

TALES OF ORGANISTS

TO THE DESCENDANTS OF JUBAL
*(“And his brother’s name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as
handle the harp and organ.”—GEN. iv., 21)*

TALES OF ORGANISTS

(LONG AND SHORT)

ASSEMBLED BY

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PRE-SCRIPTUM

(INTRODUCTORY VOLUNTARY)

EVERY craft has (or should have) its lore, its history, and its literature. To some extent, its literature—if there be any—no doubt will include both lore and history; but if there be no literature, little traditional lore and no particular history, weak indeed will be the interest of a contemporaneous generation.

The position of an organist-important as it is to a degree higher than we sometimes realise-is so modern that, except in a few cases, there is only oral lore, little written history and no special literature beyond casual reminiscences attaching to the calling. It is so new, indeed, that as a rule the position of the organist is unrecognised in Ecclesiastical Law in both the English and Scottish churches. His anomalous position, due to this, and the absence of definite literary associations with his office are between them largely responsible for much of the languid interest and lowly estimation displayed in regard to his ministry.

This little volume makes no pretence to rank as literature: it is merely a collection of stories (humorous or otherwise), sayings and doings by many different contributors, all more or less associated with the profession or calling of the Church Organist.

Some of these stories may be thought trivial; others may be called “chestnuts.” But our individual minds have varying dimensions and differing “contents;” an old story to one may be a new story to another. Therefore in passing judgment on this little book we may, perhaps, be allowed to claim the charity that never fails, if it does not appeal to a “high-brow” standard.

Many of these stories are original, and record the actual personal experiences of the contributors whose names will be found at the end of their respective paragraphs, duly numbered.

The Editor desires to express gratitude and best thanks to all who have contributed.

For paragraphs to which no name is attached at the end, the Editor is responsible.

It has not been possible to use all the matter kindly offered, through copyright and other difficulties.

Every care has been taken to avoid infringements if, in spite of this, involuntary and unconscious lapses should be discovered, it is hoped that the editor's apologies will be accepted.

Denmark Hill, S.E., October, 1927

CHAPTER I.

Tales which are (probably) Stories

(1) A LOCAL reporter, describing the opening of a new organ, wrote: "The swell died away in suffocation, like someone singing a sweet song under the bedclothes."

(2) SAID one dear old lady to another: "My dear, you should come and hear our organ now that it has been improved. The new Nux Vomica stop is a perfect dream!"

(3) THE late Sir Frederick Bridge had a wonderful vein of humour. He once described an aged organist of the old school as one who had "One foot in the grave and the other on the swell pedal."

E. BURRITT LANE, MUS.B.,
Late Organist, Steyning Parish Church.

(1) VILLAGE organist (lady), who presented a banner to the Sunday School, wired details to the vicar as follows: " 'For unto us a child is born.' Seven feet long by three feet wide; green in front and blue behind."

(2) AMATEUR beginner (impressing his friends after a first lesson): "And tenderly pressing my foot down upon the vox humana, I drew the swell pedal out and played a gorgeous chord upon the tremulant."

ALEC ROWLEY, A.R.A.M., F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.,
Master of the Music, St. Alban's, Teddington.

(1) A MILLIONAIRE and family came to live in the neighbourhood of a country village. At the little church on the first Sunday the family were expected, with much interest. The parson waited a little, but had to begin his service. Half way through the Litany a rustle of silk was heard and the parson quivered. The clerk, however, soon undeceived him ("It's only the upper housemaid, Sir"). "Good Lord deliver us."

(2) VERGER (showing a party round cathedral): "Now turn round. On the right we have the thirteenth century stalls: on the left, there you see the fine organ with the old and new matics."

(3) AT EUSTON Station an elderly clergyman handed his wife into a carriage. The porter followed with the luggage. Thereupon the clergyman gave his wife twopence, kissed the porter, and left.

(4) WHEN the Moody-Manners Opera Company was lately in Dublin, the wife of a well known resident was startled to receive "notice" from her cook, upon whom Madame Fanny Moody's Mignon had exercised a fatal influence. "Sure, Mum," said she, "I'm sorry to lave you. But me voice is a 'sultana,' and I know the stage is the only place for me."

(5) ENUNCIATION.—General Jones had some shirts made at a fashionable hosiers, and the cutter a few weeks later met the General with a friend. The General remembered the face, but could not place him; and the cutter greeted him "Good morning, General." The General stopped, shook hands; and the cutter, perceiving that the General's mind needed refreshing, said quietly "Made your shirts." "Oh, I beg your pardon," said the General quickly, and turning to the gentleman with whom he was walking, he said, "Colonel, allow me to introduce you to my friend, Major Schurz."

(6) SEVENOAKS CHURCH, 1788. "This is to give notice that the magnificent organ will be opened in a grave and patriotic manner by the celebrated Mr. Wesley on —."

(7) ROWLAND HILL gave thanks for the letter H being in our language, as without it he would always have been "ill."

ALBERT ORTON, F.R.C.O.,
Organist, St. Anne's Church, Soho.

(1) *Tourist* (to verger, who is indicating the various cathedral dignitaries as they assemble for service): "And who is this gentleman?"

