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“ If there be one thing more conspicuous than another by its absence in the archæological records of Sussex, it is all reference to music.” Such is the sweeping statement of Mr. Fleet in his *Glimpses of Our Ancestors*; and no-one with any knowledge of our County’s antiquarian literature can do aught but endorse the statement. Both secular and sacred music have suffered from this lack of the historian’s recognition; the subject of music is not mentioned by the Sussex diarists—Gale, Stapley and Marchant; there is scarcely any reference to it either in the Burrell MSS. or the Sussex Archæological Collections, while few of the numerous general and local histories or other books relating to the County have devoted even a page to this “ Art unsearchable, Divine and Excellent,” as Playford terms it.

In mentioning this lacuna in Sussex literature my intention is not to condemn the writers and enquirers

after knowledge of the past for their omission of a very important subject ; nor is it to offer an apology for introducing it now, for no such apology is needed. Rather I wish to suggest to local antiquaries an almost unexplored field of research to which they might well devote their energies with every hope of fruitful results ; and specially to emphasize the importance of this research being made *now*, before many of the sources of information will have disappeared for ever. For the main spring from which one must chiefly derive any knowledge of the subject, and to which I have turned for the last twenty years, consists partly of the old inhabitants whose fathers and grandfathers performed and often composed the music of the past ; and partly of the well-thumbed and dog-eared volumes of music, both printed and manuscript, which were the treasured possessions of those ancient enthusiasts. And time is relentlessly calling away the one class, while the kitchen fire is too often the finale of the other.

Before proceeding further it is necessary to define the term " The Past " as used in this article ; otherwise the treatment of too lengthy a period of history may be anticipated by so ambiguous an expression. It is to be understood, therefore, as referring mainly to the two hundred years beginning with the latter half of the 17th and ending with the corresponding part of the 19th Century. These two-hundred years cover a period in the history of Sussex Church Music quite distinct and separate in its characteristics from the times both before and after that period ; an epoch indeed which differed far more widely from both its preceding and succeeding ages than these do from each other. In all departments concerned with ecclesiastical music the divergence was great : the music was different in style, the instruments were not the same species, the performers were in many respects dis-similar, and the places where they sang or played were at opposite ends of the churches.

For some hundred years or so before the beginning of "The Past," as defined above, most of the Church music was of the simple and stately kind represented by the familiar "Old 100th" tune, a type to which the best modern ecclesiastical music has a tendency to revert; and this was a great contrast from the florid style adopted by composer and performer alike within our period. As regards the instruments used before "The Past" the organ reigned practically supreme and almost alone, and it has recovered its supremacy in subsequent years; but during the era covered by our title nearly every instrument known, from a fiddle to a flute, from a trumpet to a triangle was employed; and whereas the place in the churches allotted to the musicians, both before and since that period, has been in the chancel—either in the stalls or in the rood-loft—during "The Past" itself it was up in the gallery specially erected for the minstrels at the west end. The dissimilitude between the musicians themselves was perhaps not quite so great, but such as there was will appear in the third section of this article.

It is to be understood therefore that the term "The Past," as used herein, refers neither to the remote era of Gregory and his modes, nor to the 16th Century when the German chorale was introduced into England, but to the period beginning with the Restoration in 1660 and ending somewhere near the middle of the reign of Queen Victoria two centuries later. And the subject itself is discussed under the three headings into which it can obviously be divided—the Music, the Instruments and the Musicians.

1. THE MUSIC.

The musical outlook of our forefathers in "The Past" was evidently a limited one, for the energies of both composers and performers seem to have been chiefly confined to metrical versions of the Psalms,

and to short Anthems; and of the former that by Sternhold and Hopkins, published in 1549, and issued for the first time with tunes a few years later, was regarded practically everywhere as the best. This was the "Old Version" as distinguished from the "New Version" of Tate and Brady, published in 1698. It is stated by J. Holland in *The Psalmists of Great Britain* (1843) that the Psalms, in whole or in part, had been rendered into English verse by over 150 authors; of which about 70 were complete versions, amongst them being one by Dr. King, Bishop of Chichester (1642-1669). In Sussex choirs, however, the "Old" and the "New" versions superseded nearly all the others.

The indigenous Sussex books claim our first attention; and of these the most noteworthy is a splendid volume, entitled *Improved Psalmody*, compiled by the Rev. William Dechair Tattersall, A.M., Rector of Westbourne, and published in 1794. The words are "The Psalms of David from a Poetical Version originally written by the Reverend James Merrick, A.M., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford," while the music is "Collected from the most Eminent Composers." The book is bound in leather (oblong 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.), and contains 348 pages of music, beautifully printed from special plates, and 46 pages of introductory letter-press; with a *List of Subscribers*, among whom appear Mr. Dupuis, Organist and Composer to His Majesty, Guiseppe Haydn, Mus.D. Ox., Samuel Johnson, Esq., and other well-known names. In the *Advertisement* it is stated that "the design of the Editor is not only to silence the many ludicrous reflections that are perpetually cast upon our psalmody, but to fulfil the wishes of many able writers who have recommended an amendment in this part of the service." Then follows a lengthy explanation why Mr. Merrick's Version of the Psalms was used in preference to others, a laudatory apology that was by no means necessary, for Mr. Merrick's version is

far better poetry than that of either the "Old" or the "New" versions so commonly adopted. In the introduction a special acknowledgment is made to Dr. Haydn (the famous composer of the "Creation," etc., then in his 65th year) for having allowed the editor "to reckon him in the number of my respectable coadjutors," but it is not stated whether the tunes by Haydn included in the work were specially composed for it or not.

The tunes are nearly all in three parts only (treble, alto and bass) and only 75 Psalms are set to music in this book of Psalmody, it being the Editor's intention to issue a second volume, though whether that design was carried out or not I have been unable to ascertain.

