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ASPECTS OF THE THEORY AND
PRACTICE OF CHORAL TRAINING
IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

Just beyond... were the new school buildings, expensive pink brick, and gravelled playground inside iron railings, all very imposing, and mixing the suggestion of a chapel and a prison. Standard Five girls were having a singing lesson, just finishing the la-me-doh-la exercises and beginning a 'sweet children's song'. Anything more unlike song, spontaneous song, would be impossible to imagine: a strange bawling yell followed the outlines of a tune. It was not like savages: savages have subtle rhythms. It was not like animals: animals mean something when they yell. It was like nothing on earth, and it was called singing¹.

As die sangervarings wat die kind in die skool opdoen... nie daartoe meewerk om sang 'n natuurlike funksie in die lewe van die kind te laat word nie, en as dit nie vir hom ekspressiewe betekenis het nie - nie besieling, inlewing, oorgawe, genot, estetiese bevrediging, en so meer inhou nie - dan het die sangonderwys sy mees primêre doelstelling gemis. Alhoewel hierdie beginsel op alle musiekonderwys van toepassing behoort te wees, leen sang hom tog besonderlik tot die bereiking van hierdie doel, eerstens omdat dit aan teks gebonde is, en tweedens omdat ons in skoolmusiek byna uitsluitlik een of ander vorm van groepsang toepas².

There are six chapters in this thesis, namely:

- I. Recruitment.
- II. Rehearsing.
- III. Vocal Training: Posture and Breathing.
- IV. Designing a Programme.
- V. Staging a Concert.
- VI. The Making of Choral Arrangements for School Choirs.

Firstly, the matter of constituting a choir is discussed. This involves auditioning, with its attendant problems of nervousness and self-consciousness on the part of the children, and assessment on that of the trainer. In the final

1. E.G. Biaggini, The Reading and Writing of English, Hutchinson, 1936, page 178, quoting from Lady Chatterley's Lover by D.H. Lawrence.

2. Philip McLachlan, Klasonderrig in Musiek, Nasou, undated, page 28.

analysis, after enthusiastically advertising the rewards to be gained from choral singing, and after trying to create an environment which is seen to be conducive to this philosophy, the trainer has to make the best of the willing forces available.

Rehearsals are probably more important than performances, since the time devoted to preparation is much longer. Moreover, the educational value of carefully preparing the music and of becoming acquainted with the techniques of singing and with the aesthetic niceties of style and interpretation should by no means be underestimated. The choir and trainer get to know not only the music but also each other, and the trainer has to use his skills wisely in developing the human and musical resources available to him, in order to realize their greatest potential.

This training naturally involves the whole range of vocal techniques, but only two are dealt with in some detail, namely posture and breathing, two complementary and indispensable aspects of choral technique for the procuring of a good choral product. The discussion probes various ideas put forward by well-informed writers and also arrived at empirically concerning these interrelated topics, with a view to, firstly, understanding their importance and, secondly, to finding analogical ways of presenting these concepts and mechanisms to singers, analogies which suggest natural and easily-obtainable methods of using the body to best advantage.

The importance of designing a well-balanced, aesthetically pleasing programme is then considered briefly.

The culmination of the process of recruitment, of the

the development of skill, and of learning repertoire, is the concert, whatever form this may take. Various practical matters related to the giving of a successful performance are dealt with, based empirically on personal experience and observation - membership of the Rhodes University Chamber Choir being a valuable training ground - and tempered by the ideas of other choir trainers.

Since the choir-master generally has to work with a group of children that is selected yet less than ideal from a choral point of view, it seems a wise policy for him to make his own arrangements of folksongs and similar music, created specifically for the resources he has available. Though there is a large quantity of choral music published, from which he can select his programmes, in practice he often finds that this music is unsuitable for his particular singers. The use of folksongs is so well sanctioned and the challenges that this type of music-making presents are so rewarding, that the practice can be highly recommended. Suggestions as to how he may set to work are given, again based on empirical experience as well as on theoretical study. In fact, it is surprising that choir trainers so seldom pursue this very useful procedure, since an enhanced choral product is so much more likely to be the result. The second part of this chapter consists of a set of simple though effective arrangements. Sometimes two versions of the same song are presented, each one arranged for a different group of singers. In each case, the way in which the arrangement was worked out is discussed, together with suggestions for its performance. Every arrangement was created for a specific choir and has been tried out in actual performance, which makes each commentary authoritative.

RECRUITMENT

In order to have a school choir it is necessary to recruit its members, a process which is governed by many factors. In high schools there is often no choral tradition and the children form an ad hoc choir for the end-of-year speech-day ceremony. Quite a few children do in fact enjoy singing in such a choir, but the pupils participate far more because it is expected of them than because they value the activity. The final result is passable, but many singers are miscast and the boys in particular tend to sing the melody line rather than the notes assigned to them. At the other extreme is the situation in which a choir is firmly established in the school and has the support of the headmaster and staff, with choir members who are willing to participate enthusiastically. These examples illustrate two basic themes which can have many variations in practice. In a large school there may be more than one choir and a large 'oratorio' choir may even be formed. On the other hand, the trainer may prefer working with a smaller group of selected children. The type of choral organization in a school will partly depend on the interest of the children and partly on the enthusiasm and competence of the trainer. The reason for forming any choir should always be essentially a belief in the educational value it has for the singers and this should override other considerations; but whilst most children will benefit from singing in a choir, they should never be forced to do so against their wills.

One must never forget that a school choir is not a static organization which remains constant in both interest and personnel. This is part of the enjoyable though demanding

challenge that has constantly to be met by the choir trainer. Every year the choir has to be reconstituted because children have left the school or no longer wish to sing. Though a core remains, a new intake has to be carefully grafted in. The instructor's skill as an arranger can help to compensate for the loss of good voices and the fluctuating strength of each voice part.

Choral singing is a time-consuming activity and needs a measure of dedication in those who take part. There are inherent rewards built into singing in a choir, especially when it is organized by someone who has insight into the children's needs and interests. However, the trainer is usually fortunate if he needs no other attraction to draw and retain his choir members. Therefore, in order to recruit effectively when forming or reconstituting a choir, it is necessary to offer appreciable incentives to the children. These may occasionally take the form of treats such as outings, feasts and privileges, but, whilst one should be reasonably generous with any income from concerts, gifts should preferably be earned rather than automatically expected. If, however, a reward like an outing has the added advantage of the choir and its trainer getting to know each other better, then it can be well worth the effort. Every really successful choir is undoubtedly the product of this interaction between choir members and conductor. The character and standard of the singing both benefit when the choir is welded into a family-like unit and this is helped along by such activities. Moreover, interest is vitally stimulated when the children know that their practising has as its objective the giving of a concert. The strongest motivation of all is provided by a choir tour.

Primary-school children are likely to be somewhat more willing than older ones to experience a new activity, particularly if their support and energy are directed towards the giving of at least one performance. They are not unhappy about performing, especially if they are extroverts. They bring much enthusiasm to practices if these are lively and if the pieces are neither over-practised nor too difficult and are related to their interest levels. The trainer who has psychological insight into how and why they respond best, a sense of humour enabling him genuinely and with affection to laugh with and never at the children, and a warm, sympathetic personality will naturally gain their co-operation. If the choir members like the trainer and also the music to which he introduces them, then recruitment will be so much easier.

Adolescents are much more self-conscious about singing in public, especially in front of their fellows, though a few are extrovert enough or have sufficient confidence, liking for the trainer, or love for music, to overcome this reticence. Part of the difficulty is the fact that no one wants to be made to look foolish or to lose face. In an old but interesting book entitled Music in Boyhood¹, Thomas Wood amusingly describes how he persuaded the members of the first teams in his school to participate in musical activities, after which these magically acquired an acceptable status and recruitment was no longer any problem.

Much also depends on the local environment. Children attending private schools tend to look with less suspicion on musical activities than those who go to non-fee-paying ones. Girls are generally more interested in cultural affairs than

1. Thomas Wood, Music in Boyhood, Oxford, 1925, page 21.

boys. In fact, high-school boys are much more likely to be interested and willing to take part in wind-band groups than in singing, but that type of experience may well eventually lead to the creation of a receptive environment for choral singing. Boys attending mixed-sex schools are keener to sing in a school choir than those at a boys' school. Rural schools are more likely to have pupils who are willing to accept the teacher's authority than city schools, particularly those situated in lower-class areas. English-speaking children tend as a group to suffer from cultural apathy related to strong peer-sanctioned attitudes, whereas Afrikaans pupils, though they are not immune from this disease, appear to have a much greater resistance to such pressure. The provincial Youth Choirs invariably have a predominance of Afrikaans-speaking singers, although membership is open to all musically-competent white scholars. Thus, every situation has to be analyzed on its own merits. The trainer's skill in dealing with the position in which he finds himself, and in creating a favourable environment, is of great importance.

Adolescents are inclined to be much more critical of adults than younger children, and they sometimes feel that they can do much better themselves. This stems partly from feelings of insecurity marked by apparent aggression, especially in boys. Very often they are only interested in performing in group structures which are clearly acceptable to their peers, characterized by the use of the guitar, the singing of a modern version version of folk music, and the use of an unsupported vocal style. Fortunately not all teenagers have this attitude, but it is definitely a prevalent one. Moreover, young people tend to be severely critical of apparent toadying by their

fellows: being pleasantly enthusiastic about singing in a school choir, which is usually considered to be a teacher-dominated organization, is taken as evidence of trying to get into the teacher's good favour. Since worthwhile choir work of necessity requires the whole-hearted, enthusiastic and loyal support of everyone involved, it may be wise to delegate much of the responsibility for the running of the choir to suitable, elected members. This would make it an acceptable peer-structured group under the trainer's guidance rather than a purely teacher-structured one, and recruitment would be easier and more appealing as a result. Nevertheless, though there are decided advantages in spreading responsibility and in making the choir a joint endeavour, the teacher must remain tactfully, sympathetically, yet firmly the final authority in important matters such as the choice of music to be sung and general good taste. There can and should naturally be consultation, benevolently directed by a mature trainer. Wayne R. Jipson² makes the following statement in this regard:

To achieve musical results requires a totally effective pulling together and interaction between teacher and members of the class... For a student to really learn and assert himself musically, he must feel individually needed and wanted because of his value to the results achievable by that class... The director and students, relying on each other's talents and development, make music together... The teacher must direct the learning process without becoming a real dictator. The receptiveness the students have for the teacher's ideas is often in direct ratio to the receptiveness he displays for theirs... Materials to be included in the curriculum would seem to be the domain of the teacher, but it would be wise for him to listen to the suggestions the students might have... If the teacher is such a purist that he discounts the values and attitudes of the child, he will alienate more pupils than he will communicate with.

Children can only experience the joy of choral singing by actually participating. They may be more prepared to join a

2. Wayne R. Jipson, The High School Vocal Music Program, Parker, 1972, pages 26-27.

choir if the trainer starts with songs they already enjoy singing or being associated with - which will in all probability be of little aesthetic value and be based on commercial hit parades and the like. This may help to get the choir launched, as long as good taste is not abandoned entirely.

It is also extremely important for adolescents to be able to accept the leadership of the trainer without fear of ridicule. He must project an acceptable image. Musical people sometimes exhibit eccentricities of behaviour and children are awkward about, indeed dare not associate themselves with, anyone considered in any way unusual. However, if they are themselves keen on music, nothing their peers think will matter much to them, though they have to be really strong-willed for it not to matter at all. The trainer's personality is of vital importance in the matter of recruitment. The ideal trainer is one who has his feet firmly and maturely on the ground, and yet has skill, insight and sensitivity as well - a rather unusual combination to say the least.

The procedures outlined by Dallas Draper³ concerning auditioning for the choir seem to be very idealistic and in the South African context certainly only possible with such specialized choirs as the Drakensberg Boys' Choir and the various provincial Youth Choirs. According to Draper, the audition should provide the director with information concerning the range, vocal quality, evenness of vibrato, basic musicianship and sight-reading ability of the individual singer, testing for this last point being most likely to produce negative results in South African schools.

3. Dallas Draper, 'Choral Auditions' in Music Education in Action, edited by Archie N. Jones, Allyn & Bacon, 1960, pages 170 and 172.

Monsour and Perry⁴ prefer group testing, though they think that such testing should be introduced only when the pupils feel secure in the class. Their suggestions are intended for general music classes, but are nevertheless of interest to the choir trainer. The teacher must ensure that the children understand the purpose of having their voices tested, and he should have the entire class sing the songs being used for the tests. He should organize the activity efficiently and if necessary sing along with anyone who is feeling awkward. This is an enlightened approach, since one should wish to encourage rather than destroy any confidence the singers have. The authors give a seven-point method for group testing, which is in essence having the class divide into rows or smaller groups and sing a song in various keys which reveal the children's individual ranges as the teacher moves amongst them. They feel, however, that individual testing is important when auditioning for the choir. Jipson⁵ gives similar advice, though he is more concerned with discovering the vocal characteristics of the boys he is testing.

Priestley and Grayson⁶ give two possible ways a school choir can be recruited: either a compulsory voice test is held for new pupils and those with the best voices become choir members regardless of their personal choice in the matter; or volunteers are called for and everyone who responds is automatically accepted. Neither method can be recommended. However, these authors feel that

a more satisfactory plan is for the teacher in charge of the choir to make careful observation over a period of weeks, noting the pupils of outstanding enthusiasm,

4. Sally Monsour and Margaret Perry, A Junior High School Music Handbook, Prentice-Hall, 1970, page 22.

5. Jipson, op.cit., pages 20-21.

6. Edmund Priestley and J.H.Grayson, A Music Guide for Schools, Nelson, 1964, page 222.

of good reading ability, and of good 'blending voice', and to gather the number he wants from those who possess all three qualifications to the greatest degree.

They stress that pupils who are chosen should be informed in such a way that they feel they have been "awarded an honour".

Under the heading Tryouts, Frances Andrews⁷ introduces the subject as follows:

The majority of non-professional singers experience a certain degree of fright, or at least nervousness, before and during voice tryouts. This is intensified in the case of adolescents, who are in a highly sensitive stage of development. The beginning of the voice tryout, therefore, should find the teacher putting the pupil at ease, working to help him show his voice to its best advantage, finding what he can do vocally, and what he has difficulty in doing well, and capitalizing on the strengths of the voice being tested.

Andrews stresses that the singing material used by the pupil should be familiar so that he is not unduly nervous, and makes the point that "there is a difference between testing a voice and testing reading ability."

According to Bessie Swanson⁸, membership of the choir in the upper primary school should be selective as well as elective, and the "voices selected should be clear and flexible with a reasonably wide range." She likewise suggests that children can be auditioned either individually or in small groups, and agrees with other authorities in making use of a well-known song sung in different keys to reveal the vocal ranges of the children. Rainbow⁹ feels that the choir should not be a "tiny handpicked affair which exists only to perform on special occasions...., but one which admits as many as can pass a few simple vocal and aural tests", since he is convinced of the value of such an activity to these children.

7. Frances M. Andrews, Junior High School General Music, Prentice-Hall, 1971, page 44.

8. Bessie R. Swanson, Music in the Education of Children, Wadsworth, 1969, pages 199-200. / page 17.

9. Bernarr Rainbow, Music in the Classroom, Heinemann, 1964,

Brocklehurst¹⁰, in writing about the continuity that there should be between primary and secondary musical education, suggests that information concerning each child's musical development should be obtained from his primary school, and that if this were not available the new high-school children could complete a questionnaire concerning their sight-reading ability and previous experience in singing, and be given some test of musical ability such as Dr. Wing's Tests of Musical Intelligence¹¹. He feels that such records "can be most valuable, for instance, in selecting members of the school choir."

In the chapter on 'Testing Voices' from Choral Teaching at the Junior High School Level, Genevieve Rorke¹² briefly outlines the procedures for testing both girls' and boys' voices, and provides useful summaries of the qualities and ranges to be found in the high school. She uses scale passages for testing everyone, and in the case of boys she suggests first identifying those who give a visual impression of possessing a changed voice.