Verger (contemptuously): "Oh, him? He's the Precentor,—only music!"

(2) *Choirmaster* (reprimanding small chorister for inattention during service and wishing to improve the occasion): "What do you come to church for?"

Small Boy: "To sing, Sir."

Choirmaster: "Yes; but that's not the only reason. Well, why do the congregation come?"

Small Boy: "To hear us sing, Sir."

(3) ONE evening during Ascensiontide, the organist was playing the chorus "Lift up your heads" as an outgoing voluntary, and two old cronies were having an animated conversation under cover of Handel. At the moment when there is half-a-bar's rest in the voice parts, just before the final chords, after the repeated proclamation "He is the King of Glory," one lady was heard to say loudly, "Yes, and I'm very sorry to hear it!"

MISS M. G. WRIGHT, A.R.C.O.

(4) THE PROBLEM OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.—In the lobby of one of the colleges at Oxford (or Cambridge, as the case may be) there used to be displayed a notice to the effect that visitors wishing to join in the singing were requested to do so silently! A visitor remonstrated with the verger and inquired if it were not the House of God. "No, Sir," came the reply, "This is the private chapel of the college."

(5) A LADY visiting Chester Cathedral recently (to another visitor who also had noticed the perfume of incense): "This might be a Christian church and not an English cathedral."

(6) THE congregation of an old church in Belgium decided to repair its properties, and employed an artist to touch up some of its old paintings. Upon the presentation of the bill, the committee having in charge the matter of repairs refused payment unless the details of the work were specified, whereupon the artist presented the items as follows

To correcting Ten Commandments	1	10	0
Embellishing Pontius Pilate		7	6
Putting new tail on rooster of St. Peter and mending his coat		15	0
Repluming and regilding guardian angel		15	6
Washing surplice of High Priest and putting carmine on his cheeks	5	4	
Renewing Heaven, adjusting the stars and cleaning up moon	1	1	0
Touching up Purgatory and restoring lost soul	2	15	6 ½
Taking spots off son of Tobia			4 ½
Putting ear-ring in Sarah's ears		2	6
Brightening up flames of hell		2	0
Putting new tail on devil		2	6
Cleaning his left hoof and doing several odd jobs for the damned	1	6	
Re-ordering the robes of Herod and adjusting his wig		1	6
Repainting Balaam's ass and putting new shoes on him		5	10
Putting new stones in David's sling, enlarging Goliath, extending leg of Saul		15	0
Decorating Noah's ark and putting new head on Sham	1	4	0
Mending shirt of Prodigal Son and cleaning his ear			3

(7) We have to remind ourselves that not many years ago organs were blown by hand! Having been invited to play the organ one Sunday at a strange church, five minutes before the service I was seated at the organ looking over the stop-knobs, &c., when I espied a cord. Curious

as to its function, I pulled it. Nothing appeared to happen, so I pulled it again harder; again, harder still. A man then appeared from the hidden recesses using language bordering on the abusive and vigorously rubbing his arm. He was the organ blower, the cord attached to his arm and the organist was wont to pull it (gently, to be sure) to remind him that the time had come to supply the instrument with wind.

F. G. SHUTTLEWORTH,
Organist of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington.

(1) AT an annual banquet of the London Society of Organists, a visitor, meeting after an interval of many years a professional organist who had held his present post for a very long time, enquired if he still practised. "I never did practise," was the reply.

(2) A YOUNG organist was recommended to apply for a post that was advertised. He did so, stating in his letter that his father was a Doctor of Music, his grandfather was a pupil of S. S. Wesley, an uncle a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, another had studied under Mendelssohn and he felt sure he was descended through his mother's side from J. S. B. He received the reply that they wanted a man to play the organ and train the choir, *and not for stud purposes*, and could not therefore consider his application.

G. S.

(1) A SERMON OF VALUE. — A gentleman confessed that he had gone to sleep during a sermon by the bishop. The reply was that it must have been Bishop the composer.

(2) *Maid*: "The singing was lovely this morning, Ma'am."

Mistress: "Yes? the boys were rather flat, I think."

Maid: "Oh, was they, Ma'am? Well, you see I sat at the back, so I couldn't see them."

(3) *Choirboy* (reading a psalm and hesitating somewhat over the longer words): "Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns, so let indigestion vex him," &c.

(4) A VICAR was heard to give out "As parts the hant." This is a good second to "Kinkering Kongs."

R. H. WHALL, MUS.B., F.R.C.O.
Organist, Holy Trinity Church, Stroud.

(1) I VOLUNTEERED to play at a country church where the rector combined the duties of organist with those of his calling. The Children's Service in the afternoon was taken by an elderly spinster, who asked me if I wished to choose the hymns. Upon my replying that I should prefer her to do so, she asked if I had any favourite ones. I answered that I had not. She (determined to have a definite answer) riposted: "Well, what tunes can you play?"

(2) A RAILWAY porter spent his Sundays blowing an organ, and on one occasion fell asleep during the sermon. When the organist desired to play, he quickly roused the slumberer, who jumped up and cried: "Hammersmith train; plenty of room behind."

ERNEST BUSBY.

Organist, St. Thomas's Church, North Kensington.