Early in the 19th Century a Brighton musician, Nathaniel Cooke, organist of the Parish Church, contributed a remarkable achievement to Sussex ecclesiastical music by issuing—*A Collection of Psalms and Hymns Sung at the Parish Church, Brighthelmston*. This book went through three editions; the second of these contained 93 tunes (set to the New Version) of which no less than 78 were composed by the indefatigable compiler himself. Many of these tunes are of great merit, written in four parts, with a certain feeling of dignity and repose unusual in the similar compositions of the same period. The author was evidently a true son of Sussex, for he named all his compositions after towns or villages in the County, the first dozen being entitled respectively—Chichester, Brighton, Arundel, Steyning, Bosham, Worthing, Shoreham, Hastings, Cuckfield, Broadwater, Lewes, Newtimber. There was apparently no eclecticism about this nomenclature as the titles include places of all sizes and degrees of importance situate in every part of Sussex. Nathaniel Cooke was, I believe, born in Bosham; he was buried there, in the chancel of the old Church, in 1827. (A collateral descendant of his, Mr. A. Stanley Cooke, the author of "South Down

Songs and Idylls," etc., for many years wore his ancestor Nathaniel's mantle as organist of Brighton Parish Church.)

Two other contributions to Sussex Church Music were made by Chichester organists; the earlier (undated, but issued before 1815, in which year a former owner of my copy inscribed her name, with date, on the title page) was:—*Sacred Melodies. A Collection of Psalms and Hymns as sung at the Cathedral Church, and the Chapel of Saint John the Evangelist, Chichester, Composed, Selected and Adapted by T. Bennett, Organist.* This book was published by subscription at 7s. 6d., and in the List of Subscribers appear many names that are familiar in Chichester at the present moment. The tunes were chiefly from other collections, only one, named "Sussex,"* being by Bennett himself, while the words were nearly all from Tate and Brady. A few years later another and enlarged edition of this work was published in five volumes, and in this edition the compiler made an amusing and novel departure by re-naming many of the tunes selected after local places, no matter who the composer happened to be. Thus we have the tune "Littlehampton," by Dr. Croft, "Cowdray" by Dr. Hayes, "Woolbeeding" by Gluck, "Fittleworth" by Mozart, and "Aldwich," by Beethoven!

Mr. Bennett was organist of St. John's Church, Chichester, when he compiled his book, and then became organist of the Cathedral from 1817 to 1848; he left four musical sons to carry on his name and fame, one of whom, Thomas J. Bennett, also compiled a tune-book:—*A Selection from the New Version of the Psalms and from the Hymns appended to the Book of Common Prayer Adapted to Appropriate Tunes, by T. J. Bennett, Organist of St. Paul's, Chi-*

*Another tune called "Sussex" appeared in "Lock Hymn Tunes" published in London in 1769.

chester. This work is undated but was probably issued about 1850; it contains 51 tunes for Psalms and four for Hymns, none composed by the compiler himself, unless several anonymous tunes were his, but several of them taken from his father's publication.

In 1842 an anonymous book was published by Hayley Mason of Chichester, entitled:—*A Collection of Psalms, Hymns, Anthems and Collects as Sung at Selsey Church*. This contained words only (New Version) and was probably compiled by the Rev. Barré Phipps, Rector of Selsey from 1817 to 1863.

Mention is made of another Sussex book by the Rev. E. B. Ellman, Rector of Berwick (Sussex) from 1846 to 1906, in his *Recollections of a Sussex Parson* where he states that "the hymnal used at Berwick in 1838 was a local one for the neighbourhood." This may have been a selection compiled by Mr. Scobell, of Southover, Lewes, introduced into the parish in 1825, but I have been unable to trace a copy of this work or obtain any account of it.

It is now impossible to ascertain the number of Churches in which any of these particular books were used, but inasmuch as two of them went through more than one edition it is possible that they were fairly widely known. Unfortunately not many copies of any of them seem to be in existence at the present time, and very few people have any recollection of them at all.

Of greater interest in some respects than these printed volumes are the innumerable manuscript books used by the enthusiastic and painstaking village scribes, who combined the art of the singer or player with that of the copyist and composer. A large number of these MSS. are fortunately still extant, and they form a notable monument to the care and diligence which our rustic forefathers exercised in their part of the Church's service; for they are most of them admirable specimens of penmanship,

The image shows a page of a musical manuscript for a Tenor part. It consists of ten staves of music. The first staff is decorated with illustrations of various insects: a fly, a bee, a butterfly, a dragonfly, a grasshopper, and a cicada. Above the first staff, the word "TO" is written in large, stylized letters, with "THE" written above it in smaller letters. The lyrics are written below the notes. The music includes dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *f*, and *pp*. The page is framed by decorative borders at the bottom of the first and last staves.

ppp *f* *ppp* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

They that in ships with courage bold
 Do Gods amaryng
 But for the choicest tempest flies,
 Which see the storm in the rapid haste and

often with well executed scroll-work designs in the margins of the pages, and generally free from errors or other blemishes. Indeed very few of the great composers' MSS. are to be compared in their calligraphy with that of the old Sussex musicians.

The *raison d'être* of these MS. books is, of course, obvious; the prices of printed music were practically prohibitive in "The Past" to our local choirmen, who would often have had to give a week's wages or more for a single copy of a choir-book. Each man, therefore, made his own copy and in most cases it became a cherished and well used possession for the rest of the owner's life.

Frequently these old MS. books were "begun" at both ends, to use an Irishism, the Psalm-tunes being written at one end and the Anthems at the other, the book having been turned upside down for the latter. Each tune had its own special name, and doubtless this universal custom owed its origin to the diversity of the books; no two books being precisely alike either as to pagination or the order in which the tunes occurred. In referring to any particular tune the choirmen could only mention it by name, not by number or page; and the old choirmen always spoke of psalm-tunes by name, never by number even after the prevalence of printed books rendered this feasible.

Down to the middle of the 19th Century the melody of all Church tunes was usually sung by the tenor voices, not by the treble as at the present time; the latter only rendered the inner part commonly allotted to the tenor in modern music.

