLLEGE OF ST. NICOLAS, ELMSTEAD LANE, CHISLEHURST, KENT.

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THE FUTURE OF THE NEWS SHEET.

We are happy to announce that this NEWS SHEET will enter on a new stage of its career with its next issue on January 1st, 1931. It will be enlarged to 16 pages, be illustrated with one or two photographs, find space for a few carefully selected advertisements and, in fact, grow up from being a humble "News Sheet" into a quarterly magazine devoted to the interests of English Church Music.

This is a bold undertaking, but the School of English Church Music has in the three years of its existence achieved its position by choosing the bolder policy whenever alternatives offered. The first words of the first NEWS SHEET (April, 1928) were bold to the point of rashness. "The School is now fairly launched," they declared, though the launching had consisted of the appointment of a provisional Council and the acquisition on loan of a small office from which the Council could conduct its business. The issue of that NEWS SHEET was the first piece of educational work undertaken by the School. A few parishes had then affiliated; a few local representatives had been appointed in the dioceses. The School consisted of nothing but the nucleus of an organisation and a large fund of enthusiasm amongst a small band of people determined on the accomplishment of the full scheme which Dr. Nicholson had outlined.

A year later (April, 1929) the first article of the NEWS SHEET bore the heading "Work begins at St. Nicolas." In the interval we had heard of a place at Chislehurst and found it in a wood. The property had been acquired, gifts had been received from many quarters, the chapel had been dedicated, the choir school opened. The College of St. Nicolas was there, with Dr. Nicholson installed as Warden, with the necessary apparatus for the study and practice of Church Music, but for the moment very few students.

Another year and the hostel had filled with students, methods of education had been worked out by experience, lectures given alike to resident and visiting students, members gained and choirs affiliated in every diocese; and by April, 1930, the NEWS SHEET was discussing the music for the festival of united affiliated choirs which was brought to a successful issue in the Albert Hall on June 27th.

At every stage in this development risks had to be taken in comparison with which that now to be incurred by the enlargement of the NEWS SHEET seems trifling. Results have justified them, and we are using no mere figure of speech when we say that the venture of faith has been blessed and rewarded. It must be emphasized, however, that the financial position is still very precarious, and only the continued and increased co-operation of all who care for the Church and her music can secure the permanence of the School's work.

It is to stimulate co-operation that we now undertake the enlargement of the NEWS SHEET. Hitherto it has given news of what was going on at headquarters, and through its reviews of music compiled by the Committee appointed by the Church Music Society it has sought to help the School's affiliated members in their parochial work. It will continue to do these things still more thoroughly in its new form. But now that there are something like 500 affiliated parishes, news must not only come from headquarters to them, but from these affiliated parishes to headquarters and to each other. Every one of these parishes is a local branch of the School of English Church Music. What efforts are being made among them to advance the cause of Church Music locally? What has been their experience; what their difficulties? A difficulty shared is a difficulty halved. Let the NEWS SHEET become a means of communication between the branches, and especially a means of encouraging those who are too far distant from the College of St. Nicolas to be able to participate closely in the work carried on there. That is the object of the enlargement.

We shall ask our diocesan representatives to co-operate in collecting news from the dioceses and affiliated parishes. We look forward to publishing special signed articles by experts dealing practically with the problems of Church Music performance, and also to including correspondence from members of the School and answers to enquiries. These features, together with the series of illustrations should make **ENGLISH CHURCH MUSIC** (as the paper will in future be called) an attractive magazine. It will be distributed free, as the **NEWS SHEET** has been, to all members of the School, and to affiliated choirs under the same condition as hitherto, and will be on sale to the general public.

SUMMER SCHOOL AT THE COLLEGE OF ST. NICOLAS.

As announced in the last two issues of the **QUARTERLY NEWS SHEET**, a Summer School of choir training was held at the College of St. Nicolas during the last three days of July and Professor E. C. Bairstow, of York Minster, was the lecturer. Attendance was smaller than last year because numbers were purposely restricted, as it was thought that last year's numbers were rather too large for the somewhat intimate character of this year's lectures.