The choir trainer in South African schools usually has simply to accept the voices he gets, provided that no child auditions who is clearly unsuitable. Quite often even singers with small voices are admitted in order to reinforce a vocal part. Obviously, everyone allowed to join the choir must "possess a good ear"¹³ and be able sooner or later to sing their part accurately.

10. J. Brian Brocklehurst, Music in Schools, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, page 9.

11. I have used Dr. Arnold Dentley's recorded tests (Measures of Musical Abilities, Harrap Audio-Visual Aids, 1966) in an attempt to detect musical ability but found them more of academic interest than of really much practical use.

12. Genevieve A. Rorke, reprinted in Music Education in Action, op. cit., pages 130-133.

13. Dallas Draper, *ibid.*, page 170.

Usually the trainer of the school choir will be involved with class music teaching, or be closely associated with those who are, particularly in the primary school. Occasionally an enterprising teacher whose subject is not music forms a worthwhile choir, but this is not a common occurrence. Thus, the trainer will be able to classify the singers as part of his normal teaching task, and he will have some idea of the vocal characteristics and personality qualities of most of the children who show an interest in choral singing before he forms or reconstitutes the choir. It is not necessary for him to have a very refined analysis of each voice at this initial stage.

In the high school one may well find that the more senior classes do not have general music lessons, and since these are the very children who will be the most useful singers, it will be necessary to hold auditions. This need not be a very elaborate procedure. The children will at least be fairly keen to begin singing and the sooner they are tentatively shuffled into their voice parts the better. Wisest is to have one or two pieces ready - whose ranges and notes are undemanding and whose interest level is proven - and to have everyone begin singing as soon as possible. Obviously vocal ranges and quality must first be tested so that sopranos, mezzo sopranos, altos and, in high schools, upper and lower baritones can be identified. Most boys with untrained broken voices should be treated in this way, since one is fortunate if true tenors and basses are available. When boys with more settled, mature voices do occur, the other singers can be very usefully grouped around them.

Voices can be tested individually in private, which is time consuming but more accurate, or in small groups. Preferably, all the singers can sing something well-known and the

trainer moves amongst the ranks in order to judge ranges, intonation and above all tone quality - the last being very important since it allows each voice part to be balanced as, for example, lighter or darker voices are placed together in like groups to reinforce these characteristics.

Naturally, the trainer should have "a good mental concept as well as a tonal picture of what he expects from the group as far as basic color is concerned"¹⁴, but it would be foolish to eliminate a musical singer whose vocal characteristics did not match this concept. The trainer in the South African context needs the skill to make something worthwhile from the very materials he finds available, even if they are not ideal. His mental concept is, in fact, an evolving one.

14. Dallas Draper, op. cit., page 170.

REHEARSING

Ideally, the basic techniques of singing, such as correct posture, breathing, tone production and diction, can and should be taught to all children in the general music classes. Other useful areas covered in such lessons are sight-reading, involving both rhythm and pitch perception, as well as aural training which includes the development of a musical memory. Obviously, if there are no such classes, the choir trainer has to give more attention to these skills, which become more refined as the choir is trained.

In principle, all technique should be dealt with as an extension of the actual singing of songs, rather than in isolation, especially in the initial stages of establishing and building up a choral tradition in a school. Once the choir members are enthusiastic and prepared to work for obtainable goals, it is easier and more profitable to spend more time on actual vocal technique. However, it must never be forgotten that the main objective is to sing the chosen songs, and technique should be concerned almost entirely with singing them as well as possible. The most important area of choral teaching - if teaching is the correct term to use here - is that concerned with the growing awareness by the children of aesthetic values and the related enjoyment which this development brings. If a high standard is achieved here, the other skills will be developed painlessly and effectively.

The first consideration is to decide where to rehearse. If the school has a music department, then a big enough room in this complex can be set aside for choir work. In most cases, however, the school hall will be the most suitable venue,

though a classroom where there is a piano can also be used. Lawrence¹ reminds us that "trying to rehearse a large choir in inadequate surroundings is painful not only for the conductor but also for every member of the choir."

From an acoustical point of view, the rehearsal room will either enhance or disturb the music making. A room with too much resonance is likely to be unbeneficial. Jipson² describes how such a room can be improved by means of curtaining and the like. He talks of the room not being too subjective, "an honest room that doesn't lie to the music makers." More problematic is the room with sound-proofing built into it, since the singers tend to sound and feel isolated from one another in such a locality. However, an acoustically dead room need not be an insuperable problem, provided that both the children and the trainer have opportunities occasionally to practise in a venue where there is more resonance. This invariably becomes a stimulating and exciting experience since suddenly everything seems to come alive and sound impressive. Such a change to a new environment may initially cause the singers to feel insecure, but is good training for those occasions when the choir performs in a strange venue. Indeed, moving from a reserved to a brighter room may be a useful psychological device for the trainer to keep in reserve for duller moments, though it should not be overdone. Jipson³ writes:

Learning pitches and rhythms can be achieved in any room, but an experience in sound calls for more care... It is well worth the couple of minutes it takes to get the students into the auditorium in order to provide enough space for a 'sound experience'.

As far as the placing of the piano is concerned, the best

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1. Ian Lawrence, Music and the Teacher, Pitman, 1975, page 30.
 2. Wayne R. Jipson, The High School Vocal Music Program, Parker, 1972, pages 129-133.
 3. Ibid., page 136.

position is one where the singers are seated on a raised area behind it. This is the ideal position for the trainer who plays his own accompaniments and who has learnt to control the choir from the keyboard. When one is performing a programme of mostly a cappella music, it is better to place the piano to one side, but when one is rehearsing it is necessary to control the learning process efficiently and it is useful to have the keyboard readily available. Fiske and Dobbs⁴ point out that it may be necessary to learn to play standing up, and the prevailing circumstances will have to be taken into account. Certainly, wherever it is placed, the piano should not prevent the trainer from being able to move freely amongst the singers.

Jipson⁵ respects the piano's role as accompanying instrument and also its use as an aid in demonstrating pitches and rhythms. However, he does not consider it "an exemplary model for styles of production due to its percussive characteristics." He writes:

Some instructors lean so heavily on the characteristics of the instrument that the flaws of the vocal class are lost. The choirs become excessively percussive and incapable of good legato work. Notes begin to decay as soon as they are struck. The word 'struck' really has no place in the vocal efforts of young singers.

McLachlan⁶ also refers to this matter:

Dit is opvoedkundig swak as kinders bloot saam met die klavier die melodie oor en oor sing totdat hulle dit ken. Die sterk perkussiewe toon van die klavier oorheers so volkome dat die kinders dit slaafs naboots sonder die leiding (ondersteuning) van die instrument moet sing, is die intonasie meestal baie onbetroubaar. Die perkussiewe klaviertoon word ook onbewustelik deur die jong sangers nageboots en die mooi legatolyn wat goeie sang kenmerk, word die sangers van die begin af ontnem.

Remembering the prevalence of this type of teaching, one can

4. Roger Fiske and J.P.B.Dobbs, The Oxford School Music Books, Teacher's Manual, Junior, Oxford, 1956, page 13.

5. Jipson, op. cit., pages 133-134.

6. Philip McLachlan, Klasonderrig in Musiek, Nasou, undated, page 15.

understand the need for such warnings. However, much will depend on the way in which the piano is played and used. If the notes are hammered out when the music is being learnt, there is a strong possibility that the singers will imitate the sound; on the other hand, a skilful pianist is able to disguise the innate percussiveness of the instrument and produce a cantabile legato line.

If one is teaching songs with accompaniments and is making use of an accompanist rather than playing them oneself, it is wise, as Ehret⁷ suggests, to have a rehearsal with him in order to establish his acquaintance with and competence in performing the music, and to discuss such matters as the tempi of the songs. This avoids wasting time during the choral practice. He also feels that the piano should⁸:

be played softly;
 not be played percussively;
 use only occasional chords marking strong beats and harmonic changes, rather than the complete part;
 support female parts being sung by playing the male parts, or the converse;
 sometimes play notes in a different octave from that being sung.

All this naturally presupposes that a reasonably skilful pianist is available.

Staton⁹ gives a list of some of the qualities of the ideal accompanist. He should:

be endowed with good brain, ears, eyes, fingers and humour;
 be able to comply with the conductor's ideas and intentions quickly;
 have some knowledge of harmony;
 have a sense of blend, balance, and tone colour;

7. Walter Ehret, The Choral Conductor's Handbook, Augener, 1959, page 7.

8. *Ibid.*, page 12.

9. J. Frederic Staton, Sweet Singing in the Choir, Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1942, page 5.

be able to play in several parts from a vocal score;
 be able to incorporate the melody of a song into the
 accompaniment;
 possess a strong sense of rhythm and a perception of
 the suitability of a tempo;
 possess some idea of what the voices can accomplish,
 and have "a sense of orchestral colour";
 have "an alert and resourceful mind, capable of dealing
 with all kinds of emergencies".

Staton makes the wry comment that one will rarely find all these qualities in the average school accompanist. Certainly, the pianist should "ever bear in mind that his or her work is to support and sustain the singing, not to dominate it."¹⁰

Fiske and Dobbs¹¹ warn that "many teachers are so bothered by their attempts to reproduce the accompaniment that they do not notice whether the children are singing the tune correctly or not, and the subtleties of intonation and rhythm have no chance of being corrected."

It is preferable to use a combination of both the piano and the voice when training the choir. One is very fortunate indeed when neither means of support is needed very much and the children can sight-sing their music accurately. The piano can be very useful in teaching the notes to a voice part or to reinforce the learning of a more difficult section. Jipson¹² makes the valid point that "if you want to strengthen a part and do it with your voice, you lose the sound of the class", and suggests the use of a second piano when working on accompanied songs, enabling one to hear the sounds produced by the singers - an interesting if rather extravagant idea. Nevertheless, there must of necessity come the time when the piano is dispensed with, unless the song has a piano accompaniment.

10. Edmund Priestley & J.H. Grayson, A Music Guide for Schools, Nelson, 1964, page 22.

11. Fiske & Dobbs, op. cit., page 13.

12. Jipson, op. cit., page 133. Strangely enough, one quite often finds children who respond more easily to the piano than to the voice, though the differing ranges of the child and the trainer could cause this.

Most rehearsing, in fact, particularly of a cappella music, should take place with the voices alone, especially when the notes are reasonably secure.

If a piano is not available, any portable instrument or pitch-pipe can be used to give the initial pitches to each part, and one can even make use of a singer who has perfect pitch. Rehearsing without the piano has the advantage of forcing the singers to do without instrumental support. They have to concentrate harder and learn to listen carefully to each other - to members of their own voice parts for confirmation of their notes, and to singers in other parts for focussing the harmonies. In doing so they gain self-confidence. When one works in this ideal way, it is most useful to have leaders in each voice part who can be relied upon to keep that part together. These are people who not only have good voices but also efficient musical memories or sight-reading ability. The trainer starts with one voice part, singing with the children until some small success is achieved. He then adds the next part while the first group repeats the phrase or section just studied with the help of the leaders who keep their part going while the trainer's attention is directed towards the new part. In this way the choir-master gradually builds up the full harmony, giving help where it is needed and sometimes isolating a part to clarify any uncertainty.

If one is fortunate to have an assistant or two, possibly drawn from among the ranks of musically-gifted senior pupils, or even staff members, then it is possible to make use of more than one venue at the same time and have different voice parts learn their music under the guidance of these helpers who, incidentally, will profit from such responsibilities. Among the

advantages of such a procedure is the obvious fact that it saves time. Moreover, it is never wise to rehearse for too long with one group while the others must sit idly waiting, particularly since one cannot afford to have any child lose interest. If one must rehearse with a part for any length of time, one should suggest that the others follow their music silently or sing very softly so that they also benefit, without disturbing the learning taking place. Indeed, unless the music being studied is elaborate, extended, or in any way difficult, it is best to rehearse with everyone together most of the time, helping each part in the total context.

In fact, though it is important that each singer learns his part accurately, it is better to start with the whole group and then divide up the choir into smaller units for refining, rather than have each part learn its notes first and then put the parts together. Surely this latter procedure, which many teachers follow, and sometimes the children ask for, is as unmusical as learning the notes first and then, as some would naïvely express it, "add in the expression". Although areas of a song can be analyzed and given individual attention and help where necessary, the music essentially forms a complete unit, a 'gestalt' whose total effect and meaning or significance is greater than the sum of its parts. Thus, part songs should be perceived by the singers as harmonically integrated as soon as this is practicable. The singers should hear the relationship of their voice part to the whole by having all parts, or groups of parts, sing together as soon and as often as possible. This may prove difficult to begin with, but the solution lies in starting with rounds and easy two- and three-part music so that these techniques of listening and blending can be developed

with enjoyable enthusiasm as the children hear the harmonies and the parts knitting beautifully together. This philosophy is particularly relevant in the South African school situation where extended or difficult works will usually not be studied.

As far as the time for rehearsals is concerned, it would be wonderful if an enlightened headmaster who was also a mathematical wizard could devise a timetable in which one or two periods a week were set aside for choir practices. As it is, one usually has to arrange for rehearsals to take place before or after school or during tea or lunch breaks. As Lawrence¹³ writes:

It is unfortunate that such a worthwhile activity as the choir should be forced to take place outside the main framework of the school day, for it provides many valuable experiences, physical, social, emotional and intellectual.



The choir has as much right to its share of extra-mural time as other activities. The trainer's greatest problem is to find a suitable time when everyone can attend. Useful, reliable singers are often children of several talents and interests besides music. It gives the choir a good image if children who excel in other spheres, particularly on the sports field, are seen to be choir members as well. Often, too, staff members in charge of other activities do not co-operate with good grace. Occasionally, one simply has to be flexible and understanding enough to release a singer for another activity. The director's training does not always equip him for these extremes of psychological insight and patience, and he can now and then be excused for justifiable emotional outbursts. On the other hand, since showmanship is often an important personality trait of the success-

13. Lawrence, op. cit., page 29.

ful conductor, it has not been unknown for an engineered emotional storm to achieve a desired objective.

Rehearsing can and should be as enjoyable and rewarding experience as performing, though the enjoyment and rewards are of a different nature. Indeed, since the trainer is, above all else, an educator, and since the time spent on rehearsing is far more than that on performing, it might be true to say that rehearsals are the more important activity, involved as they are with discovery and aesthetic and technical development.

The first responsibility of the trainer, once the choir has been assembled, is to have suitable music available for the children to sing, and to set about ensuring that they learn the songs accurately. The trainer must have an impeccable sense of rhythm and pitch and an alert ear to hear what is happening when the children actually sing. He naturally becomes more skilled as he gains experience.

All rhythmic features of a piece of music must be thoroughly grasped by the trainer and carefully taught to the choir. As far as note values are concerned, certain areas need special care. A particular example is the common rhythmic fault of singing  as if it were . In fact, it is important that all notes, and rests, are given their full time value, especially at the end of phrases. The exception to this rule occurs when a quick breath has to be taken between phrases, in which case the last note of the first phrase is shortened slightly without distorting the rhythm, and the first note of the new phrase is begun at precisely the correct moment. Another exception, but this time on the individual level, results when staggered breathing is employed - the singers breath unobtrusively in the middle of phrases and shorten notes in order to

do so. Children who are taught the system of French time names - the Chev  system - usually have no difficulty with time values. Certainly the aural perception of the music must never be confused or distorted or eccentric. The trainer is the final arbiter in these matters, exercising aesthetic judgement tempered by good taste and experience.

Of course, rhythm has a much wider significance than that dealing with note duration. In essence, it is the vital force, brought into play by the conductor, which breathes life into the music. It is concerned with the flow of the notes, with subtle nuance, with phrasing, accent and rubato. The most successful conductor is he who can discover the secret of tapping this energy and of recreating and interpreting the music in a meaningful way.

Problems related to pitch are mostly concerned with accurately sung intervals. Particularly notorious for being sung incorrectly are the major third and minor sixth, but care must be taken to ensure that all intervals are sung in tune. One should bear in mind, of course, that a cappella singing does allow some possibility of untempered tuning. Trainers with some experience will readily acknowledge that the mental perception of the different semitones and tones, as well as other intervals, is not one of equal size. In fact, one can experience the sensation of intervals appearing to change their size, depending on their relative position and on whether they are sung ascending or descending, and the children can easily be made aware of this. It is useful to indicate the relative size of steps by utilizing appropriate hand gestures. For example, the leading note appears to be situated just under the tonic and this can be indicated by the trainer using his two hands as

tonic and leading note and demonstrating the 'narrow' interval between them to the children while they are singing them.