A typical MS. book, of probably the late 18th Century, was used at Waldron Church by successive generations of the family Collins (members of which still live in the parish); it contains 55 pages of music all very neatly written, with tunes arranged in 2, 3 or 4 parts. In size it is $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $9\frac{1}{4}$, oblong in shape, and is bound in leather, with a piece of old

parchment having some 16th Century writing on it incorporated in the binding. At Bosham there was a set of MS. books, all dated 1822, of similar size to the Waldron example, a separate book being used for each different voice—bass, tenor, etc. A Willingdon 18th Century MS. contains a fine tune named after the parish, but the composer's name is omitted—an unfortunate circumstance, for his work is so good that he deserves to be remembered. The music at Angmering was very clearly and neatly copied; a Hurstpierpoint specimen was embellished in a minute manner with scrolls and dots and wavy lines; several good examples are preserved in Warnham Church (two dated 1799 and 1812 respectively) one of which contains a tune, "Portsmouth," to *Trumpet metre*, whatever that may mean. A West Grinstead Anthem book of 96 well-written pages, has the words placed underneath the tenor part only, an indication of the importance of this voice in the olden days. The penmanship of a Wilmington MS. of the 18th Century is splendid, both notes and words being written with a care that one could scarcely have expected in those illiterate days.

An exceptional example of the illustrative abilities of our old Sussex musicians is given at the head of this article. This is the work of Mr. Frederick Jones, of East Hoathly, who played the flute nearly seventy years ago at Falmer and other neighbouring Churches, who 60 years ago inherited the pitchpipe and MSS. of an octogenarian tenor of Falmer, who has for nearly three-quarters of a century been a church musician, composer, artist and writer; a son of a singer; and an enthusiast of the old type who, alas, are gradually passing away. Mr. Jones ornamented many of the old MS. tunes in bygone years, but as he had none of them still extant, he essayed to prove that his right hand had not yet lost its cunning—with what success the reader may judge.

Many of the old copyists were also composers,

and not a few of their tunes (generally namesakes of the places of their origin) deserve a better fate than the oblivion in which they now repose. A fine collection was composed by James Marshall, of Rogate, early in the 19th Century; they were of a bold and vigorous type and must assuredly have been popular. Their names reveal the writer's habitat: Rogate, Trotton, Elsted, Woolbeeding, Harting, Treyford, Iping, etc.

A favourite anthem with our forefathers was Pope's famous ode—"The Dying Christian to his Soul" ("Vital spark of heavenly flame") which occurs in most of the old tune books, though not always set to the same music.

Turning from manuscript to print again we come to the large number of published Psalmodies used in Sussex, of various editors and dates. The earliest I have yet discovered is a small copy of what was known as "Day's Psalter," after the name of its publisher, containing the Old Version with tunes, dated 1630 and entitled:—*The Whole Booke of Psalmes Collected into English Meeter by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, W. Whittingham conferred with the Hebrew with apt notes to sing them withall.* This book (now in the possession of Mr. E. Collins, Bramber, a member of the Waldron family referred to above) is bound in velvet with silver filigree with a New Testament, 1628. It was formerly used at Waldron and contains the Canticles, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments *et alia* besides the Psalms done into *meeter* and set to apt notes, the said notes being of a diamond shape as in the facsimile of the "Old 100th" herein reproduced. This is taken from a book in the Warnham Church collection: John Playford's *Introduction to Music*, with which is incorporated *The Art of Descant* by Dr. Thos. Campion, 1664. This book was formerly in the possession of Michael Turner, Parish Clerk of Warnham from 1835 to the year of his death in 1885. Previously it belonged to a singer

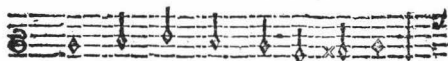
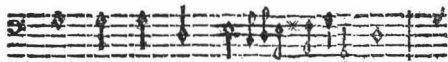
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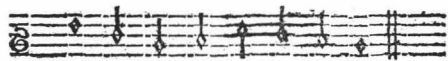
AL people that on earth do dwell,



Sing to the Lord with cheer-full voyce:



Him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,



Come ye before him and rejoice.



Page from the "Art of Descant." 1664.

of a neighbouring parish whose name is inscribed on the first page in early 18th Century style:—"May Jephthaniah Mugeridge, Rudgwick." The "Old 100th" appears in *The Art of Descant*, only the treble and bass parts being given with the usual sign at the end of each line to indicate the note on which the particular part begins in the next line.

Another of the Warnham collection is Evisan's *A Compleat Book of Psalmody*, 1750, a similar copy of which was used in Bosham Church. The former owners of this Bosham book adorned it with their autographs in an interesting manner; thus:—

“ James Wossil His book march y’ 27 in the yeare of 1757.

James Wossil His book,
 God give him grace therein to look,
 But not to look but understand
 That larning is better than house and land ;
 When land is gone and munny spent,
 Then larning is most excellent.”

“ John Caplin his book 1791 Harting, Sussex.

John Caplin
 His Hand and Pen,
 He will be good
 But God no [know] when.”

“ Thomas Welch, 1796.”

“ Elizabeth Welch Bosham.”