The majority of the men students were accommodated in the Hostel and the women students were, through the kindness of Mrs. Asser, of Chislehurst, and her friends, made most comfortable in private houses.

Where choir training is concerned, Dr. Bairstow has few equals, and the members of the School found his lectures extraordinarily interesting and helpful, and all went away with new ideas to work out on their own choirs.

The Warden, Dr. Nicholson, kept back the boys of the College choir and fortunately there was also a nucleus of the men of the choir. The usual chapel services were therefore sung, and it was possible to follow the ordinary College plan of exemplifying different types of services. Dr. Bairstow expressed his appreciation of the boys' singing.

It was decided to hold another Summer School next year and to devote the time to one main subject.

OPENING OF THE AUTUMN TERM.

A new educational year has begun at St. Nicolas College with the Autumn term (September 18th), and a full curriculum of lectures, classes and chapel services has been mapped out. The internal work of the College may be said now to have passed through its first experimental stage. The Warden has the constant assistance of the Resident Chaplain (the Rev. N. de Langdale) who lectures on Liturgical matters; Miss Forbes Close is responsible for the course in plainchant, and other assistants this term are Mr. S. Royle Shore (early period of history) and Mr. J. L. G. Hewitt, F.R.C.O. (practical keyboard work). The number of resident male students is materially increased, and visiting students, both men and women, are admitted to parts of the course. All details may be had on application to the Secretary. The following is a summary of the year's scheme.

These courses commence in the Autumn Term and continue throughout the year. Each complete course consists of three terms each of ten weekly lectures, and each lecture is of one hour's duration.

1. HISTORY OF ENGLISH CHURCH MUSIC.

1st term—Earliest period, with the rise of Polyphony.

2nd term—Tudor period and the Restoration.

3rd term—Eighteenth century to modern times.

Additional :—Singing music of different periods, both at Lectures and in the Chapel Services.

2. PLAINCHANT.

1st term—Elements and History.

2nd term—Teaching of Plainchant.

3rd term—Accompaniment of Plainchant.

Additional :—Special practical study of the more elaborate examples of Plainchant.

3. CHOIR TRAINING, ETC.

1st term—Technique of Choir Training, Voice Production, etc.

2nd term—Choir Management and Music of the Parish Church.

3rd term—Organ Accompaniment, etc.

Additional :—Singing Classes at Bickley Hall School. Extemporization and General Music Classes.

4. LITURGICAL STUDY.

1st term—The Psalter.

2nd term—The Prayer Book, with principles of Ceremonial.

3rd term. Hymnology.

On Thursday evenings during the Winter and Spring, the College Choir sings at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn—Choir Practice (open) at 5.30, Evensong at 6.0, followed by a Lecture on one of the branches of Church Music at 6.45.

The College Choir sings at St. Sepulchre's Church on Sundays at 11.0 a.m.

STUDENTS OF ST. NICOLAS COLLEGE.

J. H. Long, F.R.C.O. (Archbishop's Scholar) has been appointed Organist and Choir-master of Merton College, Oxford.

J. L. G. Hewitt has obtained the Lafontaine Prize for the best all-round work at the organ at the last examination for the Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists.

The following new resident students have joined the College this term: D. Money, M. C. Burdon, K. Scovell.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

The attention of our readers is here drawn to the issue by the Columbia Company of excellent records of a selection of the music sung at the Festival of English Church Music in the Albert Hall on June 27th. The records were made in the Central Hall, Westminster, from the singing of a choir of 400 voices, chosen from the 1,200 who took part in the Festival Service, and conducted by Dr. Sydney H. Nicholson. These records should be of the greatest value to choirmasters who can use them as examples of ensemble singing and of style in the interpretation of Church Music. The detail of the three 10 inch records (dark blue label) is as follows:—

DB214	—TE DEUM, in B flat (<i>C. Villiers Stanford</i>). In Two Parts—With Organ.
DB215	{ (a) Nunc Dimittis; (b) Jesus, Where'er Thy People Meet (Tune: Wareham). ((a) <i>O. Gibbons</i> ; (b) <i>Unknown</i>) With Organ.
DB216	{ Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace (<i>S. S. Wesley</i>) With Organ.
	{ God is a Spirit (<i>W. Sterndale Bennett</i>) (Unaccomp.).
	{ Lord, For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake (<i>Composer Unknown</i>) (Unaccomp.).