In an amusing yet nevertheless thought-provoking article in Music in Education entitled 'Interval Music'¹⁴ Edward Choppen reminds us of the useful device of associating each interval with a well-known musical phrase in which it occurs. Although he does not mention it, an obvious example of this technique comes readily to mind, namely the opening of the nursery rhyme 'Hot Cross Buns', which provides a descending octave followed by an ascending fourth. This type of association is, of course, the important 'raison d'être' underlying the use of the solfa system in school music classes, and children who have a thorough grounding in it are generally more reliable choir members, since it serves as a most useful set of reference points for rectifying errors of pitch.

A further area of training has to do with intonation. Of great importance is the children's ability to focus the harmony by listening to and adjusting the relationship of part to part. Two problems are met with, namely (a) when intervals are misread in a single voice part, thereby destroying the ensemble, and (b) when the choir sags as a whole.

One of the trainer's main concerns is to develop the ability in his singers to concentrate on what they are doing, which includes getting them to place the note or notes mentally before they are sung. One often has to correct a fault resulting from the intervals of the second or seventh between two voice parts being sung inaccurately, the lower part tending to be attracted upwards or downwards towards the same note or its octave sung in the other part. This can easily result in that

14. Edward Choppen, 'Interval Music' in Music in Education Vol. 31, No. 325, May/June 1967, pages 467-468.

part becoming unhinged harmonically. Any other carelessly perceived interval can do the same.¹⁵ Sometimes, too, a problem arises when a part enters after rests, the initial note being pitched vaguely or inaccurately. In this case, singers can be helped by relating their first note to an appropriate note or two which appears in one of the other parts just before their own entry. If necessary this relationship can be marked in the music to remind them. Correct intonation has mostly to do with an accurate perception of the notes and with disciplined concentration.

Sharp singing does sometimes occur when the children are excited or nervous. The remedies are largely related to the conductor's ability to project calmness and self-assurance. Singing flat, on the other hand, is one of the commonest diseases feared by trainers and experienced by choirs, and many authorities deal with it. Ehret¹⁶ gives a succinct yet exhaustive list of the causes of 'flatting', as he calls it, which is particularly useful, especially the way in which he divides them into

Physiological and Psychological
Environmental
Technical
Scale and Interval.

Amongst many other points, he mentions that a throaty quality and flatting result from "poor tone production usually caused by constriction in and around the base of the tongue, a rigid

15. I once used a simple but effective three-part arrangement by Prof. Gruber of the French carol 'Entre le Boeuf' with my first school choir. During rehearsals this began to sound peculiar to my inexperienced ear. I eventually isolated the problem, discovering that the altos were singing one interval incorrectly and then going off pitch as a group. This is much more disturbing than when the whole choir sags downwards, though this should also be avoided.

16. Ehret, op. cit., pages 17-22.

jaw, and rear production without a feeling of forward resonance and focus", and that

both physical and mental alertness are important;
 "constitutional flatters" should be eliminated after individual help has been unfruitful;
 "too many heavier timbred voices will bring the group pitch down", the ideal choir consisting of a variety of vocal types;
 the key of a composition may make singing in tune difficult, requiring transposition to remedy it;
 pieces in minor keys are more likely to produce problems than those in major keys.

In a subsection entitled 'Intonasie', McLachlan¹⁷ agrees with Ehret when he writes:

Detonasie kan verbeter word deur die musiek 'n halftoon of meer op te transponeer. Hierdie wenk geld veral wanneer die groep die musiek reeds goed ken. Die opvatting dat die sangers detoneer omdat die musiek te hoog sou wees, is selde waar, en dit blyk dat aftransponeering dikwels die toestand vererger. Optransponeering is 'n uitdaging en skerp die algemene konsentrasie van die sangers op.

This is an interesting viewpoint. However, McLachlan does concede that when a difficult high part is being studied it may well make matters easier if the part is transposed downward during rehearsals.

Staton¹⁸ lays the blame for faulty choral intonation on four people: the singer, the accompanist, the conductor, and the composer.

The singer may be guilty of, amongst other things, laziness of mind or body, in the use of the tongue, teeth and lips, in breathing and in listening;
 use incorrect tone production;
 lack vocal control when singing a diminuendo;
 not open his mouth sufficiently;
 stiffen the jaw, tighten the throat and raise the tongue;
 fail to sustain long notes to the end;
 attempt to sing too long a phrase in one breath;
 be uncertain of the words or music or both;
 scoop up to or slide down to notes;
 dislike the song or the trainer;
 be sulky or nervous;
 stand or sit for too long a period.

17. McLachlan, op.cit., page 142.

18. Staton, op.cit., pages 43-45.

The accompanist may play
 weak bass notes;
 wrong notes;
 with spineless tone and broken rhythm;
 with bad and prolonged use of the sustaining
 pedal.

The teacher-conductor could
 choose too slow a tempo;
 give a flabby, indecisive beat;
 talk too much, including nagging and too
 much fault-finding;
 practise one piece for too long a time;
 fail to correct intonation immediately;
 arrange practices too late in the day or
 after exhausting games;
 unwisely select voices for singing a lower
 part in two-part songs;
 have insufficient or insecure voices singing
 the middle voice-part in three-part songs.

The composer may have no consideration for the singers'
 abilities.

Amongst the extraneous factors influencing intonation, Staton
 mentions outside distractions such as noise in the streets or
 in adjoining classrooms, an interesting observation certainly
 worth bearing in mind. The author spends some time discussing
 these factors¹⁹, giving advice on how they can be dealt with,
 and writes:

Bad intonation should never be passed over by the
 teacher, and it should be realized that a note sung
 out of tune is wrong, not only in relation to the
 note left, but also to the note approached.

Woodgate²⁰ suggests that the conductor

must develop his sense of pitch and tuning so that he
 can indicate by pre-arranged signals what to do in the
 case of flattening or sharpening in any part of the
 choir.

These are clearly presented during rehearsals and utilized eff-
 ectively, one hopes, in performance. It must also not be
 forgotten that the children must be given their notes before
 they begin to sing. Eventually they can derive these for
 themselves after an appropriate chord is given on the piano,

19. Staton, op. cit., pages 45-52.

20. Leslie Woodgate, The Choral Conductor, Ascherberg, Hopwood
 & Crew, 1949, page 31.

but initially each part is given its starting note. It is also sensible to give the necessary notes after there has been a break in the singing or after attention has been given to a particular problem. It is equally sensible to inform the children clearly where one intends starting in the music. Quite often, when such a start is insecure, the fault lies with the trainer because he has been undisciplined in giving instructions.

During the rehearsals, the trainer will also become involved with choral blend and balance, the former referring to a unified sound in each part, and the latter to the sound relationship between the parts. According to Roe²¹, balance is determined by the quality of the voices, the vocal range of the music, the number of people singing in each part, the way the harmonies in the music are worked out, the uniformity of the vocal sounds, and the relative importance of each vocal part. He reminds us of the fact that at high school the boys' voices tend to be more powerful than those of the girls, and for this reason he suggests a ratio of 3:2 or 2:1, with the girls predominating in each case. He also writes that "the acoustics in a rehearsal or performance hall may require a re-placement of the voices so that certain parts may be heard either more clearly or not so loudly."

Ehret²² deals concisely with this area of vocal training in a short chapter. He writes:

Before any single vocal line can be blended into the ensemble it must be a thoroughly blended unit in itself... Sectional blend is horizontal with all voices going in the same direction rhythmically, with the same pitch, quality, quantity and tonal color. Once the various lines are blended horizontally, they

21. Paul F. Roe, Choral Music Education, Prentice-Hall, 1970, page 36.

22. Ehret, op. cit., pages 34-35.

may be merged with each other to form a combination of horizontal and vertical blend.

Amongst other interesting observations and suggestions, he advises us to "balance your groups around the weakest, not necessarily the smallest section. Balance depends on comparative resonance, power, and quality of the voices, not numbers."

Indeed, the building up of a good physical arrangement of the choir can be a fascinating and rewarding exercise. The trainer will devise his own preferred grouping of the singers into their voice parts, with the number of singers in each one partly dictating his method. However, whilst one would imagine that the sound of the choir is of great importance, it is seldom given much attention. Such an organization is by no means simply a matter of tallness or shortness, nor of good voices in the front or the rear, but involves such things as reliable singers and, above all, vocal timbre. This concern for the building up of a good instrument, with its sound potential as fully realized as possible, is echoed in Jipson's book²³, where he gives detailed plans for staging choirs. For example, amongst the sopranos there will be different vocal characteristics, such as lightness, coloratura brilliance, mezzo-soprano warmth, and so on. Voices of like timbre should be blended and balanced in order to produce a voice part which is acoustically far more satisfactory than a randomly organized group. Ehret²⁴ talks of classifying voices "into 'flute' (light), 'reed' (reedy), and 'string' (well balanced)", and alternates these in order to blend each section. If each voice part is constructed in this way, with careful consideration for the aural effect obtained, the result is a choir with an enhanced sound.

Also for acoustical reasons, it is best to have the

23. Jipson, op. cit., passim, especially pages 48-54.

24. Ehret, op. cit., page 35.

voices with the most beautiful quality in front. Though some trainers prefer to place the strongest voices at the back in order to give a good lead to the rest, it is better to work outwards from the centre and backwards from the front. This ensures good control by having the leaders in each part close at hand, and also results in the best sound reaching the audience. Obviously, from a purely educational point of view, the weakest singers do gain invaluable assistance from hearing the strongest singers behind them, and this procedure may be necessary when the choir is learning new material; but from a performance viewpoint the arrangement referred to above is the better one.

The basic arrangement may need modification if one or other of the parts is proportionately large or small, strong or weak. It may require some psychological insight and unobtrusive manoeuvring on the part of the choir-master when an enthusiastic senior member of the choir, who is either vocally or musically unreliable, would like to be placed in the front row - a prestige position. The fact that the boys are usually placed behind the girls ought not to present any problems since their voices are normally resonant and strong enough to be heard clearly; if any difficulty does arise there is naturally no law which prohibits their being placed further forward or even sharing the front positions, with tenors and basses flanking the girls - though in this case control from the centre is clearly not as acute. The enterprising trainer will experiment, above all using his ears and exercising his aesthetic judgement, until the most satisfactory arrangement for his choir - a unique instrument - is arrived at.

During rehearsals, other areas of choral technique will

be dealt with, such as staggered breathing, the dynamic possibilities of the voices, and the changing adolescent voice, this latter a most interesting field of study discussed in some detail by Roe²⁵, Jipson²⁶, Mellalieu²⁷, and McKenzie²⁸, amongst others.

Authorities have also written at length on the importance of diction. To quote Staton²⁹:

No part of a choralist's technique is more vital to a fine performance than clear enunciation. Your class may be blowing beautiful bubbles of tone, but unless the words live, they are as dull as stained glass windows seen by day from outside the cathedral.

If the trainer is excited by words, he will ensure that he provides a worthwhile example of correct and vital diction, which includes phrasing and rhythm, for the choir members to emulate. Since each song has verbal as well as musical significance, much affectionate care must be exercised in order to project that fact effectively. This naturally involves a well-grounded appreciation of the function of both vowels and consonants in producing a performance that is meaningful as well as beautiful.

Rehearsals should start promptly. The trainer should insist that members arrive punctually, and he should always be on time himself. If the rehearsal is a long one there could be a break in the middle, which would refresh the singers. However, the trainer would have to ensure that everything again began in a disciplined manner after such a break, with everyone being encouraged to concentrate fully on the task in hand. Perhaps beginning this section with a favourite song would help

25. Roe, op. cit., pages 189-294.

26. Jipson, op. cit., pages 64-70.

27. W. Norman Mellalieu, The Boy's Changing Voice, Oxford, 1905.

28. Duncan McKenzie, Training the Boy's Changing Voice, Faber, 1956.

29. Staton, op. cit., page 53.

to get things afloat, as it would at the beginning of the practice. On the other hand, it is unwise to prolong any rehearsal, and the trainer would have to use his experience in interpreting both visual and aural signs of weariness to guide him in knowing when to bring the proceedings to a close. If time were then still available, he could work with soloists and any instrumentalists. Nevertheless, a set period, for example an hour, in which everyone is expected to work diligently, whatever the circumstances, will create an atmosphere most conducive to achievement. Too relaxed or 'understanding' an attitude on the part of the trainer and too flexible a schedule may result in the singers setting the pace and expecting the trainer to give way to their natural inclination to cut corners.

Much depends on the personality of the trainer and on his manner of conducting rehearsals. A choir is very much the product of its leader. A man who is warm and friendly yet firm, who is dedicated to and enthusiastic about the music-making, and who inspires loyalty, will be most likely to succeed.

VOCAL TRAINING: POSTURE AND BREATHING

Choral training begins with the voice. Children can only use their voices correctly and effectively if their posture is sensible and their breath control at least adequate. Like all other areas of vocal training, the correct postural and breathing techniques are habits which have to be learnt and practised consciously until such time as they can be safely left to the subconscious, if that is ever really possible. Self-discipline always needs to be exercised, and the trainer must constantly guard against lapses. Although choral performance naturally takes place with the choir standing, it is wise to remember that much learning takes place with the choristers seated. The principles applying to good posture and breathing must therefore be projected to include the seated position as well.

Since it is widely agreed that correct breathing forms the basis of good voice production, and that controlled breathing can only occur if the posture is suitable, this discussion will begin with a consideration of posture; posture and breathing are, however, so closely linked together that there will of necessity be overlapping at times.

Singing is a unique form of musical expression because it involves the whole body. Good posture is therefore very much a feature of physical and mental well-being. It is the trainer's first duty to attempt to create a happy environment in which the children respond willingly and easily. His vigilance must always be tempered with good humour and understanding, aiming at co-operation rather than rigid enforcement.

The trainer's own example will act as a stimulus to obtaining sound posture in the group and he should bear this in

mind. A great deal is achieved in the training of singers by the imitation of suitable models. Children who grasp and exemplify correct posture can also be used to illustrate it to the others - if this neither produces embarrassment nor an inflated ego. The successful trainer has to have insights into human psychology because choral training has constantly to do with human response and reaction. He has not only to have gifts of musical interpretation but must also be able to interpret human strengths and weaknesses and have skill in 'human' phrasing, welding individual rhythms of personality into a homogeneous whole.

The following description of good posture¹ is very useful in helping children to achieve this ideal condition effortlessly:

In a correct stance the body must be supported by both feet - the weight being felt on the soles, not the heels (the use of the heels for support tightens the stomach muscles). Perhaps support is the wrong word to use, for the body must not, so to speak, be placed into the legs and be allowed to drop into them. It is quite possible to hold oneself upright so that the weight of the body is lifted away from the legs. If the singer does this he will find that the stomach is held firmly and not allowed to protude, and that the chest is raised - not excessively rigid, of course, like a sergeant-major's, nor kept up by breath, but rather by muscles. The shoulders should be kept down and should never rise in the act of breathing. To check up on this position, which may feel somewhat unnatural to begin with, let the singer stand with his back, from heel to head, pressed against a flat surface. If he will then step forward, maintaining the same position, the body is held correctly and ready to breathe properly. This posture should be cultivated until one can feel relaxed in it. Perhaps 'relaxed tension' would best describe the feeling.

This is a sensible statement, summarizing the features of correct posture in a practical manner, and will serve as the basis for a more detailed discussion.