(1) SHAMEFUL ATROCITY (from the Melbourne *Punch*). — The other day a little girl whose music master was supposed to be giving her a lesson was heard to utter the most doleful cries. On her mother's entry into the room, the professor was found attempting to hammer a tune into the girl's head!

(2) *Vicar* (to new church cleaner of doubtful efficiency): "What do you do with the dust and rubbish?"

Church Cleaner: "Empty it down the grid, Sir."

Vicar: "And where, pray, is the grid?"

New Church Cleaner: "Under the organ seat, Sir!"

G. J. METZLER, F.R.C.O.

Organist, St. Stephen's Church, Walbrook.

(1) A CERTAIN clergyman, when visiting a rural church at Dingestow, being unaware that it was the custom to await the arrival of the country squire, commenced the service punctually with the sentence: "When the wicked man turneth away." But he was interrupted by the clerk, who touched him on the arm and in an audible whisper said: "'E aint come yet, Sir!"

HERBERT HODGE, F.R.C.O.

Organist, St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.

(1) SMITH, the vicar's gardener and village organ blower, had a friend in need in the vicar's daughter. He was frequently in trouble

owing to his prolonged visits to "The Dog and Gun." One Sunday morning, in the middle of a heavy Te Deum, the wind went out. At the conclusion, the organist blew down his Whistle to the back of the organ: "Drunk again last night, I suppose, Smith?" Small voice in reply: "Please, Sir, I am the vicar's daughter!"

(2) MESSRS. A. and B. were two applicants to join a festival as tenors. Mr. A. satisfied the chorus master, taking his top notes easily. Mr. B. could not be coaxed to sing higher than top F.

Chorus Master: "But I understood you were a tenor; can't you sing above F?"

Mr. B.: "Well, you see, Sir, I sits next to Mr. A. in our choir; and when he goes above F I waits until he comes down again, and then I joins him."

ERNEST DARBY, MUS.D. (Dunelm), F.R.C.O.
Organist, St. Mark's, Wolverhampton.

(1) FOR the truth of the following story told me by the alleged sufferer himself, I cannot vouch. A friend of mine was appointed organist of a famous London church of ritualistic tendencies. During the winter, owing to the damp, a stove was kept burning inside the organ. One festival morning my friend arrived at the church early so that he could practise before the service and, on opening the door of the organ loft, was greeted by a familiar smell. At first he was not able to place it, but, after a moment, concluded it must be a superior brand of incense. On going to the other side of the loft, however, he discovered that the blower had opened the door of the organ and was cooking on the oil stove a couple of bloaters for his breakfast.

W. J. FREDERICK PUGH, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M.

(1) "I MUST see Dr. Brown at once," said the stranger. "But Madam," said the maid, "Dr. Brown is a Doctor of Music, not a doctor of medicine." "Well!" said the caller, "he should be the right doctor for me, because I'm suffering from an awful singing in my ears!"

L. R. THOMAS, A.R.C.O.

(1) THE church stood in the fields. An old lady passing was deeply interested in nature and was listening intently to the crickets chirruping. The vicar, meeting her, was however listening to the choirboys singing in the church. "The music sounds nice out here, Mrs. Brown,"

said he. "Yes!" said she, "and they say that they do it by scraping their hind legs together."

ALFRED R. STOCK, F.R.C.O.
Organist Essex Church, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate,

(1) SCENE: the clergy vestry of a well known London church, before Evensong; Mr. G., the curate present. Enter the organist.

Organist: "I thought an extract from the 'Daughter of Jairus' would meet the case to-night, Mr. G."

Mr. G.: "Oh! what, are you removing her appendix?"

(2) It is told that a Scotch Presbyterian who found his way accidentally into the Temple Church, but was observed to leave before the service had advanced very far, was asked why he had not remained until the end, and replied: "As I went into the church a man handed me a programme, but when I looked at it and saw 'Collect, Collect, Collect' all the way through, I thought it was no place for me, for although I'm quite willing to give something to one collection, I don't want to be 'collected' half-a-dozen times in the course of an hour or two."

CHARLES LONG, MUS.B.
Organist of Gray's Inn.

(1) SIR WALTER PARRATT to a pupil named Mr. Hope, who one very hot day arrived after hurriedly climbing three flights of stairs for his lesson in Room 83 at the R.C.M.: "Well, sir, I suppose your motto is 'Dum perspiro spero?'"

J. STANLEY ROBSON, F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M.
Organist, Grimsby Parish Church.

(1) CONVERSATION at a ladies' (?) school:—

Phyllis (daughter of *nouveau riche*): "What is your father, Marjorie."

Marjorie: "A music teacher."

Phyllis (to another girl): "And what is your father, Catherine?"

Catherine: "My father is also a music teacher."

Phyllis (disdainfully): "My father is a gentleman!"

Marjorie and Catherine (in chorus): "And so is mine!"

(In parenthesis, it might have been better if Marjorie and Catherine had each described their father as a "teacher of music" rather than as a "music teacher.")