Waldron and Warnham Churches both used *The Psalmist's New Companion Set forth and corrected by Abram Adams, at Shoreham in Kent*—an undated book of late 18th Century containing Psalm-tunes and Anthems with an “ Introduction to the Grounds of Musick.” As in most of the choir-books of this period there is a quaint Preface beginning “ I need not acquaint you with the original and ancientness of musick ” and extolling the aims and object of the publication, which in this instance is to “ better and improve this excellent and useful Part of our Service, to keep up Uniformity in our Parish Churches, and bring them as much as may be to imitate their Mother-Churches, the Cathedrals.” An ambitious aspiration, truly ! One wonders at the intrepidity of the author—especially when we know Sussex country churches ! Kindred to this in ingenuousness is the Introduction to *Psalmody Improved*, by William Gresham of Dunstable (about 1780), a tune-book once used in Henfield Church, containing Canticles, Psalms and Hymns with music. The editor states that “ It is intended to facilitate and improve that delightful part of Public Worship—Singing Praises to our Creator and Redeemer The Words are taken from the Version of Tate and Brady, with a few alterations ; of which the design is to improve

the Poetry, to give a Sense nearer to the Prose, or adjust the Words better to the Music." Then follows a pedantic dissertation "on the Matter, the Words, the Music, and the Manner of Performance most adapted to mixed assemblies," in all of which Mr. Gresham claims to have made great improvements, a claim scarcely justified by the results. One remark in the Introduction reveals the 18th Century mind on the question of the multiplicity of tunes: "The number of Psalms and Hymns in this Work is Eighty-six; and, if each were adapted to different music, the tunes would be too numerous for a congregation to use: I have therefore limited their number to about Forty." What would our forefathers of a century or two ago have said about some of our modern hymn-books with their tunes running into several hundreds? Instructions as to the rendering of the hymns are given in *Psalmody Improved* in an amusingly direct manner; "Cheerful but not too fast," "Loud and not very slow," "Supplicating," "Loud and majestic," "Slow and tenderly," "Slow and solemn."

Other books formerly used in Sussex were:—*Williams' New Universal Psalmist*, 1764, at Billingshurst; *Psalms and Hymn-tunes* by Reinagle, 1839, at Hellingly; *Cheetham's Psalmody*, 1851, at Twineham; *The Union Tune Book* at Berwick; *Horne's Psalms and Hymns* at Angmering and Hellingly; *Rippon's Tunes*, 1806, at Wilmington, Lurgashall and other places; *Congregational Harmonist*, and *Clark's Psalms* at Bolney; *Mercer's Church Psalter and Hymn-book*, 1859, at Hurstpierpoint; *Dr. Addington's Collection of Psalm Tunes*, 1786, at Waldron; *Bristol Tune-book*, 1863, and *Bennett and Goldschmid's Chorale Book*, 1863, at various places. The favourite words were the Metrical Psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins (one book dated 1744 at Greatham), and Tate and Brady; and *Dr. Watts' Hymns*. Besides

all these there were countless numbers of manuscript music-books employed, nearly every choirman deeming it necessary to write and possess his own copy.

A general custom in most churches was to begin the morning service with some special hymn, generally "Awake, my soul, and with the sun," the same one being sung invariably all the year round. Another common practice was the strict limitation of the psalm or hymn to four verses only; it being apparently a matter of indifference whether the fourth verse made a satisfactory termination or not. The frequent repetition of the words, especially of the two last lines of each verse, was also the general usage, and many of the old tunes were specially composed with two extra lines of music to fit these iterations. (A familiar survival of this occurs in most modern hymn-books in such favourites as "O come, all ye faithful," "Lo! He comes with clouds descending" and "All hail the power of Jesus' Name.")

2. THE INSTRUMENTS.*

Many of the sins of their generation are visited on the heads of the great men of every age, and Cromwell was no exception to the rule. Every visitor to a cathedral or noteworthy church is familiar with the phrase: "Cromwell destroyed this or that," and almost every iconoclastic act of the fanatics among the Puritans has been ascribed directly to the mighty Oliver, including the wholesale destruction of organs. In justice to the Lord Protector's memory it is but fair to state that he was a good amateur musician; he was specially fond of the organ and had one set up in Hampton Court Palace for his own pleasure; he constantly endeavoured to check the extravagances of his followers and on most occasions counselled moderation and tolerance.

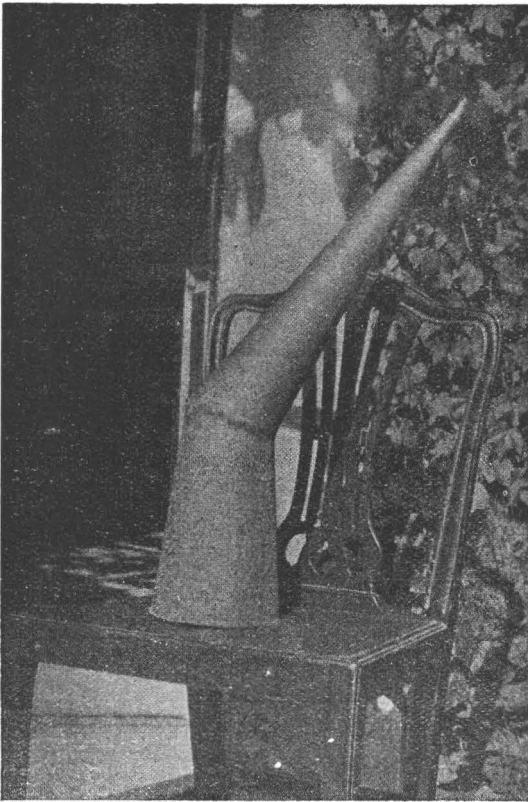
*A complete list of the instruments used in Sussex Churches of which I have been able to obtain record is given at the end of this article.

(See Morley's *Life of Cromwell*). In all probability, therefore, our Sussex musician, Mr. Henry Davey, of Brighton, was quite correct when he wrote to *Notes and Queries* (9th Series, Vol. III., 1899) defending Cromwell's memory in the matter of church organs, which were abolished from our churches by a law passed in 1644 and were accordingly destroyed wholesale; but not by Cromwell's own wishes or instructions.

The Puritan rage against music and organs was not so much against the instruments or music *per se*, as against the frivolous manners of the singers in vogue in the days of Charles I. As a matter of fact the Puritans were fond of music and evinced it by their frequent Psalm-singing; moreover in 1656 a Committee of Council was formed to assist in founding a College of Music in London, a project that was only stopped by the Restoration in 1660!