Wright begins with the position of the feet, and the

1. Eldred Wright, Basic Choir Training, The Royal School of Church Music, 1955, pages 7-8.

following authors each contribute something interesting in this connection. Lewis² says that the feet should be "firmly planted", Gelineau³ that they should both be "flat on the floor." They should be, to quote Staton⁴: "slightly apart so that the body is easily balanced", and McLachlan⁵ gives this distance as about 200mm apart. According to Slater⁶: "Do not place the feet close together, but allow the one to be slightly advanced." Howe⁷ mentions that "the weight of the body (is) distributed equally on both feet." Priestley and Grayson⁸ talk of the cultivation of "a natural, easy stance." Reginald Jacques⁹ suggests that "the children stand in an easy attitude, with feet slightly apart, feeling balanced and springy." Warren¹⁰ writes that the singers should stand with "the weight of the body being poised on the forepart of the feet." Armhold¹¹ agrees: "the weight of the body should be on the balls of the feet and not on the heels", and Gardiner¹² suggests that more weight should be supported by the outside of the foot than by the big toe, and that though "the weight has to be on the balls of the

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2. Joseph Lewis, Singing without Tears, Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1939, pages 6-7.
 3. R. Phyllis Gelineau, Experiences in Music, McGraw-Hill, 1970, page 13.
 4. J. Frederic Staton, Sweet Singing in the Choir, Clarke, Irwin, 1941, page 39.
 5. Philip McLachlan, Klasonderrig in Musiek, Nasou, undated, page 124.
 6. David D. Slater, Vocal Physiology and the Teaching of Singing, Ashdown, undated, page 49.
 7. Albert Howe, Practical Principles of Voice Production, Paxton, undated, pages 30-31.
 8. Edmund Priestley and J.H.Grayson, A Music Guide for Schools, Nelson, 1964, page 13.
 9. Reginald Jacques, Voice Training and Conducting in Schools, Oxford, 1963, page 16.
 10. Ivor Warren, The Examination Candidate's Handbook on Singing, Hammond, 1934, page 14.
 11. Adelheid Armhold, Singing, based on Irrefragible Laws, Tafelberg, 1963, pages 24-25.
 12. Julian Gardiner, A Guide to Good Singing and Speech, Cassel, 1968, page 13.

feet, ...the heels must stay down." Watkins Shaw¹³ writes of the children "standing comfortably relaxed", a sentiment echoed by Mainwaring¹⁴ and others.

In his book A Guide to Good Singing and Speech, Julian Gardiner¹⁵ has devoted a chapter, called 'The Framework' to good posture and to ways of achieving it. He has many sane and interesting things to contribute to the discussion. He writes:

Good singing means skilful playing on a well-tuned instrument - the human voice. This well-tuned instrument is suspended inside a complicated framework - the human body...
Essentially the human body is an admirable structure. Its distinguishable physical characteristic is the fully erect posture. Many creatures can walk on two legs but man alone carries head, neck, trunk and pelvis in a nearly vertical line. This is particularly noticeable in the case of athletes, dancers and others who depend for their livelihood on physical fitness... All these people hold themselves so as to bring their centre of gravity up to its highest level; in this attitude they are ready to move in any direction with the least effort at the shortest notice. In the same way, though he seldom moves about while singing, a singer who uses his body as an instrument of music, needs to bring it to the point of utmost all-round efficiency, so as to be able to contract and relax with ease and speed a number of muscles, most of which lie outside his direct conscious control...

This is a most refreshing point of view. In a footnote, Gardiner explains that to him "the centre of gravity in a human body is the point where a man impaled on a skewer could be most easily twirled around by a hungry giant"¹⁶, a whimsical analogy which is nevertheless useful, as are all such descriptions when one is dealing with choir training at school level. The author suggests that the body can be thought of geometrically as a system of three pyramids with their bases uppermost, the lowest with its base the pelvis, the middle one with its base the shoulders, and the top one with its base the crown of

13. Watkins Shaw, Music in the Primary School, Dobson, 1952, page 71.

14. James Mainwaring, Teaching Music in Schools, Paxton, 1951, page 17.

15. Gardiner, op. cit., page 9. 16. Ibid.

the head. He continues¹⁷:

Each pyramid however is no mere example of solid geometry, but living substance supported by muscles on whose constantly co-ordinated activity the whole structure depends. In the act of singing all three pyramids must be kept stable, and the centre of gravity brought up to the highest possible level; in other words you must learn to sing on the stretch.

Gardiner maintains that this is not as easy as it seems, since the body naturally feels more stable when it sags, lowering the centre of gravity, whereas the good singer needs to adopt a position of readiness, which seems precarious and is comparatively unstable and energetic. Since sagging is most likely to occur at the apices of the three pyramids, he suggests that¹⁸:

we should therefore begin by making certain that the apex of the lowest pyramid, on which the weight of the body is thrown, is so balanced as to enable the two upper pyramids to maintain the most verticle alignment possible.

Gardiner¹⁹ reminds us that energy is needed to keep the vertebrae of the spine suitably erect. If there is no real enthusiasm for living nor physical fitness, the back will be inclined to become more hollow, resulting in the buttocks protruding and the abdomen sagging forwards and downwards. In this connection, Roe²⁰ writes: "Joyous enthusiasm tends to expand the body", and as one of his hints for obtaining good posture he gives the following²¹, which is similar to Wright's suggestion mentioned earlier:

Stand with the back to a door. The heels should be against the door. The head is brought back against the door; the chin remains level (chin back over chest). Some students will need to relax the head from the wall a little or the throat may be tense, while some will be able to keep the back of the head against the door. Square the shoulders against the door but keep them relaxed. It is important that the hips be tightened and the small of the back moved against the door for

17. Gardiner, op.cit., page 10.

18. Ibid., page 11.

19. Ibid., page 14.

20. Paul F. Roe, Choral Music Education, Prentice-Hall, 1970, page 76.

21. Ibid.

strength and to release frontal muscles for freedom in breathing in breathing. The back must not be arched enough to cause the student to be swaybacked. The knees may have to be bent in order to allow the back to straighten; then the student should straighten his knees and keep his back out and straight, and his hips tightened.

If the whole choir is to experiment in this way, then obviously standing against a wall is a better proposition. Howe²² gives similar, less detailed, advice and says: "In this position it is easier to appreciate the proper functioning of the the diaphragm." Armhold contributes the following statement:

Breathing can only be free and unimpeded when the adjustment of the spine and pelvis provides the correct posture. The body has a tendency to curve at the small of the back. This must be adjusted by pulling the buttocks in and in line with the spine. You will notice that as a result the lower abdominal wall draws in slightly by itself. It must be stressed here that this drawing in is only a reflex and should not be done consciously as this would stiffen the lower abdominal muscles... This brings the body to an almost straight line from head to feet, and you will notice that the backbone in the small of the back is straightened.

Loney²³ makes the interesting observation that what may be a comfortable upright position for one singer may not necessarily be so for another. Nevertheless, the importance of an erect bodily stance is unquestioned. Henson²⁴ suggests that the singers should be made aware of how cramped the area between the bottom of the rib cage bone structure and that of the hips and pelvis becomes when the body sags. The diaphragm and abdominal muscles need "as large an area here to function properly as it is possible to create." Staton²⁵ would have no slouching, and Hart²⁶ gives a useful analogy: "You cannot swim with your feet on the ground and you cannot sing crumpled up."

22. Howe, op. cit., page 11.

23. Andrew Loney, 'Problems of A Cappella Choir', in Music Education in Action, edited by Archie N. Jones, Allyn & Bacon, 1960, page 175.

24. B. R. Henson, 'Posture and Breathing' in *ibid.*, page 156.

25. Staton, op. cit., page 39.

26. Muriel Hart, Music, Heinemann, 1974, page 53.

Gelineau²⁷ suggests that what is needed is "neither a soldier-like rigidity nor a rag-doll fold-up, but rather something acceptably comfortable in between."

Both Lewis²⁸ and Armhold²⁹ suggest the use of a mirror to determine the erectness of the body, a sensible though not very practicable idea in the school situation. Lewis writes:

"Straighten the spine and push up the head as far as it will go - comfortably." Roe³⁰ feels that the singers should "stand as if hooks were pulling the tops of the backs of their heads, then relax a little, This device will straighten bodies and move chins back over chests, where they should be." It will also bring about the forward-facing position of the head mentioned by McLachlan³¹, who warns that when the head is raised the throat is stretched and tense. For this reason the conductor should never stand so high that the children are forced to look up to him. Howe³² writes that the singers should stand with "head up and poised easily on the shoulders", or, as Armhold³³ expresses it: "The head rests freely on the end of the spine." Slater³⁴ says: "Hold the head well up, but not thrown back." Gardiner³⁵ emphasizes that the crown of the head must remain the highest point and that it should feel as if it is attached to the lower end of a suspended elastic cord. He gives useful analogies:

The ears must be as far away from the shoulders as possible. Ladies can imagine themselves wearing very long earrings which they must keep from trailing over their shoulders, It is also helpful to remember your sensations when in swimming you have to keep the head above water.

27. Gelineau, op. cit., page 13.

28. Lewis, op. cit., page 6.

29. Armhold, op. cit., pages 24-25.

30. Roe, op. cit., page 76.

31. McLachlan, op. cit., pages 18-19.

32. Howe, op. cit., page 30.

33. Armhold, op. cit., page 24.

34. Slater, op. cit., page 49.

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35. Gardiner, op. cit., page

Warren³⁶ feels that the body should be "well braced up, yet in a supple and unrestrained condition... the shoulders hanging loosely backwards in a perfectly natural and easy manner." This will automatically produce a comfortably raised chest. Henson³⁷, instead of reminding us, as do most authors, that the shoulders should not be raised when inhaling, makes the refreshing point that they must be held up and off the rib cage rather than allowing them to sag, thereby ensuring that the upper lung capacity will not be limited. Venables³⁸ has "shoulders drawn down, moderately back, square to the front." He also refers to "the commonest fault", namely that of raising the shoulders, but makes the interesting comment that this may well be the result of pupils being "most anxious to show the teacher that his instructions are being obeyed", since "when a teacher raises his hand as a signal to take breath, he is to some extent suggesting that very movement of the children's bodies that he wishes them to avoid." Cleall³⁹ would have "shoulders loosely back and down", and usefully suggests that "if the shoulders tighten as you set them back, rotate them for a minute or two." Lewis⁴⁰ writes: "Think of your shoulder line and its level steadiness." Further discussion of the shoulders will appear later in this chapter when breathing is considered.

Jones⁴¹ comments that "the chest must remain high and quiet." Armhold⁴² concurs: "The chest should be held raised without being rigid during inspiration and expiration." Howe⁴³

36. Warren, op. cit., page 14.

37. Henson, op. cit., page 155.

38. L.C. Venables, The School Teacher's Music Guide, Curwen, undated but possibly about 1920, pages 3-4.

39. Charles Cleall, Voice Production in Choral Technique, Novello, 1969, page 11.

40. Lewis, op. cit., page 7.

41. Arnold Jones, 'Choral Director as Voice Teacher' in Music Education in Action, op. cit., page 152.

42. Armhold, op. cit., page 24.

43. Howe, op. cit., page 11.

gives the following method for obtaining the correct position:

Raise the arms at the sides to the level of the shoulders. This will raise the chest. Then let the arms fall steadily to the sides, without allowing the chest to fall.

The chin, according to Venables⁴⁴, is "drawn slightly in." Cleall⁴⁵ agrees. Ulster⁴⁶ feels that "the chin should not be made to poke, for this will cause a tension in the facial and neck muscles." Roe⁴⁷ talks of "singing with the jaw relaxed." He emphasizes the need for a feeling of freedom when the chin is tucked in, and for the neck muscles to be relaxed as well. Jipson⁴⁸ reminds us that the jaw muscles must be "allowed to follow freely the dictates of the lips."

In doing the breathing exercises given by Field-Hyde⁴⁹, the children are to stand "with their hands lightly clasping their sides - fingers towards the front of the body and thumbs toward the back." This is a useful stance since it allows the children to feel the chest and back expanding and contracting, but it is, of course, not suitable for singing a song. Staton⁵⁰ writes: "The hands should be placed on the front of the body, with the finger tips meeting." Watkins Shaw⁵¹ talks of the children clasping their hands loosely behind their backs in order to avoid raising their shoulders. Priestley and Grayson⁵² agree. McLachlan⁵³ makes the following contribution:

Die arms hang los langs die sye of die hande word met een of twee vingers liggies saamgehang agter die rug. Laasgenoemde houding is baie goed omdat dit verhoed

44. Venables, op. cit., page 4.

45. Cleall, op. cit., page 11.

46. D.R.Ulster, The Teaching of Music in Primary Schools, Maskew Miller, undated, page 107.

47. Roe, op. cit., pages 70, 75-76.

48. Jipson, op. cit., page 84.

49. F.C.Field-Hyde, The Singing-Class Teacher, Joseph Williams, 1914, page 133.

50. Staton, op. cit., page 39.

51. Watkins Shaw, op. cit., page 71.

52. Priestley and Grayson, op. cit., page 13.

53. McLachlan, op. cit., page 19.

dat die skouers vorentoe hang; dit moet egter steeds los en ontspanne bly. As die skouers deur hierdie posisie na agter gedwing word, is dit beter om die arms langs die sye te laat hang. Vir verhoogdoel-eindes kan die hande lossies en natuurlik voor saamgehou word, ongeveer op heuphoogte. As die hande in hierdie houding te laag gehou word, trek dit ook die skouers vorentoe.

McLachlan also suggests that occasionally when breath is inhaled the singer can feel the expansion of the sides and lower ribs and the diaphragm by placing his hands in this region; but usually the arms hang loosely and supply at the sides in order to prevent the shoulders rising, which results in undesirable tension and consequent tiredness. This is an important point. Venables⁵⁴, Carroll⁵⁵, Howe⁵⁶, Armhold⁵⁷ and Ulster⁵⁸ hold similar views, though the latter feels that it is unnatural for the children to clasp their hands in front of the body.

If the children are holding music, the problem of what they are to do with their hands is different. The trainer will soon discover, according to Roe⁵⁹, that

It is impossible to get consistently good posture and attention from his group unless books and music are held in the proper position... One excellent way to hold music is to place one hand under the open music and place the other hand on the music to turn the pages and control the angle and height of the music. Each singer must see the director by shifting only his eyes, not his whole head. If there is only one copy of music to two singers, it is important that most of the music be held by the singer closest to the director... if the music is held too high the audience and teacher cannot see the mouth and face and the sound is cut off to some extent. If the music is held too low, the head will be too low and will cause poor singing posture; the singer will not watch the director, since it is too much trouble to move the head up and down; sound will be directed toward the floor instead of toward the audience; and the audience will see the top of the singer's head instead of his eyes.

54. Venables, op. cit., page 4.

55. Walter Carroll, The Training of Children's Voices, Forsyth, 1922, pages 13 and 16.

56. Howe, op. cit., pages 30-31.

57. Armhold, op. cit., page 25.

58. Ulster, op. cit., pages 106-107. 59. Roe, op. cit., page

Commenting on the importance of the facial expression, Armhold⁶⁰ writes:

A correct omission of the voice is always accompanied by freedom of the mouth, face and eyes. The eyes especially, reveal the wrong or right production, as a good note will always be accompanied by a soft and relaxed expression of the eyes.

Howe⁶¹ would have the "eyes looking straight ahead, and the facial muscles relaxed into a pleasant expression." He warns that care should be taken "that the breath is always taken silently, without any stiffening of the muscles of the face or neck." Slater⁶² says: "Look, but do not stare, at a point on a level with the eyes." It is the trainer's responsibility to create a congenial atmosphere to support his teaching. One often comes across singers who reveal their nervousness and consequent tension by staring, especially when they are being adjudicated at an eisteddfod.

Several authors give useful advice concerning posture when the singers are seated. Henson⁶³ reminds us that the back should be kept straight and not rest against the back of the chair, since the intercostal muscles - which also work in the back - should be free to operate and not have to push the weight of the body against the chair-back for every breath that is inhaled. Complementing this suggestion, he recommends that the body should be balanced by keeping the feet firmly on the floor, with one foot slightly more forward than the other. In fact, it is best to balance the body securely between the feet and the buttocks. Backs should be maintained in an easy erect condition. If the children are sitting on benches, they will not be tempted to lean against non-existent backs. However, the trainer must still ensure that they are able to sit correctly

60. Armhold, op. cit., page 25.

61. Howe, op. cit., pages 30-31.

62. Slater, op. cit., page 49.

63. Henson, op. cit., pages 155-156.

yet comfortably. If the benches are too low their slouching will be excusable. When chairs are used, their seats should be flat and parallel to the ground in order to avoid similar awkward contortions.

