

**CHURCH MUSIC AND CHOIR
TRAINING: TREATING OF THE
MANAGEMENT OF BOYS'
VOICES AND THE PROPER
RENDITION OF CHURCH MUSIC**

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Church Music and Choir Training: Treating of the Management of Boys' Voices and the Proper Rendition of Church Music by F. H. Shepard

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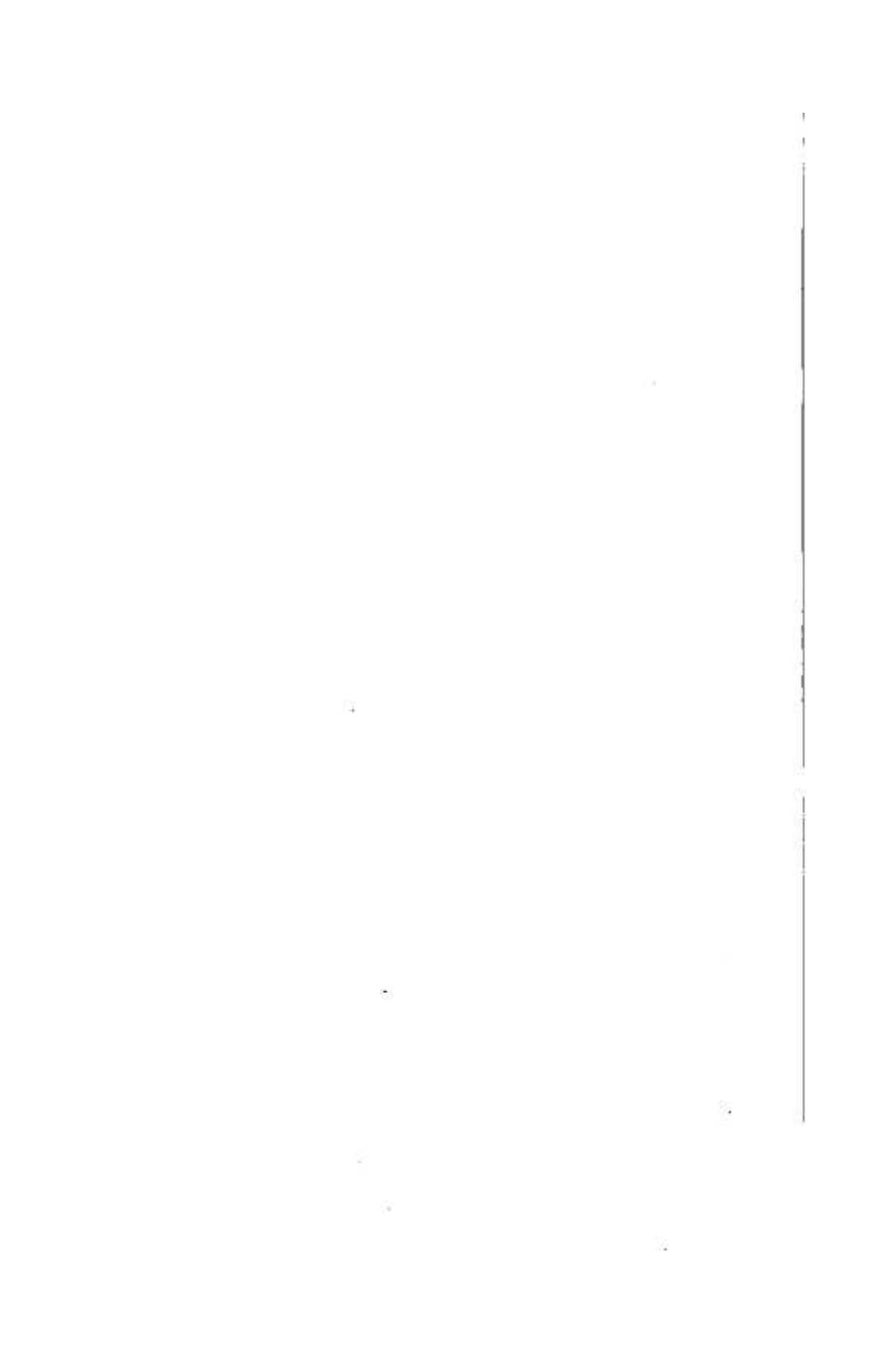
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F. H. SHEPARD

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Revd. Chas L. Hutchins,
with the compliments
CHURCH MUSIC *of the*
AND *Author.*
CHOIR TRAINING.

