

**IN THE CHOIR, AND
OUT OF THE CHOIR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649611898

In the Choir, and out of the Choir by Anonymous

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ANONYMOUS

**IN THE CHOIR, AND
OUT OF THE CHOIR**

IN THE CHOIR,
AND
OUT OF THE CHOIR.



Second Edition.

LONDON:
J. MASTERS AND CO., 78, NEW BOND STREET.
MDCCLXXXIX.

1489. f. 1130.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. MASTERS AND CO.,
ALBION BUILDINGS, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.





In the Choir, and out of the Choir.

“**I**T’S all very well, George, being in the choir, but take care that you don’t let yourself get spoilt by it. You’re a good chap every one knows, but it’s more than likely you’ll be so for a very little longer if you go on as you are now.”

Both the speaker and the person spoken to were boys, with only two years’ difference between them. George Fielding was the elder, and about sixteen years of age ; Frank Mathews the younger. From early days had they been brought up together, they had shared the same care, the same school, the same parental love. They were cousins. George was an orphan ; his mother had died at her brother-in-law’s

house soon after her husband's death, and had left the boy entirely to his care. Mr. Mathews was not very wealthy. He might be termed a well-to-do farmer, and lived in the south of England.

The parish in which Mr. Mathews' farm was situated was called Hursleydown, and Mr. Drewett was the vicar. The old church had been restored, and a very different service from that of former times was now held under its roof. In place of the high pews were open sittings, and instead of the single voice of the clerk a surpliced choir intoned the responses. Crammed to overflowing was the village church, and before the altar of the LORD each Sunday morn knelt a group of devout and earnest communicants. Mr. Drewett had been placed upon a very unfruitful soil when first he was appointed to the living of Hursleydown. Church-going was regarded as a custom and not a duty. GOD was worshipped in form, but not in reality. The boys of the place disliked to attend church, the Sunday school had but a nominal existence, and the idea of being religious was contemned by every one. We must cast no blame, ask no

questions upon how all this had been allowed to spring up. The Church of England has inactive as well as active servants, but God be thanked, the former are now rapidly decreasing, and she is becoming stronger, not weaker, and her services more loved, and more devout. Hursleydown had been many years in arriving at its present state ; and diligently had the vicar worked, laboriously had he toiled to bring it about. The lads of the place were changed, and it had been a pleasure to many to be enrolled in the service of the church as choir-boys. They felt a new longing after holiness, a new desire springing up to be useful in two ways, to their God, and to their fellow-men. They were all in humble positions, but the poorest can vie with the richest in acquiring that treasure which moth cannot corrupt or time destroy.

George Fielding was a farm apprentice under his uncle, and though his work kept him from attending all the week-day services at the church, the Sunday found him arrayed in his white surplice at the head of the other boys. George was gifted with a great taste for music, and it was this that first brought him under Mr. Drewett's

notice, who on further acquaintance found in the boy a deeper and more precious talent. Farmer Mathews was a middle-aged man; he had married rather late in life; and he was one of those peculiar people who seem to carry through life their own ideas of right and wrong, however distorted they may be. He had been a church-goer at Hursleydown in the olden days, and he disliked what he called these innovations. He was however sensible enough to force his opinions on no one else; now and then perchance, he broke out in some long tirade against Mr. Drewett, yet secretly he was a true friend to the clergyman, though very antagonistic to his principles. Frank and George from having been so long together were more like brothers, though the former inherited all his father's peculiarities, and was therefore no companion to the latter in what related to the Church or to religion. It was noticeable, Mrs. Mathews had observed to her husband, how George and Frank got on, "for they are always very affectionate, and yet they have not, I believe, one idea in common."

"Very likely, my dear," was the reply, "one

is manly, and the other is womanly. George is always after church, and our boy after sports, and games, and active pursuits."

"I wish Frank followed George a little closer, it would do him no harm if he was a bit steadier."

"Well, I think it would, so you see, my dear, there's just the rock on which we always split; our Frank will not be any the less the man for not being so religious as George. In my eyes he's all the better."

Mrs. Mathews made no reply. She was very fond of George, he was her only sister's child, and on her death-bed she had promised to love him as her own. She had done this to the present time, and she intended doing so until the end. She often felt slight uneasiness about Frank, not that he was absolutely bad or possessed of any great faults, yet he was too gay and light-hearted sometimes, to make her mother's heart rejoice when she contrasted him with the steady-going ways of her nephew George.

The two boys were working in the fields, when Fred uttered the speech with which our story begins. It was a lovely summer evening, and the coolness of the air made both the lads