Whoever was responsible, however, it is actually true that from the middle of the 17th Century to the corresponding part of the 19th Century there were very few churches (other than cathedrals, collegiate chapels, etc.) wherein the instrumental part of the music was provided by an organ (excluding barrel-organs from the category for the moment). Direct evidence of this is furnished by the Selsey Collection of Psalms, where the Preface, written in 1842, makes a reference to the suitability of the Organ for Church Music, and concludes thus:—"Its general adoption is therefore strongly recommended and earnestly to be hoped for."

In the absence of organs the necessary accompaniments were supplied by bands containing a variety of instruments, of which in Sussex there were no less than eighteen different kinds employed in one place or another.



Vamp-horn at Ashurst.

Unique amongst them was a *Vamp-horn*, still extant, formerly used in Ashurst Church. This curious instrument is made of tin, 3ft. in length by 7in. across the mouth of the bell, painted green with an inscription of yellow lettering:—"Praise Him upon ye Strings and Pipe. 1770. Palmer fecit." Inside the bell, about 8½in. from the end, are stretched some intersecting wires, the purpose of which it is impossible to tell. The instrument has no mouth-piece and can only produce a sort of bellowing noise; in all probability it was employed to form a drone foundation.

for the band and choir, like the drones of a bagpipe, or the drone-strings of a hurdy-gurdy.

There are in existence five other vamp-horns in England (at Willoughton in Lincolnshire, East Leake and Braybrooke in Nottinghamshire, Charing in Kent, and Harrington in Northants), all of them larger than the Ashurst example, and it seems to be the general opinion that they were merely used to amplify the sound of the lowest part of the music. The word "vamp" is derived from the French *avant-pied*, which was originally applied to a piece of leather attached to the front part of a boot to add strength; thus "vamping" came to mean making the best of a thing by helping it out. In music the term is used in reference to accompanying a solo without music to help the performer; and no doubt the vamp-horns were so called from their function of supporting the other members of the church bands.

The *Flute* nearly always figured in the orchestras of Sussex Churches and was often used, when no pitchpipe was available, to sound the note for the choir when singing was unaccompanied. Most of the old flutes were of boxwood, about 2ft. in length, with only one key, though sometimes the piccolo (as at Selsey) or short flute was used. At E. Lavant there are two flutes in existence, one dated 1821; the other is stated to have been played by a Thomas Wackford in 1824.

The *Oboe*, a double-reed instrument with a penetrating sound, also of boxwood, was not very frequently employed, no doubt on account of the difficulty in playing it. A Sidlesham specimen is of boxwood with ivory rings, and has only two keys.

The somewhat kindred single-reed *Clarionet* was much more common, and most of those that were used had several keys and were thus capable of producing many more notes than the flutes and oboes.

One of them formerly played at Sidlesham has no less than twelve keys, an unusual number for an instrument about a century old as this is. A Harting clarinet has only six keys and that of Bosham has no more than one.

Sussex people love nick-names, both for people and things, and their forefathers were apparently like-minded; and they spared not the things of the Church any more than those of other places. The *Bassoon* is a thick wooden double pipe about 4ft. in length, always nicknamed the "horse's leg" in Sussex; a reed instrument of low pitch, supplying the bass to the oboe and clarinet with a tone that may be described as "nasal." Though difficult to play it was not uncommon in the Churches, and two were used at West Tarring. One now in the possession of Mr. Edward Sayers (author of *Transcripts and Records of the Past: West Tarring*) who has done much towards rescuing from oblivion the history of Sussex Church Music, was made by W. Millhouse, London, about 1800, and has 8 keys; the other, belonging to Mr. Jesse Clipper, has 6 keys. A Sidlesham bassoon has also 6 keys. The chief difficulty in playing this instrument is the production of the notes at an accurate pitch, and what the Church congregations suffered in the Past from bassoons played out of tune by some of the ill-taught enthusiasts must have been torture indescribable.

An instrument that is now practically obsolete in England but still to be met with in France, the *Serpent*, formed part of Selsey, Heathfield and Upper Beeding bands and probably also of others. The Beeding example is preserved by Mr. Collins in his famous and quaint Museum at Bramber. The instrument is of thin wood covered with leather, with a brass trumpet-like mouthpiece; total length 7ft. 10in., with four keys and the usual finger-holes. Its name is derived from the curved form in which the tube is contorted, presenting three U-shaped turns followed

by a large circular convolution. Supposed to have been invented in the 16th Century in France, the instrument was so well recognised as a member of the Church bands in that country that it became known as the *Serpent d'Eglise*; and as, owing to the material of which it was made, its tone was more tender and less obtrusive than that of the brass orchestral instruments, it was therefore deemed more suitable for ecclesiastical purposes.

Of the brass instruments the *Cornet*, *Trumpet*, *French Horn* and *Trombone* have all been used in Sussex, though none of them were common. At Berwick a cornet (then commonly called *cornopean*) and a harmonium provided the musical accompaniment in the middle of the 19th Century; a wonderful and fearful combination indeed!*

The stringed instruments, *Violin*, *'Cello* and *Bass-viol*, were all fairly commonly used and little need be said about them. The bass-viol was the immediate precursor of the 'cello and was only slightly different in shape, having a flatter back and more sloping shoulders. Owing to this it was comparatively lacking in tone, and the louder 'cello gradually ousted it from orchestras all over Europe, England being the last country to allow it to be displaced. Here the bass-viol survived till the end of the 18th Century in general use, but for Sussex churches it lasted for at least another 50 years. Two bass-viols in the County were made of thin sheet copper instead of wood—one at Bosham and another at Eastbourne.

During an interregnum between band and organ, a *Concertina* was used at Balcombe. This instrument is practically a miniature harmonium; and if custom has sanctioned the latter, we need not shudder too much at thoughts of the former.

*For some time after the Restoration in 1660 there was a dearth of boys' voices and the Clergy supplied the need for treble parts by the introduction of cornets into the Churches.

