

**THE ROMAN RITUAL AND ITS CANTO  
FERMO COMPARED WITH THE WORKS  
OF MODERN MUSIC IN  
POINT OF EFFICIENCY AND GENERAL  
FITNESS FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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The Roman Ritual and Its Canto Fermo Compared with the Works of Modern Music in Point of Efficiency and General Fitness for the Purposes of the Catholic Church by Henry Formby

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**HENRY FORMBY**

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FERMO COMPARED WITH THE WORKS  
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CATHOLIC CHURCH**



TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND DR. ULLATHORNE, O.S.B.

VICAR APOSTOLIC OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT,

**The following Essay**

IS, WITH HIS KIND PERMISSION, INSCRIBED

BY

HIS HUMBLE AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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“MUNDUM tradidit Deus disputationi eorum.” Every period presents its matter for discussion; and the inquiry attempted in the ensuing pages would seem to be one of the needs of our own; for, notwithstanding the fact that many deeply feel the importance of Music as an element of Christian Education, clear and practical views can scarcely be said to prevail as to what this Music ought to be.

The Author would venture to hope that no presumption or unkindness will be perceived in the remark, that the inquiry here undertaken will be found to be one demanding, for its adequate consideration, more real thought, than many who may feel prompted to approach it, will, on trial, be disposed to bestow. And if the views he has here advanced should meet with an opponent, he would entreat him to consider, that while the cause of Religion must always gain by the application of fair and close reasoning to any important question, it can gain nothing from misrepresentation and ridicule.

He should also add that, in using the term Modern Music, he is speaking of a class of works, both more recent in point of time, and altogether different in character from those of Palæstrina and the Roman Ecclesiastical School of harmonists upon the *Canto Fermo*. These latter compositions undoubtedly possess a considerable degree of sanction, both as works of genius and piety; and in the character of a highly ornamented supplement to the Song of the Ritual, the study and execution of which, in subordination to her own Song, where circumstances permit, and the requisite professional skill is to be had, it would undoubtedly be the spirit of the Church to promote and to encourage.

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, NEAR LOUGHBOROUGH,  
*Octave of the Epiphany, 1849.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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### On the Divine Idea.

The Divine Idea, the Exemplar or Pattern, in conformity with which the intellect and free will of MAN, and whatever is their combined work, finds its perfection.

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ALL persons are familiar with the expression "beau idéal;" and in judging of matters of taste, nothing is more common than to appeal to the standard of an "ideal;" as, for instance, the statue of the "Apollo Belvedere" would be, and is commonly said to realise, the "Ideal" of the human form. Of course the ideal thus appealed to, as existing generally in the minds of persons of education, is nothing in itself absolutely certain or determinate. But as far as it goes, it is a natural indication that the standard and measure of all perfection is an "Ideal." For we see that an Ideal, which is generally recognised and acknowledged by persons of taste and refinement, does, in point of fact, come to be a standard, the authority of which is accepted to a great extent by others.

What is, then, in a measure true of an "Ideal" subsisting in the mind of persons of education, as a standard of perfection, must be infinitely true of the Idea of creation subsisting