

**BIBLIOTHECA PASTORUM, VOL.
II. ROCK HONEYCOMB. BROKEN
PIECES OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S
PSALTER. LAID UP IN STORE FOR
ENGLISH HOMES, PART I**

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Bibliotheca Pastorum, Vol. II. Rock honeycomb. Broken pieces of Sir Philip Sidney's Psalter.
Laid up in store for English homes, part I by Sir Philip Sidney & John Ruskin

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SIR PHILIP SIDNEY & JOHN RUSKIN

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BIBLIOTHECA PASTORUM.

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VOL. II.

ROCK HONEYCOMB.

BROKEN PIECES OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S PSALTER.

LAI'D UP IN STORE FOR ENGLISH HOMES.

WITH A PREFACE AND COMMENTARY

By the Editor.

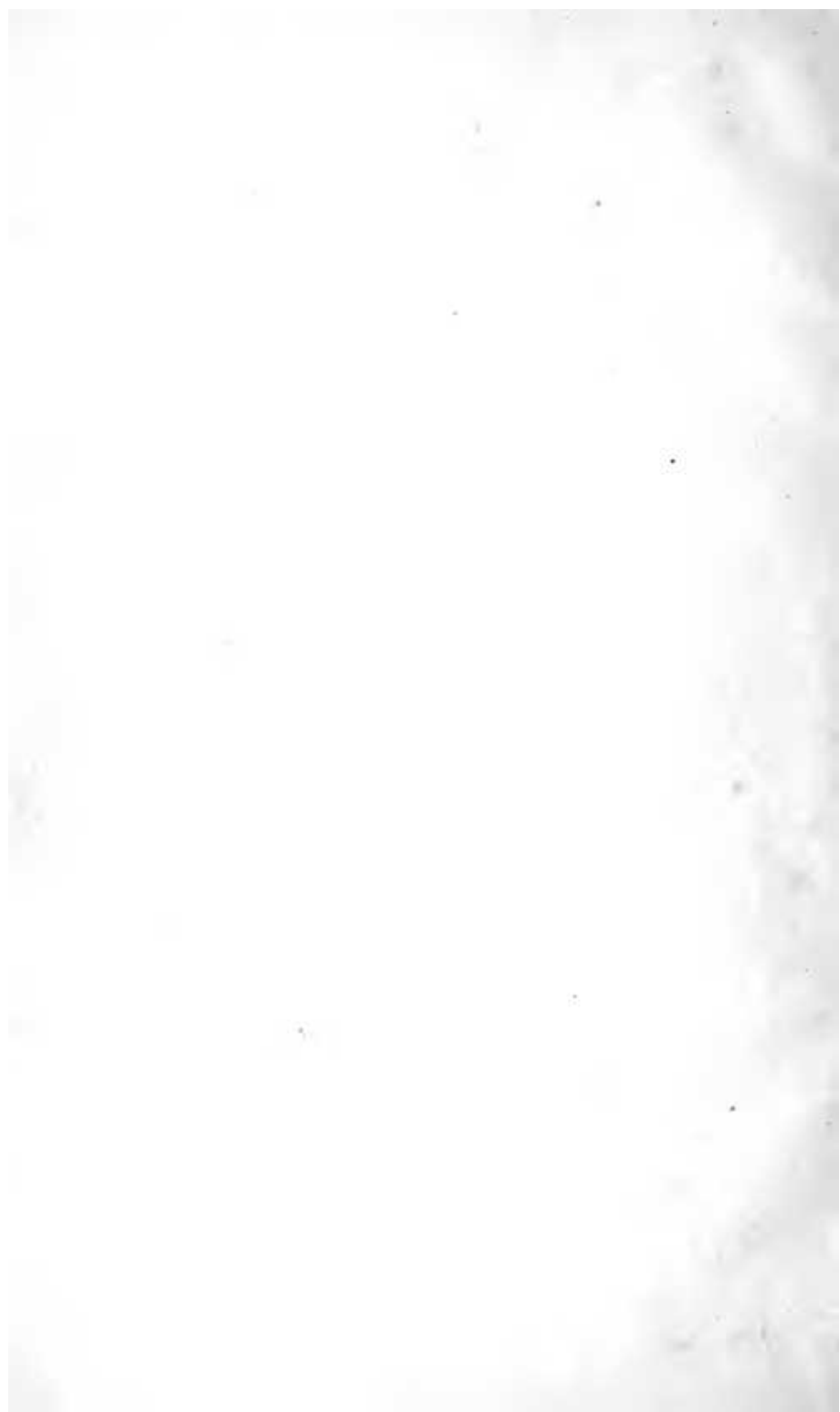
IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

ELLIS AND WHITE, 29, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON:

AND

GEORGE ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.

1877.



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P R E F A C E.

SUNDAY, 9th July, 1876.