One would scarcely expect any member of the percussion tribe of instruments to be used in Divine service—their sound can hardly have been edifying—but the *Drum* was used in Nuthurst Church and, possibly at an early date, in West Tarring Church also. In the Churchwardens' Account Book of the latter parish occurs this entry:—

“ 1561. It. to the Drowme pleyr xi.,D.”

This payment was for the music performed at the “ Church Ales,” and evidently the “ Drowme pleyr ” (drum player) was an important member of the Church band, for he had this special fee, whereas the other “ mynssterylls ” were all massed together in one item of payment:—

“ It. to the mynssterylls v/,s. vii,D.”

It is not quite certain, however, that either the drummer or the minstrels performed in the Church itself, they may have been engaged for the out-door revelry only.

If played well and with restraint, the drum may have been effective in some of the old jovial (there is no other word for them) Psalm tunes, but how can the *Triangle* have found a place in a Church band? In the Coptic Churches in Old Cairo in the middle of the 19th Century, cymbals, small bells and triangles were all used to accompany the hymns; but Cairo and Sussex have not much in common, and one can only state the fact, leaving it to the imagination to conceive the effect, that a triangle was actually used in Rustington Church some 70 or 80 years ago. Whether Sussex copied Cairo, or the reverse, must also be left to the imagination.

In the Sussex Churches where no band was available the accompaniments to the Psalms were almost universally provided by a *Barrel Organ*, an instrument that had the obvious advantage over all others that it could be played without learning or practice—the performer simply turned a handle. These organs were

in great vogue for about a hundred years, and were of various sizes, some having four stops and others none. Most of them had three separate "barrels" (wooden cylinders with pins on them after the style of the barrels in musical boxes), each having ten tunes which could be employed as required. The tone of the barrel-organs, or "winch-organs" as they were also called, was probably little better than that of the familiar one-legged resting-place of a monkey so often seen in the London streets; but our Sussex forefathers evidently deemed its soft sounds to be nothing less than celestial, for they nick-named the instrument the "Seraphim." (In contra-distinction from "winch-organ," one with a key-board was called a "finger-organ.") Unfortunately not all of these "Seraphims" were equally angelic, far from it indeed; for many of them were made to be used primarily in the village inn, to entertain the bucolic and alcoholic peasant mind, and the tunes provided were "apt musick withall," generally consisting of about 7 or 8 very secular songs leavened with 2 or 3 Psalms. It is related that the Berwick (Sussex) barrel-organ was one of these mundane "Seraphim," and it was played by clockwork; and on one occasion instead of stopping at the end of a Psalm, the mechanism gave a "click" and went on with a comic song entitled "Little drops of brandy"; after which another "click" and then—"Go to the Devil and wash yourself!"

About 1830 Jevington resolved to have a barrel-organ and a farmer who was Churchwarden was deputed to fetch it in his wagon from London. Also at the same time he was commissioned by his spouse to bring back a new washing machine. Both were duly brought down on a Saturday—but the organ was deposited in the farmhouse kitchen and the washer in the Church!

Piddinghoe still possesses its winch-organ, sadly

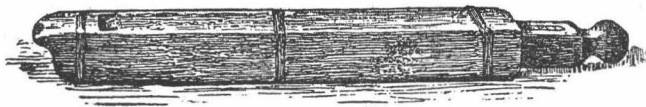
out of order, however; at Rogate are some remains of a barrel, and at Harting is the box formerly used to keep the spare barrels. Hartfield had a "Seraphim" as early as 1726—a three-barrelled one made by Bryceson of London. Rye obtained one in 1811, Salehurst in 1836, East Ferring about 1850, Angmering in 1852. Steyning had its winch-organ transformed into a finger-organ in 1853, but the barrels were still left *in situ* inside the organ where I saw them in 1894. The "organist" at Bishopstone received the munificent sum of £1 a year for "grinding" out the music, and yet we hear of the badly-paid Church musician!

The following advertisement appeared in the *West Sussex Gazette* on June 25th, 1857—quaint reading in the present days:—

"Church Organ. For sale an excellent barrel-organ in wainscote case with gilt pipes in front. It has 3 barrels each playing 10 Psalm tunes. The above instrument was made by Bryceson, has 4 stops and will be sold for the very moderate price of 8 guineas. Apply Mr. Bennett, North St., Chichester."

The firm of Bryceson were famous manufacturers of barrel-organs for many years.

When neither band nor organ was available the singing in Sussex churches was rendered unaccompanied, the key-note of the tune being given out on



Bosham Pitch-pipe.

a *Pitchpipe* by the Clerk. These pipes were of wood, square in section, about 19 inches in length; the mouthpiece was similar to that of an ordinary tin whistle and at the other end was a wooden plug on which the notes of the scale were marked. The

plug was pulled out to the indication mark of the note required, the pipe was then sounded and the members of the choir took their note by singing the word "Praise," or "Praise ye the Lord"; when all had obtained their proper notes, off they started on what must have often been a somewhat uncertain musical venture.

Many of the old pitchpipes are fortunately still in existence, and those of Bosham (discovered by myself among a pile of rubbish) Brede and Lavant are preserved in their respective churches.

Up to the middle of the 17th Century the Organ was the instrument in general use in our churches, but it does not quite come within the scope of this article, for it was almost entirely ousted during the whole of the period covered by "The Past"; but a brief reference to the King of Instruments may be permitted. Rye Church had several organs, one in the choir, a larger one in the transept. In Rye Churchwardens' Accounts appears this item under the date 1513:—

	£ s. d.
" For the bringing the organ from London to Rye...	1 3 8"

In 1514:—

" For scouring and mending the old organ now standing in Our Lady Chapel	0 10 0"
---	---------

In 1523:—

" Pd. the organ maker; for making St. Georges' organ	1 4"
---	------

The last item was probably for tuning and could not have been for actual manufacture.

In the West Tarring Churchwardens' Accounts transcribed by Edward Sayers) occurs:—

" 1570 R. [received] for Orgayne Pypes Xs.