J. ADELBERG LAWSON, F.R.C.O., F.T.C.L.
Beethoven School of Music, Harrogate.

(1) THE EFFECT OF THE SERMON ? — My collection of "things which might have been said better" steadily grows. You have probably heard that one which concerns a member of a shooting party who was not altogether an adept with the gun. One of his shots was particularly alarming. "Confound you," exclaimed an angry little man, striding up to him, "do you know that that shot of yours only just missed my wife?" "Believe me, sir," stammered the unlucky sportsman, "I'm most awfully sorry!" The second story is told of a certain Provost of Eton who was alleged to have said on one occasion to late-comers in chapel, "Your conduct is an insult to the Almighty, and, what is more, you keep the masters waiting." That would be hard to beat, but in its way the following, which I took from the news column of one of our newspapers, is quite as good: "Mr. W. R. Moody arrived in London at the end of last week. On Sunday morning he heard Dr. Orchard at the King's Weigh House Church. He has now gone to St. Ives, in Cornwall, for a long rest."

(2) PREACHER AND CHOIR,—You may remember the story of the minister who began the lesson after the anthem at the place where the narrative begins, "And after the uproar had ceased"; the choir getting level before the service ended by following the sermon with the anthem "Now it is high time to wake out of sleep." Here is a similar story: On Saturday the choir-leader gave this notice to the daily paper: "Linden Congregational Church. Morning worship at ten o'clock. The Rev. Mr. Silver will preach, and the choir will sing 'The Lord have mercy upon us.'" Mr. Silver read the notice, but said nothing. In his sermon, however, he spoke of the wonders of science, and especially of airships. "It will not be long," he said, "before they will be in common use. I can imagine many of this congregation getting into a big aeroplane on Sunday morning and going to some church many miles away to hear some good music."

(3) FROM A TROPICAL DIOCESE.—The drawing-room of a lady devoted to good works was rapidly filling with folk who had been invited to listen to an address upon the missionary work of the church. A gorgeously appraised footman stood at the door, and loudly called out the name of each arrival. Lords and ladies arrived in plenty, and cleri-

cal dignitaries not a few. It was a great occasion, and many of the more important people encountered looks of complimentary interest as their entrance followed the footman's calling of their names; but the most excited interest was manifested when the footman announced loudly that the latest arrival was no less a person than "The Lord Bishop of Gehenna." "I didn't know," whispered one lady to another, "that we had missions there." "Nor did I," was her reply, "but by all accounts there's no place that needs a missionary more. He ought to have a very interesting tale to tell." As a matter of fact, he had; but there were those present who were a trifle disappointed when, in due time, the chairman called upon him as "The Bishop of Guiana," and pronounced the name correctly. Guiana is a warm country, but the footman had caused the audience to expect a visitor from an even warmer clime.

(4) LINCOLN AND LINCOLN.—An American schoolmistress, returned from a visit to England, was telling her pupils of some of the wonderful sights she had seen. She referred to Lincoln Cathedral. "Is there a Lincoln Cathedral in England?" asked one of the girls. "Certainly there is, and it is one of the most beautiful of all," was the reply. "Say!" exclaimed the girl, wasn't it just sweet of them to call it after *him*!

(5) NOT TO BE CHEATED.—A few nights ago an inhabitant of a London suburb was more than surprised to hear a thin, boyish voice outside his door piping up "While Shepherd's Watched their Flocks by Night." It is bad enough, he thought, to get this sort of thing for six weeks before Christmas, but to have a renewal of it more than a month after the festive season was, he felt, too much. Opening the door he saw a little urchin with his mouth close to the letter-box, singing away for all he was worth. "Hullo," said the householder, "What's the meaning of this! Singing carols? Why, Christmas was weeks ago." "Yes, sir," said the youngster, "I knows that. But I was in 'orspitai then."

(6) THE SUNDAY DRUM.—A misguided uncle had given Pam a drum for her birthday one Friday, and very lustily she banged it most of the hours of Friday and of Saturday. Then, on Sunday, after coming home from church, she hurried to the cupboard where her toys were stored, and once again resumed her music. "Pam!" said her mother, in her most grieved tones, "surely you forget what day this is: we don't play drums on Sundays." "Oh, yes, mummy, we do," said Pam with a most engaging air of condescension, "this is a Salvation Army drum. I ought to have explained that, but I thought you knew."

(7) THE CHILD'S VERSION.—Children's renderings of the hymns they hear sung in church or elsewhere are frequently amusing, and often shed much light on the child's point of view. The little girl of a correspondent of mine had been to the Armistice Day service, which opened with hymn No. 807. The next day she was playing at holding a service by herself, and was heard singing lustily "For all the saints who from their neighbours rest." The state of absolute peace conjured up by this line will doubtless touch a sympathetic chord in many hearts.

(8) CONCERNING THE COLLECTION.—Most American collection stories seem to derive from the churches of the coloured citizens of the States, and two such have just arrived. "De choir will now sing 'I'm glad salvation's free,'" announced the Rev. Mr. Johnson, "while Deacon Ketcham passes de plate. De congregation will please 'member, while salvation am free, we hab to pay de choir foh singin' about it. All please contribute accordin' to yo' means, an' not yo' meanness." That is the first of the pair, and this is the second. "Am dere anybody in the congregation what wishes prayer for deir failin's?" asked the coloured minister. "Yussah," responded Brother Jones, "Ah's a spen'thrif", and Ah throws mab money 'round reckless like." "Ve'y well; we will join in prayer fo' Brother Jones,—jest atfeh de collection plate have been passed."