Roe⁶⁴ feels that singers can sing as well when they are seated as when standing. He writes:

When sitting and singing, it is important that the students sit as far back on the chair seats as possible, sitting into the angle between the chair seats and the chair backs or on the front edges of the seats (any other places will promote slumping); and that the feet be in a position that requires no shifting when the students stand... Many times it is better to have the singers curl their feet under their chairs during rehearsal than to insist that the feet be flat on the floor.

In a footnote, Roe comments that in his opinion the command to singers to put their feet flat on the floor can actually result in posture difficulties with singers of different heights, tending to throw bodies back in the seats. "whereas feet curled under the chairs makes it easier for the singers to sit upright without a feeling of strain or feeling out of balance." This is an observation with practical value, since the leg length of the singers will certainly vary. Ideally, the seats should be adjustable, but this will not usually be the case. Moreover, Roe advises that "the choir that is seated is likely to slump unless it is reminded constantly to 'sit tall'." McLachlan recommends that the children should not stand for too long a time since tiredness results in poor posture. Sitting on the floor is unsuitable and the pupils should rather sit on chairs or in their desks and keep their backs straight. Hart⁶⁵ makes the obvious yet worthwhile comment that good posture in both sitting and standing positions not only makes breath control easier but is a healthy habit to cultivate, and this is

64. Roe, op. cit., pages 75-76.

65. Hart, op. cit., page 53.

a strong motivational point one could raise with the singers.

Two final statements are worth recording. According to Jipson⁶⁶, "the body should feel alert, tall and strong, but never sway-back", and Gardiner⁶⁷ writes:

Like a highly flexible sword which never loses its resilience, each part of the body has to be sensitive and responsive to every other part... The body is a unity. The more this conception is established, the more efficiently the body will behave.

Correct posture has been discussed as a preliminary to effective breathing for singing. Loney⁶⁸ states: "Without good posture the director will find that what he commonly attributes to poor breath control is no more than poor posture." Henson⁶⁹ holds similar views and writes:

In working for... better breathing, the most common and logical approach is to seek to remove all obstacles that prevent it. Immediately we find the most serious obstacle to be bad posture; this is largely true because man can sustain life by using, unfortunately, only a small fraction of his breathing capacities. Bad posture poses no problem in getting enough breath to sit still in choral class and listen, or to stand by a piano and listen to the teacher demonstrate. In active work or play, however, we find the body cannot tolerate bad posture; the abdominal muscles and rib muscles often heave for breath after such activity attempted with bad posture.

Although the general attitude is one of freedom from tension, there is unavoidable muscular interplay, especially in the act of controlled exhalation for singing. Gardiner⁷⁰ makes a wise statement about relaxation:

When teachers, writers and colleagues talk about muscular relaxation, what they really mean is a balance of muscular tensions - a tensional equipoise. One can do no work whatever with a relaxed muscle.

In his description of the physical act of breathing for singing,

66. Jipson, op. cit., page 84.

67. Gardiner, op. cit., page 20.

68. Loney, op. cit., pages 174-175.

69. Henson, op. cit., page 155.

70. Gardiner, op. cit., page 20.

Henson⁷¹ uses the term "relaxed tension" employed by Wright (page 32) and develops this theme:

We have all heard it said that 'breathing is singing'. Although this aphorism is not literally true, it is a fact that improper breathing prevents the correct function of other practices commonly used in proper tone production. There are more than twenty-two muscles involved in respiration, but they may be grouped in two sets - one for inspiration and one for expiration; or for more practical application - one for taking breath to sing, and one for using the breath in singing. The chief muscle of inspiration is the diaphragm, and the chief muscles of expiration are the four sets of abdominal muscles. The intercostal muscles that elevate and depress the ribs belong in both groups and serve both inspiration and expiration in a very active way. When you breathe in air in preparation for singing, the diaphragm (being a convex muscle) contracts and flattens downward. This creates a larger thorax, or chest cavity; hence, there is room for more breath as more room is created at the bottom of the rib cage. At the same time the intercostal or rib muscles elevate the ribs around the lungs for breath. The abdominal muscles merely relax and expand outward. Expiration depends entirely on the abdominal muscles, which contract inward while the diaphragm merely relaxes back to its convex shape and allows the force of the abdominal muscles to push upward, forcing the air out of the lungs. Again the intercostal or rib muscles contract, depressing the ribs to help force the air out of the lungs also. So we see the very simple relationship between diaphragm and abdomen breathing. Tension opposed to relaxation formulates the action, but both are never simultaneously tense or relaxed. While these two alternate in changing the size of the chest cavity at the bottom, the intercostal muscles tense to do both.

The above is simply an explanation of natural breathing as the body was intended to breathe. Although natural breathing is often sought by an attempt to relax 'completely' and let the body breathe and sing on the breath that results, upon closer examination this is seen to be impractical because it is plain that some tension is present constantly in breathing. We might better call the desired effect 'relaxed tension'... We are seeking a modification of normal breathing habits... the singing student must first learn where the tension occurs and then must strengthen it when needed.

Nevertheless, all outward signs of tension should serve to warn the trainer that all is not well. After giving a humorous description of what usually happens when an untrained child is

71. Henson, op. cit., pages 154-155.

asked to take a deep breath, Rainbow⁷² goes on to describe what is needed:

The first essential is relaxation. The singer must stand loosely. Muscular tension as displayed in clenched fists, braced knees and frowning faces, is fatal to good tone production. Let your children stand with feet slightly apart, and then go through a pantomime of drooping with them - all muscles slack, the arms hanging lifeless at their sides, the head falling forward on the neck. After this, recover a comfortable pose. Then let them feel for the bottom edge of their front ribs and place their hands lightly on each side... The chest must not be allowed to move upwards and the shoulders must not rise.

As Gardiner⁷³ says: "A lifted chest is an essential characteristic of good singing, but it is no part of inhalation."

Jones⁷⁴ agrees: "With the chest high and quiet, the students must learn the expansion round the waistline for air intake."

Steenkamp and de Klerk⁷⁵ warn that "skouers moet stilgehou word", as do Roberts⁷⁶ and Holst⁷⁷, who quotes Peter Peers as saying: "Never lift the shoulders when you breathe: you will soon lose your breath." Fiske and Dobbs⁷⁸ make the following interesting observation in this connection:

In some songs there is very little time for taking breath between phrases, and some children will need practice in breathing in quickly and deeply. They should be discouraged from raising their shoulders when doing so.

Hart⁷⁹ writes as follows about deep breathing:

Usually, when children are told to take a deep breath they immediately hunch their shoulders near their

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72. Bernarr Rainbow, Music in the Classroom, Heinemann, 1956, pages 58-59.
73. Gardiner, op. cit., page 38.
74. Jones, op. cit., page 152.
75. W.F.B. Steenkamp and A. de Klerk, Ritme en Melodie, Nasionale Boekhandel, undated, page 9.
76. Helen Roberts, Music for Infants, Boosey & Hawkes, 1954, page 57.
77. Imogen Holst, Conducting a Choir, Oxford, 1973, page 53.
78. Roger Fiske and J.P.B. Dobbs, The Oxford School Music Books - Teacher's Manual, Junior, Oxford, 1954, pages 16-17.
79. Hart, op. cit., pages 53-54.

ears. To remain like that for only a few seconds is so incredibly uncomfortable that it proves it to be wrong. For really deep breathing, try to feel expansion in the lower part of the ribs, and pull in hard with the stomach muscles. To find if and how the diaphragm muscle is used in the breathing process, pant like a dog whilst keeping a hand on the midriff.

These directions are really meant for the teacher, but they can be used with the children as well. Roberts⁸⁰ complements this when she writes:

'Deep breath' does not mean an enormous breath - too much breath means breathiness as it cannot be controlled - the expression means breathing deep down at the base of the lungs, near the waistline instead of shallow breathing at the top of the chest.

Gardiner⁸¹ also gives suggestions for feeling the working of the diaphragm, and continues:

The act of inhalation causes a visible bulge from the breast-bone downwards as far as the naval... The resulting expansion is evident all round the body between the breast-bone and the naval, but should under no circumstances extend any lower than the naval.

According to Gardiner, the diaphragm always initiates the breath intake, but

the real art of inhalation depends on the expansion of the lower ribs... Only the peripheral edge of the diaphragm is capable of contracting. This part is attached to the lower ribs in such a way that any contraction of the diaphragm causes them to be pulled upwards and outwards, like the ribs of an umbrella when held upright and in process of being opened.

The author gives an exercise which enables the singer to experience this expansion more clearly:

Stand with one leg forward and knees slightly bent. Lean over from the waist with the neck and head in alignment with the spinal column, hands stretched out in front of you with palms upward. Breathe into the back and sides of your waistcoat. The diaphragm will contract, and at the same time you will feel the ribs expanding upwards and outwards.

Howe⁸² draws another analogy. To him

the ribs may be said to be 'bucket-handled'. When the

80. Roberts, op. cit., page 57.

81. Gardiner, op. cit., page 34.

82. Howe, op. cit., page 9.

handle of a bucket is raised, being bow-shaped, its upward movement will also be outward from the side of the bucket. In the same way the ribs, when lifted, move upwards and outwards, enlarging the chest from side to side. There is also an enlargement from back to front, due to a forward movement of the sternum.

Roe⁸³ writes as follows about inhaling:

Ordinarily the singer will obtain much finer results by expanding to breathe, instead of breathing to expand. The vacuum created when the body is left expanded will cause the body to naturally and automatically fill with air. Fill the bellows, not the balloon. Blowing up a balloon is more difficult than filling bellows, because the bellows expand and the vacuum created by the expansion causes them to be filled with air - while with the balloon, the air forces the expansion. 'Breathing to expand' usually causes local effort, and muscles that tend to contract and stiffen.

Cleall⁸⁴ comments similarly in this connection:

Keep the chest up all the time: breath will flow in silently to fill the cavity of a flexed chest; it must not be sucked in to hoist a collapsed chest... The expanded chest brings into play the breathing in muscles, so that the breath is kept in the lungs by the balance of opposing forces; under pressure but completely controlled... As the lungs fill, the waist will swell, but neither waist nor abdomen should protude.

Breath must be taken in quickly and deeply. However, Staton⁸⁵ warns: "If he takes too much breath suddenly, there is a tendency to hold it at the neck, and probably sharpness will result." Rainbow⁸⁶ feels that inhalation should take place with a quick gasp through the open mouth, an action analagous to the manner in which the expert swimmer opens his mouth for a quick breath as he passes through the water. He stresses that it is difficult for the teacher to explain exactly how to breathe, but that his example is of great importance and that he should move amongst the pupils demonstrating what he wants. In connection with deep breathing,

83. Roe, op. cit., page 87.

84. Cleall, op. cit., pages 11-12.

85. Staton, op. cit., page 52.

86. Rainbow, op. cit., page 60.

Rainbow continues:

The expression 'a deep breath' is so frequently and loosely used that we usually miss its true significance, Yet it means just what it says: that the breath is taken right down to the base of the lungs, thus depressing the diaphragm. When this occurs, the lungs are accommodating much more air than ordinarily. That is what forces the lower ribs outwards and sideways, and enables one to confirm the occurrence.

Howe⁸⁷ talks of the breath being sent to the bottom of the lungs, and writes: "Take an ample breath, without, however, attempting to blow oneself out." As an analogy, he uses the following example: "When a bottle is filled, the water first falls straight to the bottom of the bottle, and so it is filled to the neck." Roberts⁸⁸ says: "Singing necessitates deep breathing using the whole of the lungs." On the other hand, Staton⁸⁹ feels that "hard forced tone is often the result of the teacher urging the class to take a 'big breath'. Steenkamp and de Klerk⁹⁰ also warn that lack of insight in presenting breathing to children may create problems. "Sodra daar gesê word 'Haal diep asem' snuif hulle, trek die skouers op, neem 'n onnatuurlike gestremde houding aan." Edred Wright⁹¹ cautions against 'locking' the breath at the throat or elsewhere, which may well result from inhaling too much breath.

There is some controversy amongst authors as to whether inhaling should take place through the nose, the mouth, or both. Hardy⁹² quotes Behnke, who felt that nostril inhalation should be used wherever possible, except for short 'catch' breaths, and Randegger, who felt that inspiration for singing should take place only through the mouth, and then writes:

87. Howe, op. cit., pages 30-31.

88. Roberts, op. cit., page 57.

89. Staton, op. cit., page 39.

90. Steenkamp and de Klerk, op. cit., page 9.

91. Wright, op. cit., page 8.

92. T. Maskell Hardy, How to Train Children's Voices, Curwen, 1918, pages 15-16.

The plan which I myself follow, and the one used by professional singers generally, is to breathe through the nostrils at the commencement of a song, and during any long rests which may occur in the music, but to take breath through the mouth in all other places.

Jacques⁹³ agrees that quick inhalation takes place through the mouth and slow inhalation through the nose. Howe⁹⁴ also holds this view, considering that most breathing will take place through the mouth. In both methods, inhalation should occur silently.

Gardiner⁹⁵ feels that "when singing one always breathes through the mouth, never through the nose, and never through the nose and mouth simultaneously", his reason being that

breathing through the nose involves the lowering of the soft palate in order to allow a free passage for breath. This diminishes the length of the throat and seriously hinders its potential for becoming an effective resonating cavity. Furthermore the low position of the soft palate tends to block the space connecting the throat with the mouth and to send the tone up into the nasal passages. The result is an undesirably white and nasal tone quality.

This is logically reasoned, and when one is working with a choir, it is perhaps best to give a general instruction such as this, which will reduce the chances of a nasal quality to the sound developing. However, it is perfectly possible to breathe through both the nose and the mouth at the same time without producing either the "colossal sniffs and snorts" of which Gardiner is afraid, or nasal singing. Armhold⁹⁶, after stating that air should be inhaled silently and smoothly without drawing attention to the process, writes that this should be through both the nose and the mouth simultaneously.

The throat should be open. Roe⁹⁷ is very much against

93. Jacques, op. cit., page 16.
 94. Howe, op. cit., page 7.
 95. Gardiner, op. cit., page 34.
 96. Armhold, op. cit., page 27.
 97. Roe, op. cit., page 77.

the noisy intake of breath which he explains is the result of the incoming breath striking the soft palate and setting up a vibration between it and the pharynx behind it. "Have the singers lift the soft palate out of the way by 'opening the throat'. Vocalists must always sing with a firm, open throat and relaxed neck muscles." Quoting Albert Bach, Cleall⁹⁸ writes: "Breath must be drawn completely at ease, without fits and starts, and quite noiselessly, till even the lowest parts of the lungs are filled with air."

Armhold⁹⁹ stresses the fact that although the sensation of a wide, open throat must be achieved, "the open throat should never be consciously pressed down by muscles", and writes:

In the act of inhaling exaggerated yawning should be avoided as this would strain the organs concerned. The image of smelling a flower would be conducive towards sufficiently opened organs.

Roe¹⁰⁰ also warns of the tenseness which results from overdoing this, a condition which can be demonstrated by feeling the throat's taughtness at the peak of a yawn. He gives some very good ways of obtaining the necessary firm, open throat and relaxed neck muscles:

One can imagine how the throat feels just before taking a drink, and retaining that open feeling while singing;
feel suddenly amazed, resulting in a properly open throat;
listen for the sound of a pin dropping with an open mouth, with the same result;
"sing with an inner smile", feel 'ecstasy',
or feel the beginning or end of a yawn.

All such suggestions are useful, especially when one is

98. Cleall, op. cit., page 90, quoting from Albert B. Bach, Musical Education and Vocal Culture, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1898, page 27.

99. Armhold, op. cit., pages 27-28.

100. Roe, op. cit., page 77.

teaching techniques to school children.

Walter Carroll¹⁰¹ also uses the flower smelling analogy, as do Ulster¹⁰² and Steenkamp and de Klerk¹⁰³, who write:

Vir sangdoeleindes asem leerlinge in asof hulle 'n heerlike geur geniet, Hulle asem stil en sag in asof hulle aan 'n blom sou ruik. Hierdie oefening dien alleen as voorbeeld, en sodra leerlinge begryp wat met die blomme ruik bedoel word, kan die blomme vir goed weggegooi word.