Rotherfield Churchwardens' Accounts contain:—

" 1532 May 19. And for th' old organs Xd.
1606 Aug. 3. Certaine orgle pipes."

As before stated organs were practically all banished from our Churches in the middle of the 17th Century, and they did not generally re-appear until the end of the 19th, when a great wave of Church restoration (and destruction) spread over Sussex.

3. THE MUSICIANS.

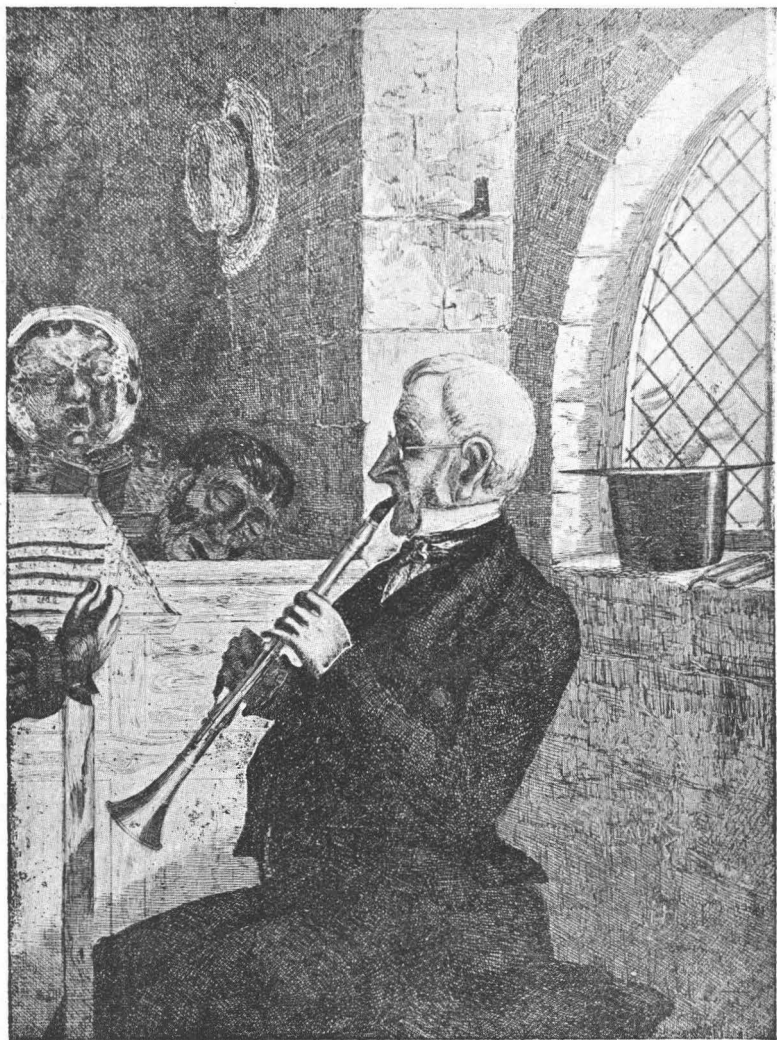
The human element in all branches of research, eminently so of course in the realm of history, is at once the most interesting and fascinating, and at the same time the most elusive and difficult to portray with accuracy ; especially if one endeavours to analyse the motives or disclose the mental attitude of those who have played their parts in history. Fortunately for me the Sussex Church Musician of the Past was apparently not a very complex character, and the extensive array of facts that I have gathered about him enables me to state without hesitation that the two pre-eminent features in his character were his boundless enthusiasm and extraordinary industry as a musician. It is true the Sussex Church Minstrels were often ignorant, only occasionally talented, frequently poor executants, sometimes irreverent ; but they were *always* zealous and *always* diligent in matters musical. They practised singing several nights a week, at home or at the Church ; or they learned their instruments slowly and laboriously, often without any tuition save that afforded by an instruction-book or a fellow-player, devoting most of their spare time to this one and only hobby ; or they spent hours of painstaking labour on the production of MS. music ; and their enthusiasm for their task equalled their industry. Never, in their estimation, were there such voices as in the Sussex Church choir ; never such singers, never such players ! Their daily toil was but a necessary parenthesis in their humble lives, but their true mission in life was to excel in the minstrels' gallery in the old Parish Church of their native village. It is certainly a sad result of the

boundless circuit of our modern mental activities that the old enthusiasm for one definite pursuit, especially that of the Church Musician, is almost entirely extinct.

One of the happy features of the old Church minstrelsy was the common custom of whole families for generations taking part therein, the juniors regarding it as a sacred obligation that they should carry on the traditions of their ancestors in this respect. There was no compulsion about it, however, and the obligation was generally regarded as a privileged one. Notable instances of the custom may be given:— At Bosham the family of Arnold supplied members of the choir without a break for nearly 90 years; at Falmer the Jones and Sandall families did the same for a long period; the Cootes at Clymping, the Hodges and Roberts at Henfield and Shermanbury, the Collins and Unsteads at Waldron, the Marshalls at Rogate, the Sayers, Bushby, Binstead and Chipper families at West Tarring, the Ashbys at Wadhurst, the Ransomes at Sidlesham,—all these had many members of different generations in their respective Church choirs; while at Donnington the band at one time was formed by twelve brothers named Davis. A Welch was in Bosham choir in 1796 and a descendant was in it nearly a century later.

Another custom was the lengthy tenure of office of individual members of bands or choirs, many of whom could claim from 40 to 60 years' service to their credit. At one time all the twelve adult singers at Bosham had an average of over 40 years continuous membership of the choir; and the senior of them, "Grand-sire" Arnold, established a world's record by occupying his seat for 80 years.

Frequently the bandsmen went to neighbouring Churches to help their brother minstrels, and at Christmas-tide any choir or band that had attained to some measure of fame for its skill visited all the



Old Penniket, in Woodmancote Church, about 1850.

parishes in the immediate locality as "waits." Dressed in their best smocks and carrying their music carefully tied up in red handkerchiefs, they were as picturesque as they were enterprising; for it was no light task in olden days to traverse the notoriously bad Sussex roads for miles in the dark winter evenings.