(9) THOSE OBSERVANT BAIRNS.—It is remarkable how observant children are. "What are you children playing?" asked mother one day. "We're playing church," replied Jackie. "How nice," said mother, "but worshippers shouldn't whisper in church!" "We know that, mother," said Jackie, "*but we're the choir!*"

THOS. CURRY.

Compiler of the "Little Choir Book" and organist of St. Paul's, Battersea. (From Polytechnic programmes.)

CHAPTER II.

Tales Which are not Stories

(1) A CERTAIN cleric, renowned for oratory rather than for musical knowledge, once urged me to take hymns at a quicker *tempo*. The bewildered congregation not unnaturally "skirmished in the rear." Finally, he exhorted them to sing "with the organ and choir; and reminded them that they were a 'semitone' behind."

(2) AT the Madrigal Society, the late Sir Frederick Bridge conducting, we sang a "Lullaby" *mf* instead of *pp*. He remarked to us confidently: "I couldn't recommend you gentlemen as night nurses."

(3) ON another occasion at the Madrigal Society, after performing one of his own compositions, with which, quite obviously, he was unfamiliar, Sir Frederick turned to us and said: "You know it better than I do."

(4) ONE Good Friday we were staying at the house of a Salvation Army woman, who enquired if we were coming in to tea. The negative, clearly expected, was given. To our question, "Are you going out?" the good woman replied: "Yes, we are doing the 'Crucifixion' this afternoon." "What, Stainer's 'Crucifixion?'" I asked in surprise. "No," was the reply; "Our Lord's Crucifixion!"

T. LESTER JONES.

(1) IN the village of Ellenbrook, Lancashire, there is an exceedingly small church, the verger of which tells a good yarn about a former clerk of the little parish. That worthy, one Friday, was seized with a cold, and he got so hoarse upon the Saturday that he could scarcely speak above a whisper. It was not possible for him to give the Responses at the Sunday service, so he made an arrangement with a brother (who was gifted with a sonorous voice) to sit beside him and prompt him *sotto voce* as to the Responses. An excellent beginning was made, the clerk whispering at the proper time "Amen" and the brother responding with a surprisingly vigorous "Amen." All went well till they got to the bottom of a page of the Prayer Book about which, by the way, the deputy knew nothing whatever, when his husky prompter

murmured in his ear: "Weet thee finger and turn over t'leaf." This was instantly followed by a loud exclamation: "Weet thee finger and turn over t'leaf." The hoarse comment of the agonised clerk was: "By the Lord, thou'lt get us both sacked;" and reproduced in stentorian tones came, "By the Lord, thou'lt get us both sacked."

(2) AT CHOIR PRACTICE.—I had given an old couple many tickets for coals and groceries, and visited them frequently. So when they reproached me because I had not seen them for nearly a week, I really felt that I might humorously insinuate that they hadn't been to see me for many months, if indeed ever. I meant, of course, in church. "Well, Sir, me and dad made up our minds as we'd go and see you, so we went. But," and she shook her head sorrowfully, "we didn't like it a bit. It was all newfangled since I were a girl and used to go. We couldn't see our books 'cause the gas weren't lighted down the church, and there weren't another soul there, bar us two. The singing weren't bad, only they kept on starting and stopping and doing it all over again. And there was a man beating time just as if 'twere a concert." It was the weekly choir practice!

(3) AN ORGAN BLOWER'S EPITAPH.—Epitaphs on organists are common enough, but epitaphs on organ blowers, commemorated as such are sufficiently rare. Mr. William Andrews, of the Royal Institution, Hull, has placed in print the following curiosity, copied from a churchyard in Wales:

Under this stone lies Meredith Morgan,
 Who blew the bellows of our church organ.
 Tobacco he hated, to smoke most unwilling,
 Yet never so pleased as when pipes he was filling.
 No reflection on him for rude speech could be cast,
 Though he gave our old organ many a blast.
 No puffer was he though a capital blower;
 He could blow double G, and now lies a note lower.

The note in the last line demands some penetration. Perhaps, also, it involves more than one interpretation. At any rate, in lying a note lower it is clear that the worthy Morgan lay *flat*.

(4) EPITAPH.—

Here lies a poor woman who always was tired:
 She lived in a house where help was not hired.
 Her last words on earth were "Dear friends I am going
 Where washing ain't done, nor sweeping, nor sewing;
 But everything there is exact to my wishes,

For where they don't eat there's no washing of dishes.
 I'll be where loud anthems will always be ringing,
 But, having no voice, I'll be clear of the singing.
 Don't mourn for me now, don't mourn for me never,
 I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever."

(5) THE CHILD'S WISH.—The Bishop of London once told a good story against himself at a Mansion House meeting. It was in illustration of his opinion that "the children of West London are as delightful as those of the East-end." A little girl was taken by her mother to church, and the preacher happened to be Dr. Winnington Ingram. In the middle of the discourse the child turned to her parent and said, "Mammy I am tired; can't the bishop go back to heaven now." That, remarked his lordship, may have been a left-handed compliment. But at any rate, no child in the East-end ever thought he had come from heaven. "They knew me too well," he added amid laughter.

