

The Ad Majorem Collection of Psalter Chants

Some Reviews of *The Ad Majorem Chants*

Very little has been written about this work of Meade Falkner's. It was not listed in Graham Pollard's Bibliography in *The Book Collector* (Autumn 1960). However, Kenneth Warren does refer to it in his Biography: "At one time, possibly with Culley's (the Durham Cathedral organist) help, Falkner spent the afternoons, Sunday by Sunday, in the organ loft, compiling his *Ad Majorem Psalter* – which, despite its name, was essentially a book of chants. He hoped it might come into use for congregational singing, had it published by Novello, and was generous in distributing copies to friends among the clergy. By 1923 it was already into a third, enlarged, edition."

In a letter, written to Charles William Pearce Mus.Doc., in November 1911 – two years before he published the *Ad Majorem*, Meade Falkner explained that his "collection is for the *Psalter* only, with no *Venites*. I have practically eliminated single chants, and there are very few minors. If you allow it, I propose using your chant for 'By the waters of Babylon'. I have tried to only use chants with real melody and power, not musical exercises, or invertebrate compositions. I am quite sure that among the great number of 'chant-books' there is still ample room for something of this kind. I am publishing with Messrs. Novello – but at my own cost, and not for profit.

PREFACE.

THE inclusion only of Chants which possess a marked and easily remembered melody, the very sparing use of single Chants, and of minor Chants, are some principles which have governed this selection.

If Chants are not thoroughly tuneful, any congregational singing is impossible. It is, of course, to be desired that *all* the parts should be tuneful, but from the congregational standpoint, it is with the melody of the treble part that we are mostly concerned. Congregations know little about part-singing, and the less attempt that they make to sing parts the better will be the result. For the sake of their tunefulness, a few of the florid 18th and early 19th century Chants have been included.

Few Single Chants appear. A Chant is a very short composition: it allows little room for development. It is difficult to do much within such Procrustean limits. But if this is true of Double Chants, it is much more true of single Chants. They are often characterless and ineffective.

Again, minor Chants have been sparingly introduced. To ordinary congregations they are apt to be tedious or dispiriting. Minor Chants have not been used even for such traditionally minor-chant Psalms as the ~~xxx~~, cix., and cxxxvii.*

For any faulty harmonies or typographical errors, and for printing any copyright Chants without permission, a sincere apology is offered. Every effort has been made to ascertain rights, and to obtain the sanction of those in whom they are vested.

The Compiler expresses his sincere thanks to The Reverend G. E. Alvis, Dr. E. J. Bellerby, Sir Frederick Bridge, The Reverend Arnold D. Culley, Mr. Wm. Ellis, The Reverend Sir George Ralph Fetherston, Bart., Dr. Basil Harwood, Dr. Charles Harford Lloyd, Sir George C. Martin, Mr. Charles L. Naylor, Mr. Tertius Noble, Dr. C. W. Pearce, Dr. Ferris Tozer, for permission to print their Chants; also to Mr. Edward Oswald Dykes for permission to print the Chants of the late Dr. Dykes, to Mr. E. M. Oakeley for permission to print Sir Herbert Oakeley's Quadruple Chant, and to the Reverend Francis G. Wesley for permission to print the Chants of S. and S. S. Wesley. Several Chants are included of that past-master of Chant-writing, the late Dr. Philip Armes, by permission of the composer, ratified by his widow.

* A number of blank staves are given which will be available for the insertion of minor and single Chants if desired.