YESTERDAY evening, one of the sweetest and brightest of this hitherto sweet summer, the 'Coniston band,' consisting of the musically minded working men of the village, rowed itself, for its 'Saturday at e'en' delectation, into the middle of the lake; and, floating just between Brantwood and the 'Hall,' on the opposite shore, where Sir Philip Sidney, it is delivered by tradition, lived for a time, with his sister, in our Arcadia of western meres,—poured forth divers pipings and trumpeting, with meritorious endeavour, and, I doubt not, real, innocent, and useful pleasure to itself, and to the village hearers on the opposite green shore.

Mostly, polka music, with occasional sublimities—'My Maryland,' and 'God save the Emperor,' and the like;—pleasant enough, sometimes, to hear, from this shore also: but, as it chanced, yesterday, very destructive of my comfort in showing the bright roses and deep purple foxgloves on my banks to two

guests, for whom the flowers and the evening light were good ; but gay music, not so.

And it might, with little pains, have been much otherwise ; for if, instead of a somewhat briefly exercised band, playing on trumpets and shawms, concerning a Maryland of which they probably did not know either the place or the history, and an Emperor, a proposal for whose instant expulsion from his dominions would have been probably received with as much applause in the alehouse, as the prayer that God would save him, upon the lake ;—if, I say, instead of this tuneful, and occasionally out-of-tuneful, metallic noise, produced, with little meaning beyond the noise itself, by the fathers of the village, a few clearly understood and rightly intended words had been chanted for us in harmony by the children of it ;—suppose, for instance, in truly trained concord and happy understanding, such words as these of Sir Philip Sidney's own, echoed back from the tender ruin of the walls that had been his home, and rising to the fair mountain heaven, which is still alike his home and ours ;—

“ From snare the fowler lays
He shall thee sure untye ;
The noisome blast that plaguing strays
Untoucht, shall pass thee by.

Soft hived with wing and plume
Thou in his shroud shall lie,
And on his truth no less presume
Than in his shield affy,"

the July sunset would not have been less happy to the little choir, and the peace of it would have been deepened for those to whom it could bring happiness no more.

"Is any among you afflicted?—let him pray.
Is any merry?—let him sing psalms."

The entire simplicity and literalness of this command of the first Bishop of the Christian Church cannot, of course, be now believed, in the midst of our luxurious art of the oratorio, and dramatically modulated speeches of Moses in Egypt, and Elijah on Carmel. But the command is, nevertheless, as kind and wise as it is simple; and if ever Old England again becomes Merry England, the first use she will make of her joyful lips, will be to sing psalms.

I have stated, in the first sketch of the design of our St. George's education, that music is to be its earliest element; and I think it of so pressing importance to make the required method of musical teaching understood, that I have thrown all other employment aside for the moment, in order to get this edition of Sir Philip Sidney's Psalter prepared

for school service. I will state the principles of music and of song which it is intended to illustrate, as briefly as possible.

All perfectly rhythmic poetry is meant to be sung to music,* and all entirely noble music is the illustration of noble words. The arts of word and of note, separate from each other, become degraded; and the muse-less sayings, or senseless melodies, harden the intellect, or demoralize the ear.

Yet better—and manifoldly better—unvocal word and idle note, than the degradation of the most fateful truths of God to be the subjects of scientific piping for our musical pastime. There is excuse, among our uneducated classes, for the Christmas Pantomime, but none, among our educated classes, for the Easter Oratorio.

The law of nobleness in music and poetry is essentially one. Both are the necessary and natural expression of pure and virtuous human joy, or sorrow, by the lips and fingers of persons trained in right schools to manage their bodies and souls.

* Lyric and epic of course, without question; and didactic, if it be indeed poetry. Satirical primarily, or philosophical, verses, as of Juvenal, Lucretius, or Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, are merely measured prose,—the grander for being measured, but not, because of their bounds, becoming poetry. Dramatic verse is not perfectly rhythmic, when it is entirely right.

Every child should be taught, from its youth, to govern its voice discreetly and dexterously, as it does its hands; and not to be able to sing should be more disgraceful than not being able to read or write. For it is quite possible to lead a virtuous and happy life without books, or ink; but not without wishing to sing, when we are happy; nor without meeting with continual occasions when our song, if right, would be a kind service to others.

The best music, like the best painting, is entirely popular; it at once commends itself to every one, and does so through all ages. The worst music, like the worst painting, commends itself at first, in like manner, to ninety-nine people out of a hundred; but after doing them its appointed quantity of mischief, it is forgotten, and new modes of mischief composed. The less we compose at present, the better: there is good music enough written to serve the world for ever; what we want of it for our schools, may be gradually gathered, under these following general laws of song:—

I. None but beautiful and true words are to be set to music at all; nor must any be usually sung but those which express the feelings of noble persons under the common circumstances of life, and its actual joys and griefs. Songs extreme in pathos are a morbid form of the indulgence of