(6) WHEN Mr. Berthold Tours was proof reader to Novello's and while he was engaged in correcting the proofs of Sir Julius Benedict's oratorio, "St. Peter," he was one day obliged to stay at home, laid up with influenza. During the morning the maid rushed to his room with a scared face and said, "Oh please, Sir, there's a man at the door. I'm sure he's mad, he says he must see you, that he's the devil, and that he wants the wind parts of St. Peter."—A. J. M., in *The Musical Herald*.

(7) AWKWARD FOR THE DEAN.—A good story is told of an unpleasant experience which befell Dr. Bradley on the day of the late Queen's first Jubilee in 1887. There had been talk of Anarchists, and the day previous to the great ceremony the Abbey was handed over to the care of the Chief Commissioner of Police—then Sir Charles Warren—as the Lord Chamberlain found his staff insufficient for the purpose. Early the next morning Sir Charles Warren entered the Abbey to see that all was well. Walking down the nave he came upon two stout constables dragging between them a small, fragile old gentleman in a skull cap. "This little ole man, sir," said one of them, "popped out of a door, and he can't give no account of where he come from." Then Sir Charles recognised the indignant Dean, and explanations ensued.

ALBERT ORTON, F.R.C.O.

Organist of St. Anne's Church, Soho.

(1) INTERROGATIONS.—In the days when I was a pupil assistant, it was my duty to play at the Sunday afternoon service. The church was a large one, with a fine organ; and the rector, who was a prebendary of

the Church of England, had the assistance of three curates. One of them came to me at the end of a service and enquired which stop I had been using in a certain hymn I had played: I told him I thought it was the harmonic flute. He said a lady in the congregation had asked him several times to enquire, as she liked it very much. (He said his rector had told him to go about the parish with a mark of interrogation always before him.) Shortly after this I heard he had obeyed his rector's advice to the letter, and had proposed to a charming lady; and, although his name was Courtenay, she said "Yes," and they lived happily ever afterwards.

(2) ONE of my most pleasant experiences as an organist was during the time of my organistship at Kinnoull Castle, Perthshire. The then Earl of Dudley had taken the castle during the shooting season, and King Edward VII. (then Prince of Wales) came to visit him. The Prince attended a morning service, and I had the honour of receiving his thanks afterwards (through the chaplain) for the service, which he had much enjoyed.

(3) AT the same church, whilst I was practising some of Bach's organ compositions, particularly the Toccata in F major, I noted an elderly gentleman (whom I knew by sight as a visitor to the town) sitting quite still during the whole time I was at the organ,—an hour-and-a-half. When I had finished, he said how much he enjoyed Bach's music and added "You seem to make the organ swear!" I begged him not to tell the rector. He was Edward Fitzgerald, the translator of "Omar Khayyam."

(4) I WAS cycling through Ingatestone in Essex one summer's day when I noticed a public house had a sign with "The Dotted Crotchet" on it. Having had thousands of dotted crotchets to do with in the course of my musical experience, I was interested to know why this house possessed such an unusual sign. The landlord told me that his predecessor was a bandsman, and had altered the sign from "The Spotted Dog" to "The Dotted Crotchet." I left him wondering which was the better,—to be a "spotted dog" or a "dotted crotchet." An answer to that came quite unexpectedly later on. I was cycling home in the winter time on a dull and rather wet afternoon along a muddy road in the country; and, as I was going uphill against the wind and nobody was in sight, I was tempted to ride a short distance on the path. I had not gone more than two or three hundred yards when I noticed a burly constable come out of a copse into the middle of the road and put his hand up. He said he had been stationed there, as complaints had been made of people riding on the path; and so I had to appear before the local magistrate and was

duly fined. A young Belgian friend wittily remarked I had been "copped by a copper in a copse." I felt like a "spotted dog!"

R. W. BROWNE.

(1) SCENE: A Swiss village on a Saturday evening.

The chaplain of the English church approached the latest arrival with the question: "Do you play the harmonium?" "A little," was the reply. "Will you be kind enough to play to-morrow? We will choose very simple chants and hymns." The stranger got through the simple chants and hymns successfully, and closed the service with a splendid voluntary. "May we have your name," asked the astonished chaplain. "Oh! my name is John Stainer. I play at St. Paul's Cathedral."

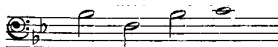
(2) THE rector was complaining that the organ accompaniment was too loud. "But," said the organist, "I have only one stop out on the swell." "Then play with no stops out!"

(3) ON the choir list, hymn 35 had a smudge after the last figure. "Hymn 350," gave out the confirmed bachelor vicar who had just become engaged. The organ remained silent. "Hymn 350" was again given out, but the cleric blushed when he turned to it and saw that it was "The voice that breathed o'er Eden" and that the congregation wore a genial smile.

HENRY RIDING, F.R.C.O.
Organist of Chigwell Church.

(1) A HAPPY THOUGHT.—At a service at St. Catherine's, Tranmore, during the winter of 1901, Stainer's Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in B flat were on the service list. During the singing of the Gloria to the Magnificat something went wrong with the blowing apparatus. The choir went on singing unaccompanied until they reached the Amen on the chord of G flat. There should follow a fugato interlude on the organ leading to the final cadence in B flat. The organist reduced it to a solo vocal phrase thus:—

world with - out end



to which the choir responded



thus bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion.