In a pamphlet issued by the Transvaal Education Department¹⁰⁴, the Organizer of Music, J.H.van Eck, writes:

Breathing is smelling (inhaling fragrance). In the left buttonhole there is always an imaginary rose and all the teacher need do together with the class is to draw the rose from the buttonhole at every initial note and inhale the scent, to serve as a reserve of breath for the singing which follows directly.

Hunching of shoulders can be obviated by suggesting that the rose has a long stalk held at midriff height.

Observant children might remember that rose stems usually grow thorns, but otherwise the idea is a good one.

Rees¹⁰⁵ contributes the following point:

Teachers will find that children who are asked to sing will automatically breathe in as the conductor raises his arms for the downbeat. No order is needed. The problem facing the teacher is to ensure that children take in sufficient breath to sing each phrase comfortably.

Ehret¹⁰⁶ makes an important statement when he writes:

Even the taking of a breath must be initiated by the emotional thought behind it. In fact, the first phrase begins, not with the first note, but with the breath previous to it.

101. Carroll, op. cit., page 13.

102. Ulster, op. cit., page 107.

103. Steenkamp and de Klerk, op. cit., page 9.

104. School Music Suggestions - Basic Principles, compiled by J.H.van Eck, Transvaal Ed. Dept., 1956, pages 8-11.

105. Elwyn Rees, Rudiments of Music and Lesson Notes for Teachers, Schuter & Shooter, 1967, pages 21-22.

106. Walter Ehret, The Choral Conductor's Handbook, Augener, 1959, page 47.

Pfaff¹⁰⁷ holds similar views:

See that the children get into the habit of taking a good breath before they begin singing... You will have little trouble over breathing if you make sure that enough breath is taken IN before it is actually needed.

This advice is for teachers in infant classes, but it is relevant for children of any age level. Finally, Nicholson¹⁰⁸ writes:

To sum up the matter, it is in the emission of breath that we are able to give expression, but it is in taking in breath that we receive inspiration; and unless we are inspired we cannot express.

This is a whimsical play on words which nevertheless contains much truth.

We must agree with Nicholson¹⁰⁹ when he states that "expiration is the most difficult of the breathing functions." Staton¹¹⁰ reminds us that no stiffening of the throat or larynx should occur when the children change from inhaling to exhaling.

To Brocklehurst¹¹¹, it is of prime importance that the chest wall should not collapse during controlled exhalation. Cleall¹¹² agrees:

With the raised chest, breath is no longer driven out by the dead weight of the body, but controlled by the powerful muscle of the diaphragm... The ribs should not fall as the lungs empty; instead the belt (or clothes about the waist) should slacken as the waist diminishes... the real pressure of the breath should be concentrated up into the neck, the waist squeezing up the breath like a thumb at the base of a tube of toothpaste.

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107. Philip Pfaff, Music Handbook for Infant Schools, Evans Brothers, 1966, page 20.
 108. Sydney H. Nicholson, Quires and Places Where They Sing, S.P.C.K., 1932, page 109.
 109. Ibid., page 108.
 110. Staton, op. cit., page 39.
 111. J. Brian Brocklehurst, Music in Schools, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, page 15.
 112. Cleall, op. cit., pages 11-12.

Venables¹¹³ makes the following related comment:

A common fault in combining voice production with breathing is that a child will take breath properly, but will let the ribs collapse before the sound is struck, and will begin to sing at the end of a breath, as it were, instead of with the lungs well inflated.

Later, he writes: "The breath must be regulated from the waist, and there must be no effort to control it in the larynx.

Thinking about the throat leads to rigidity." Jacques¹¹⁴ feels that keeping the ribs raised during exhalation is "a tremendous step towards controlled breathing... A reserve of air is always kept in the lungs, a satisfactory position of the body is maintained, and the singing tone will be improved considerably. Vocal attack will be much more ready, and release can be controlled and tapered."

According to Roe¹¹⁵, one of the characteristics of good singing is "superior breath control", and he continues:

Students may learn the correct concept of breath control while they are singing song phrases by doing some of the physical isometric actions that keep the chest naturally lifted and the ribs expanded.

Wright¹¹⁶ warns that exhalation and the utilization of the breath for singing is an action during which inexperienced choristers

push out their breath on the first note - the chest being allowed to drop and the stomach to protude. Breathy tone, tightened throat muscles, and vocal strain are the results; and of course a quiet attack becomes impossible, nor will the breath last out as long as a musical phrase demands. The worst offenders in this respect are always the first to sing huskily after any intense work, and the attempt to make the breath last out leads to a rather ugly squeezed-out kind of tone at the end of a phrase. Moreover, the chest having dropped, the next breath taken in is likely to be shallower than the first; thus a vicious spiral is set in motion. Surprisingly little breath is

113. Venables, op. cit., pages 8 and 11.

114. Jacques, op. cit., page 16.

115. Roe, op. cit., page 70.

116. Wright, op. cit., page 8.

required for singing if a column of air under pressure from the waist is started, upon which the voice 'rests'. This column must remain unbroken: the very worst kind of singer is he who imagines that every note needs a separate puff of breath pumped out, as it were.

Armhold¹¹⁷ disagrees with those who advocate that breath should be pressed out during exhalation, but shows that control is exercised by the diaphragm and rib muscles, a restraining action without cramp. She writes:

One can also put it this way: The singer controls the outrush of the breath while holding the inhaled position during singing by imagining that he is further inhaling or drinking the tone, or as the old Italian master put it: 'The breath of a good note comes towards the singer, whereas a bad note seems to be slipping out'."

A whispered 'ah', as though warming the hand, will give a good illustration of how breath pressure can be regulated. She explains that "in addition to the restraining action of the diaphragm and rib muscles, the glottis itself offers resisting force to the breath pressure, which causes a compression of the breath, so that only so much air is used as is necessary for the production of a clear tone. This compression of air is called in singing terms the column of breath." Although the throat must not be impeded by stiffening or squeezing, there is nevertheless a feeling of firmness which results in a steadiness of tone, a sensation during singing "like an inflated bubble - nearer I cannot express it." She explains what is meant by the Italian term appoggio, a simultaneous contraction of the diaphragm and rib muscles together with a shutting of the vocal cords - as occurs when one lifts a heavy object, like a slight cough, and says that this 'leaning' of the breath is very useful in counteracting the use of excess breath by beginners. She continues:

117. Armhold, op. cit., pages 28-30.

It must be stressed, however, that this should not cause rigidity or cramp in the lower abdominal wall, which must be flexible enough to allow free play. As soon as one starts singing, one feels the steady gentle pressure of the abdominal muscles against the firm chest wall for the whole length of the phrase, until one stops to take a fresh breath. One can compare that sensation to the steady flow of a violin bow which always moves on.

In this connection, Jones¹¹⁸ says:

The students must learn.... the use of the stomach wall in tucking in for air expulsion... the abdominal lift. To experience this lift, the students may be asked to try several things. They can consciously push the abdominal wall immediately below the breast bone out and then tuck it in. If they shout a vigorous 'hey', the abdominal lift functions almost automatically. Then ask the students to use a prolonged 'ah', feeling the pressure build up from the abdominal lift to the closed vocal lips. The chest must remain high and quiet.

Garniner¹¹⁹ explains the need for this compression as follows:

Like the reeds of any woodwind instrument the vocal cords have to be energized by breath pressure. They may of themselves be able to vibrate, but air has to be passed between them before sound waves can be created, and at atmospheric pressure no energy is forthcoming. The top of the wind-pipe, i.e. the vocal cords, must be closed and the chest cavity made smaller by pressing the diaphragm upwards against the inflated lungs. Naturally the vibration of the vocal cords gradually exhausts the air, so that the air pressure against them is bound to drop unless compression is continually maintained.

He reminds us that under normal circumstances upward compression only occurs when one forcibly expels air from the nose or mouth, or when one is emotionally stimulated such as in being suddenly surprised. A suggestion he makes is for someone to place a hand heavily on the crown of the head in order to compel the singer to think and push upwards. The action of the lower ribs produces an over-all physical sensation which is "as if you had lifted up a little trapdoor immediately behind the triangular division, and were pulling the intestines up through it", the area being that formed by the divergence of

118. Jones, op. cit., page 152.

119. Gardiner, op. cit., pages 48-49, 46, 52-55.

the lower ribs below the breast-bone. An interesting point raised by Gardiner in this connection deserves mention:

The shoulders will inevitably rise in the same way as the upper part of an inflated paper bag bulges when squeezed from below, but there is no need to worry about this. Altogether too much stress has been laid by many teachers on the importance of keeping the shoulders down, and not nearly enough on the importance of pulling the neck high out of the body, and never allowing it to shorten. Nevertheless any lifting or hunching of the shoulders must be checked at an early stage.

This author uses many cogent examples and useful analogies to exemplify the concepts he puts forward, and this can be profitably emulated by the choir trainer. The following are examples of this method:

One might compare the diaphragm and the abdominal muscles in the act of compression to a dance team in which the ballerina is lifted by her male partner. Skilful though the latter may be, he cannot carry through his routine unless the ballerina has previously distributed her weight so as to bring her centre of gravity as high up the body as possible... You are a tightrope walker, and for this you need an extremely high and consistent centre of gravity. Having chosen a line on the carpet, mentally remove the rest of the floor, substituting a circus ring a hundred feet below you. Unless your shoes are soft and flexible, take them off. As you set foot on the imaginary wire, feel that your centre of gravity has shifted to halfway up the breast-bone. Instinctively you find yourself holding the breath. This is a characteristic of performing any skilled act, such as threading a needle, hitting a ball, jumping or walking a tight-rope. Thereby one prevents any chance of equilibrium being disturbed as a result of the descent and contraction of the diaphragm.

According to Gardiner, a further element to be considered is the contraction of the sacro-spinalis muscles, situated on either side of the lower spinal column. He explains the sensation in this way:

With the muscles contracted, the sensation at and a little above the small of the back is of being pulled outwards as if you were growing a hump... In addition to the sensation of bulge below the lower ribs, there is a tendency for the arms to be held away from the body, and of a cave-man feeling about the carriage of the upper part of the body; it is almost as if the

abdomen had disappeared... The technique of keeping the sacro-spinalis contracted enables the singer to think of his upper chest as a kind of inflated motor tyre with an air compression kept constant by some automatic regulating mechanism below it.

In order to ensure that the singer acquires both an adequate compression and a steady contraction of the sacro-spinalis, Gardiner again gives an analogy:

You imagine that you are preparing in two successive movements to shoot an arrow from a bow. Assuming that you are right-handed, you first extend the left arm; similarly, in preparing to sing, the upper chest bulges as the result of compression below it. In the second movement the right-handed bowman draws back his right arm until maximum tension is achieved; in similar fashion the singer's sacro-spinalis muscles are tightened so that the small of the back bulges outwards and upwards. With this double preparation, the work is to all intents and purposes done; the archer simply releases the arrow, and the singer his pitched note. There is no pushing or squeezing as in blowing a wind instrument, and the only difference between singing and archery is that the singer must maintain the tension throughout the sung phrase and until the moment after he has completed the final note.

Having made the statement that "voice production depends upon the controlled expulsion of air from the chest, Howe¹²⁰ writes:

The relaxation of the diaphragm and ribs in expiration must be considered as a controlled yielding to opposing muscular force; i.e. a balanced resistance, which creates breath intensity; actually air compression. The lungs being very elastic when fully inflated, will tend to expel air by natural recoil. The ribs, also, when raised, have a like tendency to spring back to their normal position. The first muscular effort will be the contraction of the abdominal muscles, felt in the region of the diaphragm, followed by the relaxation of the ribs at the sides of the chest.

Gardiner¹²¹ agrees. He explains that exhalation is impossible during singing if the lower ribs are not allowed to relax completely. Moreover, the singer must consciously feel that

for the diaphragm the state of relaxation is the natural state, the condition from which it departs

120. Howe, op. cit., page 11.

121. Gardiner, op. cit., pages 51-52.

only for a moment, and to which it returns as a matter of course... Naturally the singer does not have to think of all this; he simply induces the sensation of a high centre of gravity.

McLachlan¹²² gives the following useful hint:

Onervare sangers kan dikwels aanvanklik nie die beweging (gebruik) van die diafragma behoorlik voel en kontroleer nie. Die 'bewustheid' kan gehelp word deur op 'n gewone stoel te sit met die elmboë op die knieë terwyl die ken in die handpalms rus. As nou ingeasem word, is die regte werking van die middelrif en ribspiere duidelik waarneembaar. Die persoon hou dan aan met die gewenste asembewegings terwyl hy stadig orent kom.

Roe¹²³ makes the important point concerning exhalation that since the diaphragm is an involuntary muscle, any attempt to control the tone by hardening it can only result in a locked, tight throat. He makes the very useful comment that

if the singer gets ready to blow, then delays the action, the diaphragm feels as it should in good singing, firm, not hard. The diaphragm and abdomen react most favorably when the singer concentrates upon keeping the ribs out and the shoulders relaxed. This leaves the diaphragm and abdomen free to obey the commands of the mind without conflicting localized tensions.

Roe also mentions singing in front of a lighted candle, and the imaginary drinking in of air to control exhalation, and continues:

Students must learn to hold back air at the ribs and diaphragm, not at the throat, which, at all times while singing, must remain firmly open with no feeling of tension. The teacher must instruct his choir so that the members conserve and control their breath and energy and sing on breath pressure, not on spilled air. Let them imagine their bodies to be eggs that they dare not crush or squeeze (or blown glass which will shatter if the slightest pressure is applied; the original expanded shape must be carefully maintained). Holding the ribs out builds a pressure under the larynx that assists greatly in firming vocal cords and bringing them together so that a clear tone may be sung (the Bernoulli Effect). The trick is to allow the expansion at the waist to relax slowly enough. Pressure must be held back at the beginning of the phrase and added a little at the very end, for accurate pitch depends upon uniform air pressure.

122. McLachlan, op., cit., page 126.

123. Roe, op. cit., pages 78 and 87.

Expulsion must be carefully controlled. Roberts¹²⁴ feels: "Economy of exhalation is the aim of singing, and no unvocalized breath should escape." Winn¹²⁵ agrees. Nicholson¹²⁶ writes: "The best general rule is to use as little breath as possible to secure the vocal tone required; strength of tone is not necessarily produced by the amount of air used, but by its controlled and focussed pressure." Rainbow¹²⁷ is concerned that some singers waste breath by using it up too quickly when singing:

This is another reason why the 'chests-out' type of breathing... is so unsatisfactory. What felt like an enormous breath was taken and held under such tension that its release was bound to be too fast. Breathiness in singing, and the weak tone that characterizes it, are often due to this. In good singing the breath is not allowed to escape. It is controlled so that only the necessary amount passes out at a time. Tell the children that they should sing as a teapot pours, and not as a hose-pipe forces water out in a jet.

Herbert-Caesari¹²⁸ writes: "For the purposes of good, mechanically correct singing..., the breath must reach the larynx in a smooth, regular stream exercising normal pressure, and never forced pressure." He makes the very interesting statement that "if the speaking principle is applied to singing there can be, and will be no excess breath pressure." After explaining this concept in detail, he continues: "Provided his breathing muscles function correctly and have had appropriate exercise, the singer can profitably forget all about his diaphragm, his ribs, his chest... Flexible firmness is the soul of vocal vibration and is therefore the antithesis of rigidity."

124. Roberts, op. cit., page 57.

125. Winn, op. cit., page 43.

126. Nicholson, op. cit., pages 108-109.

127. Rainbow, op. cit., pages 61-62.

128. E. Herbert-Caesari, The Voice of the Mind, Robert Hale, 1963, pages 189, 191, 193-194.

Finally, Winn¹²⁹ makes the valid point that soft singing requires as much breath control as that for louder singing, and the teacher should explain this to the children.

Breathing, as is the case with the techniques of singing in general, is a somewhat controversial subject, both with regard to the physical mechanisms involved and also concerning the way in which it should be taught. Some writers doubt the usefulness of exercises. Firth¹³⁰ writes:

Breathing exercises in themselves are not very helpful, since the control of breath will take place automatically in vocal exercises and in songs themselves.