TREATING OF THE
MANAGEMENT OF BOYS' VOICES
AND THE
PROPER RENDITION OF CHURCH MUSIC.

BY

F. H. SHEPARD,

AUTHOR OF "HOW TO MODULATE", "THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF
VOICE PRODUCTION", ETC.

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PREFACE.

At this time of remarkable advancement in the Church, when the music of the Service is taking a much higher standard than heretofore, the management of Vested Choirs is assuming an important place in church work, and the necessity of instruction and guidance is often felt where such a choir is formed or is still in the experimental stages.

It is not attempted here to give an exposition of the Rudiments of Music — there are already many works of this class; but it is the aim of this little book to *analyze the principles* that govern choir training, particularly emphasizing their application to the needs of boys' voices, and to show what are the essentials of good church music. It is a fact that some of the most necessary points regarding the management of boys' voices, and even concerning the proper rendition of the service, are almost or quite unknown to musicians otherwise well instructed in their Art.

The principles here displayed are equally adapted to adult (mixed) choirs and to training children in the public schools, though the application naturally differs according to the class of voices.

Leipzig, Növényber, 1889.

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CHAPTER I.

THE MUSICAL HEAD OF THE CHOIR: TRAINING THE VOICES: PRODUCTION OF HEAD TONES: USE OF THE BREATH: STUDY OF THE CONSONANTS.

1. The offices of Organist and Director are usually and properly combined in one person, who should be of such a character as to command the respect of the choir. He should also be able to kindle the enthusiasm of the singers, for without this the success of the choir can be but partial. The highest musical attainments are desirable, but more necessary still is the feeling for the devotional effect of the music. Unless the director is in sympathy with the true object of church music, which is to awaken the spirit of devotion and to voice the prayers and praises of the congregation, he has certainly mistaken his vocation, however great his musical talent may be.

The ability to transpose hymns and chants at sight is a necessary quality in the accompanist, as well as the power to guide and control the voices while accompanying, which always marks the true director.

The organist and choir should not forget that the real head of the parish is the rector, and as such he has both the right and the duty to offer such suggestions in regard to the choir as he may think proper. It is not presumed that a clergyman would have so little confidence in the organist as to insist upon technical details in opposition to his judgment. It would also be an obvious injustice to the organist, who is supposed to be a cultivated musician, if the rector should take a too active part in the management of the choir. The influence of the clergyman can be made sufficiently effective by the exercise of the vetoing power when occasion requires, or by a word of praise when the music is in accordance with his views.

The author, himself an organist and choirmaster, is well aware that the expression of even these mild sentiments in regard to the rights and duties of the rector will call forth a storm of criticism from many "would be" independent organists. Instead of preparing a defence against these possible criticisms, the following is suggested as a means of fully gaining the desired freedom from clerical restraint. Experience shows that when the organist has won the sympathy and confidence of the rector by the display of judgment in choosing and rendering music suitable to the needs of the choir and congregation, he will have the fullest freedom in the management of the choir. If such confidence is lacking, the organist is advised to study the

devotional side of church music and to try the experiment of regulating the music according to the needs of Christian worshippers. *The subject of church music should be viewed not only from the standpoint of the musician but also from that of the Christian;* and both these qualities should be united in the Musical Head of the choir.

It is often the case that where a single parish is unable to command the services of a competent choir-master, two or three parishes, by having assistant organists, can obtain the best talent. This plan has another advantage in that it prepares the way for Choral Festivals, as the various choirs, having the same style of singing, are able to meet in Festival Services with but very little extra rehearsal.

THE CHOIR.

2. The members of the choir should be brought to feel that they are engaged in a sacred work and that each is ministering to God in worthily performing his duties.

A Surpliced choir is formed with the idea of leading and supporting congregational singing, or of furnishing an elaborate and highly finished musical service. For the great majority of prosperous parishes a mixture of the two is most desirable. The service may be given in a simple and devotional manner, support-