FRANK DIBB, MUS.B., F.R.C.O.

Late organist, Christ Church, Bootle, Liverpool.

THE following I learnt from Dr. G. M. Garrett, whose pupil I was from 1886 to 1891:

(1) GARRETT was a pupil of S. S. Wesley when he was at Winchester, and had a fund of stories concerning that old master, who was such a magnificent extempore player, exponent of Bach's fugues, and writer of anthems; and withal such an appreciator of humour and with a caustic wit of his own. (Most of these qualities Garrett inherited.) Wesley, who was noted for his brevity, replying to a letter enclosing an unknown composer's MS. for his opinion: "Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of the MS. of your composition, and 'much like it.'—Yours truly, S. S. Wesley." Wesley was pestered to death by budding composers for appreciation of their efforts.

(2) WESLEY, replying to a letter from a parson asking his assistance towards raising funds to provide the said parson's church with an organ: "Dear Sir,—I sympathise extremely with the object you have in view, and I have very great pleasure in subscribing [here the page had to be turned over] myself, Yours truly, S. S. W." There is no record of the parson's expression of joy at the bottom of the page or of his rude awakening on turning over.

(3) GARRETT, during the anthem (probably a Wesley remark) while the choir are singing "Noses have they and smell not." "Just so [addressing the choir] you keep yours to sing through."

(4) DR. MANN had the greatest appreciation of Garrett's genius as an organist, &c., and one day in my presence urged him to come and give a recital at "King's." Garrett replied in his gruffest way: "Let every cock crow on his own dunghill!"

(5) DR. MANN, who presided at "King's" organ, with its two angels on the top of the organ case, was much admired by Garrett. Enter to Garrett one of his pupils full of Mann's playing of the service: "Lord, what is Mann that thou hast such respect for him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels."

(6) GARRETT (who cared for no man) to the Dean (of St. John's) on a hot summer night, when he and other Dons had crowded into the organ loft to see (a lesson in itself) as well as to hear Garrett play (in his shirt sleeves). The Dean: "Splendid; you are a wonderful player." Garrett: "Well, I might be if I didn't have so many old men crowding up here to keep the fresh air out."

(7) I ALWAYS tried, as a good pupil should, to make advances to my master, whom I admired and respected; but found it difficult, being too diffident and shy myself to break through the adamant barrier of his reserve. He was a hard master, and one of the old martinet school of teachers; but I was very persevering and I had just begun to make what I thought was considerable headway both in my studies and his good graces. Leaving chapel on a hot summer eve, when I had played part of the service, during which time Garrett reviled his lot as a teacher and everlasting toiler (as he was), I remarked that it was a relief to be outside again. He replied: "To you perhaps to idle away your time." I said: "No, I am going to study Cherubini, but I hope *your* day's work is over now." "Good God, Sir," he exclaimed, "I have three or four hours' teaching to do yet!" I replied sympathetically: "Well, I am sorry, Sir, perhaps you enjoy teaching after all." To my astonishment, he replied: "Well, perhaps I do; but, thank God, they're not all such fools as you." I shall never forget this; nor bow, a few months later, when his final illness began to develop, he sent for me (I held a post away) to deputise for him at St. John's and the University Church. At heart, he was a most kindly and sympathetic man, but he wrapped it up in his pungent wit, and would say a caustic thing at anyone's expense. I have never heard his equal as an extempore player on any theme; and the calm and repose with which he played a big organ and the ease and quiet with which he pedalled the most complicated Bach passages were a revelation.

(8) STANFORD (representing the new element and German school) and Garrett (Old English school, Macfarren's harmony, but Cherubini's counterpoint) were at daggers drawn. On one occasion Garrett, correcting a Trinity student's efforts in harmony, found a passage annotated and corrected. He asked who had done that, and the student said Professor Stanford. Garrett seized a pen and red ink and drew parallel lines exposing the fifths, and underneath wrote something like this: "Bravo! Professor. Consecutive fifths. Congratulations. Yours, Garrett." Shortly afterwards they met, and Stanford, who was annoyed, wound up by saying (for he could be caustic too): "But what could you expect from a man with a common name like Garrett, which I

understand means an attic or a cheap common upper story." Garrett briefly replied: "Better have a common name than a common mind like yours, Stanford."

(9) IN my turn I was able to amuse Garrett with two bits of humour which I came across in my path up North. I had a burly Yorkshireman in my choir who sang a lusty bass. He was a tinman, and full of wit about the words of the psalms. On the day of the annual local "fair" in October (in the words of Shakespeare, "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," &c.) a mighty wind and rain arose. My friend, the tinman, had just completed the erection of a big tent, and with much labour had decorated the same "within and without" with specimens of his ware. "Fierce raged the tempest," and an unusually hefty gust tore the tent from its moorings and deposited it with all his goods upon the mighty tinman. He did not swear like a Yorkshireman would be expected to do, but stood philosophically smiling among the wreckage, and pointing to the *débris* started to chant the psalm we had sung the previous Sunday to the IVth Tone, "The lot is fallen upon me in a *fair ground* : Yea I have a goodly heritage." When I said it would take some time to collect the frying pans, &c., to display them on the re-erected tent, he smilingly continued his "plain" and plaintive "song" and pointed to the crowd:

"And in the evening they will return
Grin like a dog, and run a-bow-wow-wow't the city."