Winn¹³¹ agrees:

A good deal of time is often spent (and more often wasted) on what are called breathing exercises. Of course, it is essential that young singers should learn to breathe correctly from the very beginning, but it is questionable whether it is necessary to start every lesson with puffing and blowing.

Holst¹³² records advice given to her by Peter Peers:

I asked him whether a choir-trainer should spend any time on breathing exercises, and he told me that with his own pupils he says as little as possible about breathing and lets them learn on the songs they are singing.

Brocklehurst¹³³ makes the following interesting comment:

Many teachers maintain that breathing exercises are a waste of time since it is absurd to attempt to teach children how to do something that they have been doing automatically since birth. It is certainly true that if there is no carry-over effect from the exercises to the singing, such exercises serve little purpose. Many children probably look upon breathing exercises as a rather intriguing ritual of the singing lesson which has nothing really to do with the singing of songs.

Shaw¹³⁴, on the other hand, feels that "insufficiency of breath, whether because of inadequate intake or insufficient

129. Winn, op. cit., page 45.

130. Winifred Firth, Class Singing and Aural Training in the Junior School, Novello, 1958, page 18.

131. Winn, op. cit., page 12.

132. Holst, op. cit., page 53. 133. Brocklehurst, op. cit., p.14.

134. Shaw, op. cit., pages 70-71.

control, is at the root of much poor singing, in particular of indifferent tone and failing intonation. It is impossible, therefore, to leave breathing out of account." Reginald Jacques¹³⁵ writes quite aggressively about the teaching of breathing:

This subject is dismissed far too casually by some teachers of class-singing, but surely it is of no use complaining about bad tone, faulty attack and release, flat singing, and poor phrasing, when practically nothing is being done to improve what lies at the root of all the trouble, lack of capacity and control in breathing. In some cases the whole technique is ignored, the view being held that children's breathing should not be interfered with, on the grounds that in all probability they are breathing correctly by nature, and any exercises which they may be given will do more harm than good. The most effective answer to this theory is to ask a class of young children who have not been taught controlled breathing to sing a line or two of a song which contains either a long-sustained note or a lengthy phrase... Nature prepares for the 'usual' in regard to breathing. The organs which function during the act of respiration are able to stand up against a fair amount of extra effort, but should that effort be continued for any length of time, distress inevitably ensues. A song with a continuous vocal line, long phrases, and few spaces for breathing is not a 'usual' phenomenon for children; therefore, of necessity, if they must sing music of this type, and unquestionably many of the most beautiful songs are of a sustained character, they must be equipped by suitable exercises which give the necessary capacity and control.

Bentley¹³⁶ makes the following interesting points:

Such exercises can be extracted from songs being currently taught and so their object is immediately apparent to the pupils... the music teacher's task is not to increase chest expansion or lung capacity, but to teach the pupil to use his physical equipment efficiently for the singing of a particular song or musical phrase. There is, of course, a purely incidental, nevertheless useful, purpose in starting a music lesson with a few, quiet, deep breathing exercises. They calm down a lively group, especially if they have run or jostled their way to the music room. They focus attention upon the job in hand, on posture, and, one hopes, on the teacher; with the emphasis on 'quiet' breathing they also focus attention upon listening; and singing that is not at the same time listening, is rarely good singing.

135. Jacques, op. cit., pages 14-15.

136. Arnold Bentley, 'The Teacher's Equipment', in Handbook for Music Teachers, (ed. Rainbow), Novello, pages 37-38.

This is a pleasingly refreshing approach.

Several authors discuss the teaching of breathing techniques to young children. McLachlan¹³⁷ write:

Doeltreffende asembeheer moet van die begin af die aandag geniet aangesien geen goeie sang daarsonder moontlik is nie. Die beginsel van hoe jonger die kind, hoe minder behoort ons gebruik te maak van formele asemhalingsoefeninge wat losstaan van werklike sang, geld ook hier. Trouens, ons glo dat die normale jong kind van nature so aktief is dat sy asemhaling op sigself nouliks enige spesiale oefening nodig het. Wat hy moet wel aanleer, is om korrekte asemhalingsgewoontes met sy sang te verbind.

Pfaff¹³⁸ feels: "Breathing exercises as such do very little if any good with young children and are extremely boring." On the other hand, Annie Langelaar¹³⁹ has written:

Reeds bij de kleuter moet hiermede regelmatig geoefend worden, al mag dit nooit gebeuren als 'oefening', doch uitsluitend in spelvorm. In het begin lijkt het misschien moeilijk om steeds weer nieuwe vormen te vinden, maar ook hier wijst het kind ons vaak de weg. Wij behoeven er alleen maar voor open te staan. Bovendien hoeft het niet altijd een nieuw spelletje te zijn. Het kind herhaalt immers eindeloos en vaak met steeds groter plezier, omdat het er een zekere vaardigheid in gaat krijgen. Afgezien daarvan kan een zelfde spelvorm bij een ander liedje in een ander verhaal, dus in een ander 'omgeving', volkomen nieuw zijn voor het kind.

Obviously, the sooner children learn how to breathe correctly for singing, the better, but the teacher must approach the matter circumspectly. Children who enjoy choral singing will soon realize the value of a sound technique. Fiske and Dobbs¹⁴⁰ say: "Once the reason for practice... is understood, 'exercises' which give the necessary practice may certainly be introduced."

Even in choir practices, there is little time for elaborate exercises. Field-Hyde¹⁴¹ feels that the teaching of

137. McLachlan, op. cit., page 19.

138. Pfaff, op. cit., page 20.

139. Annie Langelaar, Voorbereidend Muziekonderwijs, J. Muusses Purmerend, 1956, page 37.

140. Roger Fiske and J.P.B. Dobbs, The Oxford School Music Books - Teacher's Manual, Senior, I, Oxford, 1958, page 3.

breathing to children should be done simply since elaborate and numerous exercises are not only unnecessary but may even be more harmful than beneficial. Moreover, time is limited, and the simpler the procedures the better. He continues: "The great prominence given to the subject of breathing, and the insistence with which considerable numbers of exercises have been advocated, are rather calculated to imbue the minds of young teachers with the idea that correct breathing is only possible as a result of elaborate teaching of the subject." Jacques¹⁴¹ writes about breathing exercises:

They must be given tersely and pointedly, the children themselves being made to realize the importance of such exercises as the foundation of good singing tone. Clever patterning by the teacher is vital in regard to this technique: a well-controlled long note held steadily *mf*, contrasted with one that is breathy, shaky in pitch, and lacking in tone, will be more effective than all the lengthy descriptions in the world.

Most authors give some guidance with regard to the type of exercises which can be used. Brocklehurst¹⁴² gives the following advice:

There are two methods generally employed in breathing exercises. In one the teacher stretches his arms out in front with the palms touching: the children inhale as the arms are moved outwards and exhale, or sing a note in the middle of their compass, as the arms are moved inwards. An alternative method of raising the arms from the sides for inhalation is not to be recommended since it tends to encourage the children to raise their shoulders as they inhale.

The children should accept the first method as being both natural and unritualistic, particularly if it is related to the songs they are singing. A third method given by Brocklehurst in which the teacher uses a clock face in order to control the length of the exhalation seems to be unnecessary, certainly when one is training a choir rather than taking a singing lesson. However, Winn¹⁴³ also extols this method since

141. Jacques, *op.cit.*, page 19. 142. Brocklehurst, *op.cit.*, page 15.

"there is more likelihood of the breath coming and going regularly than by other improvised methods." Ulster¹⁴³ suggests five imaginative methods of presenting breathing techniques to primary-school pupils. Picking and smelling flowers, blowing the flame of a candle over without extinguishing it, panting like a tired dog, imagining feathers in the air which must be kept up by blowing, and blowing soap bubbles using clay pipes are all usefully imaginative approaches. Steenkamp and de Klerk¹⁴⁴ and Howe¹⁴⁵ also give sets of exercises. Venables¹⁴⁶ covers similar ground, giving seven breathing exercises which include the retention of breath for increasing periods.

There is some disagreement amongst writers as to whether breath should be held in breathing exercises. Gardiner¹⁴⁷ feels that "exercises in which one takes a breath, hold it for ten seconds or so and finally lets it out very slowly... are of no practical help to singers." Carroll¹⁴⁸ agrees, as do Shaw¹⁴⁹ and Jacques¹⁵⁰, the latter writing: "holding the breath may increase capacity, but, unless most carefully done, it tends to rigidity and strain, and is not a 'singing position'." On the other hand, Nicholson¹⁵¹ commends exercises in which the breath is held, and Armhold¹⁵² also feels that "to practise holding the breath is most important." She gives three exercises which incorporate this principle, based on yoga. There is not, however, any need to have school children do so, unless one can be certain that no ill effects result.

Armhold¹⁵³ contributes further to the literature on

143. Ulster, op.cit., page 107.

144. Steenkamp and de Klerk, op.cit., pages 9-10. /8-11.

145. Howe, op.cit., page 40. 146. Venables, op.cit., pages

147. Gardiner, op.cit., page 41. /70-71.

148. Carroll, op.cit., page 13. 149. Shaw, op.cit., pages

150. Jacques, op.cit., page 17.

151. Nicholson, op.cit., page 108.

152. Armhold, op.cit., pages 63-64. 153. Ibid.

breathing when she writes:

To prevent stiffness of the diaphragm, and to increase the flexibility of the whole abdominal wall, I recommend two exercises:

1. Hissing ss or f alternately, at first slowly and then in long strokes in order to observe the proceeding very carefully. With every ss and f the lower abdominal wall contracts and pushes the diaphragm up, and this in turn causes a pressure against the chest. Care should be taken to relax the abdominal muscles completely between every ss and f. Gradually this should be practised faster, always relaxing in between. This should sound like a locomotive which just starts moving.

2. Panting soundlessly on ha ha ha (like a dog) serves the same purpose. I prefer the first method because the breath can be taken through the nose; exercise 2 tends to dry up the mucous membrane of the larynx.

Hart¹⁵⁴ makes similar comment. Since tone depends on the consciously controlled emission of the air, she suggests that breathing out on an audible 'sh-sh-sh' or 's-s-s', or 'h-aaa' because 'h' opens the throat, will give the sense of expelling the breath with control and evenness.

Under the heading 'Tone Development, the Australian author Frank Higgins¹⁵⁵ writes: "It will be noticed that the writer has emphasized whistling, the reason being that to whistle effectively the breath must be used correctly; in addition, the resonating chambers of the head are fully used. A good singer is invariably a good whistler... besides singing their songs, therefore, children should be allowed to whistle them, and this should be a regular practice." This is a most interesting idea, though it should not become a fetish.

Not only is a sound breathing technique the basis of good tonal quality in the voice, but it is also very important with regard to achieving a worthwhile musical interpretation. Phrasing is a vital element in the musical performance of piece of music and controlled breathing supports good phrasing.

154. Hart, op. cit., page 54.

155. Frank Higgins, Music Education in the Primary School, Macmillan, 1964, pages 31-32.

In this connection, Priestley and Grayson¹⁵⁶ write: "The aim of the teacher must be to develop that easy control which will give continuity of the breath over the range of each phrase of a song." They continue:

Faults will arise in the songs - breathing in the middle of a phrase, or even in the middle of a word. The teacher can demonstrate these faults by speaking the phrase as it has just been sung by the children, and then repeating it correctly, for singing is speech enhanced by melody. Recognition of the fault by the children should be followed by speaking and then singing the phrase correctly in imitation of the teacher.

Firth¹⁵⁷ contributes the following advice:

From the first, children should be taught to breathe at the end of phrases. In songs for young children, if well written, the phrases are short. Should the phrases be a little longer, then quiet singing will enable less breath to be used, and so it should be possible to progress to the end of the phrase without taking a fresh breath... Rather than break the phrases, it would be better to quicken the pace slightly if difficulty is being experienced... The greatest difficulty in obtaining correct breathing occurs where there is no break at the end of a line of poetry, and the music indicates this by continuing without a pause of any kind. This is to be found particularly in hymns, and, from the first, children should be encouraged to look out for this continuity and to sing through to the next line without a break.

This linking of breathing with the meaning of the words is commendable. Moreover, as Woodgate¹⁵⁸ reminds us, "a choir cannot sing long phrases without taking a breath and this must be considered by the conductor at all times." One of the things we must strive for in the vocal development of young children, according to McLachlan¹⁵⁹, is "korrekte frasering wat regstrecks in verband staan met goeie asembeheer... Dit is nie slegs goed vir asemhaling nie, maar bevorder ook die fundamentele musikale konsep van frasegevoe." Writing about phrasing, Staton¹⁶⁰ says: "Breathing points must be skilfully managed, so that the line of sound is as continuous as poss-

156. Priestley and Grayson, op. cit., pages 12-13.

157. Firth, op. cit., pages 18-19. /& Crew, 1949, page 2.

158. Leslie Woodgate, The Choral Conductor, Ascherberg, Nopwood

159. McLachlan, op.cit., page 19. 160. Staton, op.cit., page 56.

ible - an additional reason for the copies being carefully marked for breathing places." Similarly, Higgins¹⁶¹ feels that "the breath should be taken in the natural places in the phrases so that the full meaning of the words and music can be conveyed, and these breathing places should be clearly marked on the music so that all breathe together."

Myers¹⁶² makes the following points: "For those to whom singing is a new experience phrases... should be short. Artistic singing demands that a phrase be sung in one breath." She warns that "children will mimic their model. If the teacher gasps for breath after the first three words, each line will probably be sung in two sections... Emphasis on vowels demands a bit more control of the breath than does chopping the words short. Longer phrases can be sung easily and naturally with practice." She stresses that the children should be made aware of the meaning of the words, which will dictate the phrasing and the breathing that supports it, and writes: "Words of songs are so important that they have a claim to the most careful attention." Brocklehurst¹⁶³ agrees with her: "The phrasing and breathing points must always be determined by the sense of the words."

In her chapter on 'Part-Songs', Holst¹⁶⁴ deals with breathing places in this way:

The singers should avoid taking a new breath where it interferes with the meaning of words. A comma in a sentence can always provide a suitable breathing-place if it is needed... The word 'and', when it suggests that there might have been a comma just before it, can often be used as a breathing-place, but it needs intelligent phrasing to avoid a sudden burst of sound from newly-filled lungs. A new breath after a word

161. Higgins, op. cit., page 63.

162. Louise Kifer Myers, Teaching Children Music in the Elementary School, Prentice-Hall, 1961, pages 30-32.

163. Brocklehurst, op. cit., page 31.

164. Holst, op. cit., pages 67-68.

that ends on a consonant such as b, ck, d, g, p, s or t can result in untidy phrasing if the singers are haphazard about it.

Firth¹⁶⁵ writes:

A comma is often the most suitable point at which to snatch a breath, but since commas may be used indiscriminately, teachers will need to use their discretion over this. When words are repeated, it often helps to achieve the most musicianly interpretation if there is a slight break between the repetitions where a breath may be snatched.

Gardiner¹⁶⁶ says:

Over and above technical defects, quick breaths become unpleasantly noticeable unless the dynamic on the words immediately following the breath is precisely the same as on the preceding words... Sometimes there is a tendency to start the new phrase with a burst of rather breathy tone. It can be avoided by making sure that lung tension is inspired by a genuine emotional impulse.

Dealing with where breath should be taken, Venables¹⁶⁷ states: "The production of good tone and the preservation of the sense of the words alike depend upon care in breathing. Musical and verbal phrases do not always agree." Concerning musical phrasing, breath may be taken

at the commencement of a phrase;
at rests (silent pulses or parts of pulses);
before a high note;
before a long-sustained note;
before a strong pulse rather than before a weak one.

With regard to verbal phrasing, inhaling may occur

at the beginning of lines;
at punctuation marks;
at other convenient places chosen to bring out the meaning of the words.

He continues: "Do not breathe immediately after an article, preposition, adjective, or transitive verb", but this is not always true, contrary examples being 'the snow so white' (adjective) and 'the book he did bring' (transitive verb). "Most important of all, never take breath in the middle of a word."

165. Firth, op. cit., pages 18-19.

166. Gardiner, op. cit., page 191.

167. Venables, op. cit., page 54.

This fault occurs surprisingly often, even at eisteddfodau.