These records can be obtained (3/- each) from any authorised Columbia agent.

FORTHCOMING SCHOOL FOR CLERGY.

It is proposed, if possible, to arrange a two days "School for Clergy" at the College of St. Nicolas, Chislehurst, in the week before Advent.

The School will begin on Tuesday, November 25th, in the afternoon, and will end on Thursday, November 27th, after lunch. There will be lectures and discussions (with opportunity for questions) on general topics of Church Music, with special reference to the responsibilities of the Clergy in country and town parishes. The College Choir will render Church Services of different types each morning and evening. Accommodation in the College or near-by will be provided, as far as circumstances will permit. The fee for the School will be 25/-, including accommodation and meals, or £1, exclusive of accommodation, but including meals.

As the arrangement of such a School must be dependent upon the number of those who signify their intention to attend, it is particularly requested that Clergy (or Candidates for Ordination) who wish to come will communicate their intention as soon as possible to the Secretary, S.E.C.M., College of St. Nicolas, Elmstead Lane, Chislehurst, Kent. The list will be closed on October 25th, when the final decision will be taken in accordance with the response to this invitation as to whether the School can be held.

The School will be open only to Clergy or Ordination Candidates who are members, or whose choirs are affiliated to the School of English Church Music.

TELEPHONE SERVICE.

We have had frequent complaints that telephone calls to the office of the School at the College of St. Nicolas (Ravensbourne 2514) do not receive answers. As some member of the staff is always in attendance at the telephone during office hours, such failures can only be due to the installation. It would help us in getting this matter put right if any who are unable to get an answer or to obtain our number, will kindly send us a postcard telling the hour of their call and the Exchange from which it was made. Otherwise we have no means of knowing when such failures occur.

ST. MICHAEL'S, TENBURY.

The Annual Commemoration Festival was held at St. Michael's College, Tenbury on Thursday, October 2nd. The College was founded by the late Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley in a lovely, but remote corner of the diocese of Hereford for the cultivation of English Church Music. Its choir school includes the boys of the choral foundation who sing the daily Office, and in the three-quarters of a century that the College has been in being a large number of Church musicians, clerical and lay, have issued from it and have held important appointments in Cathedrals and elsewhere.

Members of the Governing Body, old boys and guests, assemble annually for Commemoration during the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels. They make their Communion at 8 a.m. and take part in the Choral Services of the day. On this occasion there was a sung Eucharist at 11.30 at which the Warden (The Rev. E. H. Swann) celebrated and the preacher was Canon A. Nairne, of Windsor. The service was Harwood in D. Among those present were the Very Reverend the Dean of Hereford, Sir Ivor Atkins, Organist of Worcester Cathedral; Dr. P. C. Hull, Organist of Hereford Cathedral, and Dr. S. H. Nicholson, Warden of St. Nicolas College, who is also a member of the Governing Body of St. Michael's College.

After luncheon, which was served to a large company in the hall, Mr. C. Hylton Stewart, Organist of Chester Cathedral gave a much appreciated organ recital in the Church, and at Evensong (5.30 p.m.), the music chosen was by Stanford and Ouseley, with Alcock's Te Deum in A, sung after the Procession.

The library of St. Michael's contains one of the most valuable collections of original manuscripts and early printed music books in the country. The Rev. E. H. Fellowes, to whose research the present revival in old English music owes an incalculable debt, has arranged and catalogued this library with infinite care and skill, so as to place its resources at the disposal of musical scholars. Dr. Fellowes spent the day showing its treasures to the visitors. He further took part as violinist in the cheerful impromptu concert of the evening, when some of the boys sang, the headmaster played a harpsichord solo, junior masters played on several wind instruments (including a duet on two "penny" whistles), and other unconventional but excellent musical talents were exhibited.