Some of the old players were indefatigable in their energies, not a few of them being able to play two or more different instruments. A famous character in and around Henfield in the fifties of last century was one Penniket whose performances on both clarionet and trombone were noted. A humorous sketch of him in Woodmancote Church was made by the late Mr. H. Smith, of Henfield (herewith reproduced by kind permission of Mr. C. L. A. Smith of Albourne, the owner of the original) in which Mr. Penniket is depicted playing the clarionet for the anthem "Awake, thou that sleepest!" thus disturbing the slumbers of the congregation. A lifelong resident of Henfield, in her 91st year, remembered old Penniket well, and in telling me of his performances on the trombone, remarked—"What a lot of that brass he could get into his mouth!" A great fascination it must have been to her in her childhood to sit in Church and see that wonderful performer swallow half his instrument, as she imagined, every time he drew in the crook of the trombone!

Another accomplished musician, Mr. George Marshall, of Rogate, played several instruments and was associated with his Parish Church as a performer for 65 years.

The old choirmen were very proud of their chief singers and players, and it was not an uncommon boast that their particular Church possessed the grandest bass or the finest tenor voice in Sussex, or even in England; an idle boast, doubtless, in most cases, but the pride that begot it was wholly pardon-

able on account of the splendid *esprit-de-corps* it be-tokened. Of one thing concerning their ability it may be confidently stated that they were all geniuses in the sense of having infinite capacity for taking pains; for many of the old singers could neither read nor write and they learnt their parts by heart and sang the Psalms and Anthems entirely from memory, a feat that will be more readily appreciated when the florid nature of the music is recalled. At Twineham, some 70 or 80 years ago, the leader of the choir was quite illiterate, but he managed to conduct the others as well as take his own part.

The "Minstrels' gallery" was in most cases especially erected at the west end of the Sussex Churches for the accommodation of the orchestra and choir; they were generally built about the end of the 17th or beginning of the 18th Centuries, and their demolition practically coincided with the disappearance of the real old "minstrels" themselves in or about the sixties of the 19th Century. It was considered a privilege to sit in the gallery, and often no-one but a musician was allowed a place there. The gallery at Cuckfield, for instance, erected in 1699, was "only for the singing of Psalms by those that have learnt and for their singing them together."

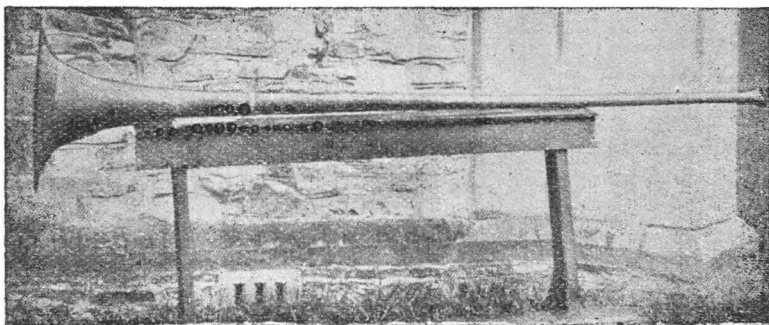
At Hailsham in 1762, £1 5s. 6d. was "paid for peoples learning to sing in the Church," but as far as I have been able to ascertain the Sussex Church Musicians in "The Past" were seldom paid for their services; they gave them willingly and loyally, though previously to that period they evidently received remuneration as the following extract from the West Tarring Churchwardens' Account Book shows:—

" 1561	It. to the mynssterylls	v.s.	vii .d.
1571.	To John Selden for mondayes play		xi.d.
"	paid to Alb Ston for the menstrells our			
	church all day	i.s.	vd "

This John Selden was the father of the famous

“learned Selden,” who may have been proud, as a child, of the fact that he was the son of a Church minstrel whose talented labours were valued at one shilling a day.

Very little reference has been made in this article to the music of Chichester Cathedral. This omission is intentional, as the aim has been to give a record of the musical activities of the amateur native of Sussex in their parish Churches, rather than that of the professional who often hailed from other counties.



Vamp-horn in East Leake Church, Notts.



A Warnham Worthy—Michael Turner—Clerk and Sexton for 50 years (1830 to 1880).

See page 11.

TABLE OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS—*Continued.*

An asterisk, *, signifies that the instruments thus indicated are still in existence.

CHURCHES.	Flutes	Clarinets	Oboes	Bassoons	Cornets	Trombones	Serpents	Violins	'Cellos	Bass-viols	Barrel-organs	Pitch-pipes	Various
Lurgashall ...									4				
Newick ...	1												
North Chapel	1*	1											
Nuthurst ...	1	1						1	1*	1		1*	Drum
Pagham ...											1		
Piddinghoe											1*		
Poling ...		1*											
Pulborough											1		
Rogate ...	2*	1						2	1		1	1	
Rotherfield				1									
Rustington		1						1		1			Triangle
Rye ...								1			1		
Salehurst											1	1	
Selsey ...	2*						1*	2*					
Sherman-bury ...	1*, 1									1*			
Sidlesham ...		1*	1*	1*				1*					
Singleton ...											1		
Steyning ...											1		
Stopham ...											1		
Tarring, W.		3*	1*	2*		1				1		1*	
Thakeham											1		
Twineham ...	1							2	1	1		1	
Wadhurst ...	1	1						1	1*				
Waldron ...	2	2		1					2		1		
Warnham ...		1						1		1			
Westbourne		1							1				
Willingdon	1	1		1				1		1		1	
Wilmington	1	1								1		1	
Wittering W.		1											
Withyham ...	1	1		2				3		2			
Woodman-cote ...	1	1				1		1					
Yapton ...				1									

Churches where bands were used but instruments unknown:—Lancing, Sompting, Tillington.