I needn't add that it was the IVth Tone with the very long ending.

(10) MYSELF walking from the organ with painful steps and slow, suffering from lumbago. Choir boy: "What's the matter, Sir?" "Only lumbago." "My word! it won't half give you 'gip' when you play them physical jerks with your feet to-night!"

(11) MAN in the street with admiration: "I seed your name in the paper this morning, Sir. I know'd you was a Mus.Bac., but blow me if I know'd you was one of them Cantabs too!"

(12) REGARDING this degree, a local paper, reporting an oratorio which I had conducted, stated that "it was under the able conductorship of Mr. Andrews and Miss Baker." My wife did not like this way of coupling Mus.Bac. with my name!

(13) THE same paper later on printed an eulogy on the fine singing by my male alto of "He was disposed." He probably would not have sung half so well if he had been indisposed.

(14) I HAD an amateur orchestra once when rehearsing the "Woman of Samaria." The local doctor gave forth a somewhat uncertain sound upon the 'cello. When we rehearsed the tenor solo, which is in five sharps, he was dreadfully at sea. I stopped and said: "Doctor, you're playing it in two flats." "Well, so it is," was the reply. "Oh no," I said, "it's in five sharps." "Well," said the doctor, "what about it? Let's rip it out again; sharps don't make any difference to me!" And they didn't.

(15) I WAS teaching my probationers "time." After explaining the use of bars and the various number of counts in a bar, I asked a few questions. "What do you mean by two in a bar?" I asked a dull boy whose father kept an inn. He thought a long time, and then said brightly: "I heard father say one day there were two in the bar and three in the smoke room."

H. COMPIGNE ANDREWS, MUS.B.

(1) SOME years ago, when I was organist of St. Peter's Church, Thanet, I was practising the organ and heard a loud knock on the vestry door. When I opened the door I was confronted by an itinerant musician (?) holding in his hand a weather-beaten clarinet. He had the assurance to ask me to "stop playing the organ, as his party outside couldn't hear themselves!" The vicar, fortunately, was not present, as he might not have approved of the language the clarinettist received in reply.

E. A. CRUSHA, F.R.C.O.
Organist, Edmonton Parish Church.

(1) A NEW preacher had honoured the church with his presence, and was holding forth in a most eloquent manner. Unfortunately, the blower (an old man) suffered from asthma and was rather noisily disturbing things. The organist wrote a short note and sent it—by a new choirboy—to the poor old fellow. To his horror, the boy (under the mistaken impression that it was for the preacher) marched up to the pulpit and presented the note to the preacher, who read the following: "For heaven's sake, stop; the people haven't come here to hear your noise!"

ALEC ROWLEY, A.R.A.M., F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.
Master of the Music, St. Alban's, Teddington.

(1) MANY years ago, it was the writer's duty to play a large organ which was blown by the united efforts of two old men operating a

single handle. The senior, who was the foreman, was eighty years old, and his assistant about seventy-two. One day, the foreman complained of his junior thus: "I think, Sir, 'tis time I got better help; that there young feller don't lift up!" Later on, the junior came with his grievance. He said: "It's quite time, Sir, that the old 'un gave up. 'E 'angs on so 'eavy that I have to lift 'im and the 'andle, too!"

(2) A VISITOR to a country church was not satisfied with the choral service, so he relieved his feelings by inscribing the following in the visitor's book:—

If good King David only could
To this old church repair,
And hear the way they sing his Psalms
Good heavens! how he'd swear!

(3) SOME years ago the Corporation of Bournemouth were considering a proposal to build a three-manual organ in the Winter Gardens. A certain worthy alderman rose and said: Mr. Mayor, I don't see what we want with a three-manual organ in the Winter Gardens. I never saw an organ yet that couldn't be worked by one man and a boy!"

E. BURRITT LANE, MUS.B.
Late Organist, Steyning Parish Church.

(1) CATS AND ORGANS.—I remember reading years ago, a story of the late E. J. Hopkins, who was trying an organ in Germany, when suddenly a cat made her appearance "Vier puss" (4ft.) said Hopkins immediately to the regular organist who stood at his side. Talking of cats reminds me of a recent experience of my own. It is my practice to sit with the choir during the sermon. On the occasion in question, I was returning hastily to the organ stool, when I alarmed a cat crouched on the floor. She hastily ran over the pedal-board, causing a series of dispirited sounds, which no doubt the congregation ascribed to my clumsiness. A twentieth century Scarlatti; but no fugue!

(2) THE Psalms are unique, it goes without saying, and not least in their applicability to many occurrences in ordinary life. Just before the war broke out, the militant suffragettes had had a particularly active week, and Saturday's paper contained accounts of many outrages in churches. The following Sunday evening, Psalm LXXIV came in its ordinary course, and herein occur the verses "But now they break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers. They have set fire