NOTES ON SERVICE MUSIC.

The following notes are written by the members of the Committee appointed by the Church Music Society. Suitability to choirs of differing types is indicated where possible by the use of initials: L (large urban chors), S (small urban choirs), V (village choirs).

CANTICLES.

V.

"MAGNIFICAT AND NUNC DIMITTIS." A simple setting by Geoffrey Shaw. 3d. Novello's Parish Choir Book No. 1158. For voices in unison, with optional verses (three in all) for simple S.A.T.B. harmony. Compass of voices from B below treble stave to E on fourth space. Organ part easy and playable on a one manual instrument.

L. or S.

"MAGNIFICAT AND NUNC DIMITTIS in G minor," by Alan Gray, Stainer and Bell. 6d. A moderately easy setting for S.A.T.B. (full throughout)—distinctive and dignified. Some of the changes of key need care, but otherwise the voice parts are not difficult—rhythm straight forward. No verses or solos, and no polyphonic writing. Soprano reaches high G once only, alto lowest note is B below the treble stave, other voices of moderate compass. The organ accompaniment is a little more difficult than the vocal parts. A two manual organ is required.

"TE DEUM, JUBILATE AND BENEDICTUS in D." Alan Gray, Stainer and Bell. (Te Deum and Jubilate, 9d., under one cover, Benedictus, separately, 6d.). A moderately easy setting for S.A.T.B., set out for Dec. and Can. and full sections. No solos or verses, and no division of voices. A large proportion of phrases for unison singing, contrasted with moderately easy, four-part writing—no polyphony. A moderate compass for all voices. Organ part is moderately easy, and has independent figures. A two manual organ is needed.

ANTHEMS AND CAROLS.

HYMN ANTHEM—"Jesu, grant me this I pray." Gibbons, with verses in Faux Bourdon by E. C. Bairstow. By an oversight, the Publisher's name was omitted from the review of this Anthem in our last number. It should have been given as Banks and Son, York.

L. or S.

"JESU, THE VERY THOUGHT OF THEE." E. C. Bairstow. From Three Introits or Short Anthems, O.U.P. 3d. each number. For unaccompanied singing. Requires some power of expressiveness, and sustained phrasing. Parts independent, but Vocal. Tenor part rises to G and A flat at the climax, where Basses sweep up to D and E flat. Alto part extends from low B flat up to C. It could be effectively sung by Second Trebles. A beautiful and useful addition to a class of Anthem, examples of which are all too rare. Time under 2 minutes.

"PRAISE TO THE HOLIEST IN THE HEIGHT." H. Middleton. Year Book Press, 6d. A new setting of Cardinal Newman's famous Hymn. It is laid out for double choir, and needs a large body of voices to sing it satisfactorily. The organ part is very important and requires a good organ and skillful playing. The voice parts are written with a masterly knowledge of effect and are therefore not really difficult, though in one or two places the tonality may give some trouble. This piece will be particularly useful for a festival service where all the choirs taking part are large, well trained and efficient. It was given at Hereford as an Evensong anthem of the Three Choirs Festival. The compass of all the voice parts is extensive, tenors soaring to G, altos to high E, trebles to A and basses extending from low E to high D.

S.

"COME, MY WAY, MY TRUTH, MY LIFE." Words by George Herbert, Music by Philip Tomblings. Oxford University Press. 3d. Simplé four-part unaccompanied. Harmonic, diatonic. Second verse tenors have the tune, the other voices supplying the harmonies. Tenor and treble do not go above F, bass and alto not above C. Alto can be sung by second treble. Time not more than 2½ minutes.

Christmas Carols.

Edward Arnold and Co. publish a number of carols set for unison singing with descant by T. F. Dunhill. These are particularly useful for small choirs where four-part harmony is undesirable. An opportunity here for the congregation to take an active part.