Cleall¹⁶⁸ makes the interesting point that since double consonants which completely stop the breath need a rush of breath to complete their articulation, "this rush of breath can be used to disguise the taking of breath." He continues:

If, during a long phrase, breath consonants end one word and start the next, providing the first word is given a dotted note, it is a simple matter to close it on the dot, thus shortening the note by the length of the dot, and to follow the articulation of the consonant by a snatched breath; or even to articulate it by means of an in-going breath. No gasp will be heard if the ribs remain flexed and the throat is not allowed to close up... The foregoing also applies to breath consonants followed by voiced... Our rule, then, is this: mark a tall V after all the T's and S's ending words in your score. Mark all the breath consonants, if you like, for they can all be used in this way, though T and S with least likelihood of the audience noticing. Rub out the marks after notes no longer than a beat, and breathe at the remainder if you need to, by sounding T and S on the last beat of the note. Use your judgement in deleting the marks further (because they are near the start of the phrase, for example), or adding more (because the punctuation suggests it); but think twice about breathing at commas, for the sense does not always need it, and a fussy element is brought in by over-punctilious breathing. Don't breathe unless your lungs need it; though it is permissible to take a series of short breaths not necessary in themselves, in order slowly to fill the lungs for a long phrase coming.

On the timing of final vowels, he writes:

It is legitimate, of course, to end phrases closed with a vowel early; if a breath is needed, and no chance for one is given. Shorten the note by a beat or half a beat.

Whilst this is all both interesting and useful, it will surely not be necessary to resort to these methods of taking breaths too often when one is training the school choir. The music one chooses should not have such ungainly phrasing nor be generally so difficult that it requires this type of action. However, when the need arises, the children can be assisted in this way, and it should prove valuable to do so when one is dealing with staggered breathing.

168. Cleall, op. cit., pages 25-26 and 29.

Roe¹⁶⁹ feels that the trainer should insist that choir members should breathe only at the ends of phrases when the group is a large one, except for the use of 'staggered breathing' when the phrase is very long. However, he gives some rules for the occasional mid-phrase breath:

When breath has to be so taken as to divide a phrase, the first note after renewal of breath should be delivered with the volume, intensity, and color that characterized the note preceding the breath. When it is necessary to take a breath, steal enough time from the final note of the phrase to take a quick breath and sing the beginning note of the new phrase precisely on the beat.

He gives five places where such breaths can be taken, namely

where the direction of a run changes or is interrupted by a skip;
after a syncopated note;
during a florid passage when it can be divided by repeating words;
after a noun.

Roe's suggestion, similar to Cleall's (page 69), that singers should habitually breathe at each punctuation mark, even when not needing to, in order to avoid breaking the next phrase, seems to be unnecessary advice for school choirs.

Ehret's¹⁷⁰ most valuable ideas on breathing occur in his chapter on 'Rehearsal Procedures'. He writes:

Choirs as a unit breathe too much! There is no valid reason for a unison breath in the middle of a long phrase or before a climax note. Instruct your members in the use of 'staggered' or 'relay' breathing and enjoy the pleasure of a 'long' phrase, the control of which is basic to superior choral singing.

He then proceeds to give succinct and useful instructions concerning the teaching of this technique, which he feels is "simple and easily mastered." Roe¹⁷¹ gives the following statement concerning staggered breathing:

A choir member must develop a special technique for carrying long phrases. He must form a habit of catching a new breath before running low on air supply by

169. Roe, op. cit., pages 277-278.

170. Ehret, op. cit., pages 15-16. 171. Roe, ibid.

interrupting any white note for an instant when he thinks his neighbor won't breathe. He leaves his mouth in the position for the vowel he is singing, inhales, and comes back in on the same vowel he left momentarily. The singer gradually softens his tone just before he breathes, and his neighbor sings with enough more power to balance the ensemble. Then the singer comes back in softly, with a gradual crescendo while his neighbor fades. This maneuver takes expert teamwork with the neighboring singer, and the well-executed breath will be imperceptible to an audience. Staggered breathing is like walking out of the room and back in without anyone missing you. The singers must never use staggered breathing when they can carry the phrase musically and with control without breaking.

It would seem that when staggered breathing is to be used, especially when one wishes to produce an unbroken legato effect, it should be possible to work out the exact place where each singer breathes, marking this in the music copy. This will remove the 'chance' element which optimistically assumes that one's neighbour will not be breathing when one wishes to take a breath. The exception, when one runs out of breath unexpectedly, should occur very seldom if everything is well-rehearsed.

Herbert-Caesari¹⁷² feels that "to sing legato is to breathe out legato; it is to think legato." Later, he writes¹⁷³: "The breath must have motion; it must flow freely and evenly... induced by thinking, willing and visualizing a smooth tonal flow." A useful suggestion of his is "mentally to 'carry up the breath' beforehand to the height at which the tone is to be produced... excess breath pressure is avoided and the fear of attacking high notes abated." He writes further in this connection:

For the attack of a high note, or final phrases of a high tessitura, we advise the student to take a normal breath, and then for the attack mentally take just a short 'stick of breath' (say three inches of needle thickness) and imagine it already poised in the breath cavity ready to be used. The reaction to this apparently absurd thought of a 'mental length of breath' is such that it positively inhibits the employment of

172. Herbert-Caesari, op. cit., pages 198, 289-290.

excess breath pressure; fuss and fear also vanish.

Holst¹⁷³ points out the need for a well-ventilated practice-room, and writes: "Lack of air can transform willing, intelligent choir members into sullen slackers who sing flat... the air the singers breathe is the raw material of their singing."

Winn¹⁷⁴ makes the interesting point that "the kind of breath one takes at the opening of a song should give the audience some idea of its general character." It sets the atmosphere for the choir as well. Once again, the words of the song are important, since an understanding of their meaning will determine this emotional response.

Finally, Rees¹⁷⁵ says:

It is suggested that teachers should practise singing selected voice exercises... and difficult phrases from songs in private, paying particular attention to their own breathing habits. When showing the class how to deal with difficult situations they will speak from experience. The most successful teachers are those who are aware of the pitfalls facing the unwary and can demonstrate what is required.

173. Holst, op. cit., page 45.

174. Winn, op. cit., page 46.

175. Rees, op. cit., pages 21-22.

DESIGNING A PROGRAMME

Even when the choir is to sing only a small group of a few songs, it is important that the trainer takes care with the design of his programme. He must consider the character of each of the songs, how they relate to each other, and how each piece contributes to an aesthetically and dramatically successful performance. When a complete concert is presented, this programme-building skill is all the more necessary.

Reginald Jacques¹ comments relevantly that "the programme should be varied in character and show a sense of design", and he warns:

... make quite sure that the choir is definitely going to profit by a fine musical experience before deciding to risk a performance which may cause a large number of innocent people to feel uncomfortable. The conductor should be enterprising in his choice of works and they should be difficult enough to make the keenest and most musical members interested and occupied at rehearsals, but there is a great deal of difference between this and the type of music which can never be made a success in performance. Do not choose works which are intriguing mainly because they are hard.

Roe², whose first consideration is always the educational value of the choral activities to the choir members, writes in the context of the situation in the United States, where the school and community work very closely together and where the concert often serves to inform the public about the work done in the classroom:

Usually concerts should reflect the total music program and should grow out of the music class and class activities. The presentation should be dignified unless a section is deliberately undignified by plan of organization. The abilities of students must be considered and utilized, but not exploited. An audience must understand the purpose of the performance in general terms of the music program's objectives, including the fact that performance is necessary for growth.

1. Reginald Jacques, Voice Training and Conducting in Schools, Oxford, 1963, pages 147-148. /page 328.
 2. Paul F. Roe, Choral Music Education, Prentice-Hall, 1970,

This close liason with parents is not usually encountered in South African Schools, particularly at the high-school level. Moreover, when one is working with a selected group of pupils, it is preferable not to have to rely upon the 'understanding' condescension of parents, and to approach the giving of a concert by the choir in the same way as any other seriously-intended musical performance.

As far as the content is concerned, there should be a sensible balance between contrasting and similar items. It is preferable to begin with music of a more serious nature and then to move to songs of a lighter character, a scheme often followed by choir masters. However, whatever the character of the music, each section should be carefully constructed, with particular attention being given to the first and last songs.

Roe³ again has some useful advice to offer:

Use music that will allow the group to warm up at the beginning of its section of the program (but be sure the number used also has audience appeal). Do not mix sacred and secular or serious and humorous songs within the same group unless there is a sound reason for it. The final number in a unit must be climactic and memorable... Each selection must be interesting enough in itself to hold the audience's attention and must be so related to the other numbers that the evolving program possesses variety and contrast at the same time that it stays faithful to the central theme or idea. Variety and contrast may be provided through changing moods, rhythms, tempi, and lengths of numbers. The keys must not be too unrelated, but must not be the same.

This sums up the whole matter of programme building very succinctly. The question of a well-constructed programme seems seldom to receive much attention at school level. Roe stresses that the opening song must not be the most difficult - it is in fact preferable to place any difficult items in the middle of a section, which allows one the possibility of a redemption

3. Roe, op. cit., pages 333-334.

exercise in the event of a disaster - and that "a good beginning and a powerful conclusion to the total program are imperative", though one should perhaps substitute "memorable and effective" for "powerful", which suggests a large force of numbers.

Whilst there is a vast range of choral music available from which to construct a programme, it is best to rely mainly on one's own choral arrangements of suitable folksongs and similar music when training an unsophisticated school choir. It is quite possible to build a most worthwhile, varied, aesthetically-pleasing programme from such material.

An interesting area of song selection has to do with language. Whilst it is by no means necessary to sing a foreign song in its original language and it may be sensible and expedient to use a good translation, it is nevertheless stimulating to attempt to sing songs in their vernacular for the pleasure and adventure that such an activity provides, and this naturally allows one to get nearer to the character and style of the music. In this connection, McLachlan⁴ writes:

Enige lied, hetsy volkslied of kunslied, sal altyd van sy artistieke waarde moet prysgee wanneer die musiek van die oorspronklike teks geskei en op 'n vertaalde teks oorgedra word. Dit is egter in die beste belang van skoolsang dat daar vertaling van liedere sal plaasvind... Hoe jonger die kind, hoe noodsaakliker is dit dat hy oorwegend in sy moedertaal sal sing, anders sal sy sang te veel moet prysgee aan spontaneïteit en natuurlikheid. Die liedereskat van die kind moet ook met vertalings aangevul word ten einde die nodige verskeidenheid van style en musikale idioom te verkry... Namate die kind ouer word, is dit egter noodsaaklik dat hy in toenemende mate ook liedere in die oorspronklike teks sal sing.

When this is done, care must be taken to achieve correct pronunciation, and the songs should be sung in an idiomatically

4. Philip McLachlan, Klasonderrig in Musiek, Nasou, undated, pages 62-63.

correct style. Certainly the children should sing songs with Afrikaans as well as English words, besides good foreign songs from countries like France, Germany and Italy. Latin should also not be avoided. Welsh words can be used with songs like "All through the Night". South African indigenous languages, such as Xhosa and Zulu, are also exciting areas for repertoire expansion. Dialect can also be indulged in to heighten the character of a song, such as, for example, the Scottish "The Road to the Isles". McLachlan⁵ gives a very useful survey of the different types of folksongs in his chapter "Die sang van ouer kinders".

Rounds on their own are good for class use but they are not really suitable as concert items. However, one can remedy this by combining two rounds together and manipulating the resulting product in such a way that the piece becomes interesting to the audience and singers alike. Naturally, the two rounds must dovetail neatly together, such as the often-used combination of "Frère Jacques" and "Three Blind Mice". One could, of course, string together several rounds whose words complement each other, or possibly develop a theme, which could even be humorous. It is also possible to set a round in an harmonic framework. The simplest form of this is to add an ostinato, the most famous historical example being, of course, "Sumer is icumen in".⁶

Though one need not be greatly attracted to the use of

5. McLachlan, op. cit., pages 37-48.

6. I once did this, evolving a simple three-part ostinato for the round "Heut kommt der Hans nach Haus", which the boys of a mixed choir sang as accompaniment. This was done spontaneously on the morning of a concert. The challenge was accepted by the children and the result was a sparkling performance which everyone enjoyed. Because it was simple, it required very little learning and gave a lovely swing to the piece.

descants, it must be admitted that they can be imaginatively written and used. In this regard Jacques⁷ has written:

The singing of Descants to well-known songs is important as another helpful step towards two-part singing. These should be used sparingly, however, for although some examples decorate the tunes in the most delightful way, others are merely specimens of laboured counterpoint which are unsuccessful as embroidery or anything else.

Certainly they should be used very infrequently in a choral concert. The practice one often finds where the musical children with the strongest voices are given this part to sing because, no doubt, it sounds "pretty", and because they are able to learn and remember it more easily than the others, is something to be abhorred, particularly since the result is almost invariably unmusical.

The whole range of choral music is available to the trainer, but he who has developed skills and insight into how best to design a programme will be rewarded for his flair and self-discipline by the success of his performances.

7. Jacques, op. cit., pages 82-83.

STAGING A CONCERT

It is important not simply to ensure that singers in a choir develop a good vocal technique, that they acquire musical and aesthetic skills, and that the children are helped to enjoy rehearsing their repertoire, but that they actually also perform their songs for an audience. One can accept the point made by Field-Hyde¹ who feels that school principals sometimes "fail to realise the discouragement inflicted upon their music teachers by the continual need to be preparing for performances"; yet the choir that never performs in public has no real reason for existing. Imogen Holst² warns that "amateur music-making that flourishes behind closed doors often wilts in front of an audience", but this is an essential risk that the choir-master and his choir must take. Roe³ makes the following relevant observations:

A choir must perform as frequently as it can concertize with polish and finesse. Preparing for performance maintains interest and keeps the choir members in the mood for work. A group that performs very little or not at all is a dying organization, because the desire for perfection and feelings of accomplishment and organizational pride are not aroused.

In its simplest form, performing before an audience can take place at a school assembly or at other times provided for by an adjustment in the time-table, though both, particularly the latter, presuppose a sympathetic headmaster. Actually, singing for their peers can be a very valuable experience for the choir members, since this type of audience can be highly critical and will usually demand and expect a satisfactory standard of performance; it also has a built-in motivational

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1. F.C. Field-Hyde, The Singing-Class Teacher, Joseph Williams, 1914, page 146.
 2. Imogen Holst, Conducting a Choir, Oxford, 1975, page 98.
 3. Paul F. Roe, Choral Music Education, Prentice-Hall, 1970, page 328.

element, since no choir member is likely to risk losing face by not giving of his best in securing a worthwhile performance.

The school variety concert gives the opportunity to sing a few choral items for a larger audience, as does the school musical production for which the choir, or the most valuable members of it, will serve as the chorus and probably supply the soloists as well. These activities, as well as choral festivals and contests, eisteddfodau, and school functions such as speech day, all motivate the children. They provide a reason for concentrated rehearsing and refining, and allow the children to experience the excitement of a public presentation. However, if the singing is sufficiently good, it is most stimulating to all concerned if the choir presents an entire evening's programme, and a school choir tour is the most rewarding experience of all.

Usually the choir concert will take place in the school hall. Naturally, at least some rehearsing will be done here, and the conductor will then be able to take the opportunity to assess the acoustical characteristics of the venue, as will the choir. This will also apply to other halls, especially if the choir is touring or singing away from the school. The trainer should remember that the presence of an audience will always alter his initial assessment, which will need some spontaneous revision during the concert.

It is wise to beware of arranging a concert in a venue which has some form of sound proofing, such as, in its extreme form, a cinema. It is very difficult to sing comfortably in such a hall, since choir members will tend to feel isolated, as if they were singing solo, and it is not conducive to mental,

let alone aural, blending of the sound. Whilst too much resonance can also be distracting, some echo in a hall is very useful for achieving a good choral blend. It is almost as if the conductor balances the sound by directing it into the resonance resulting from the acoustics of the hall. Clapping his hands firmly in a hall will give the trainer a useful initial guideline as to the amount of resonance presence.

An area needing special care if the resonance is above average is diction. It is always important to ensure that the message of each song is projected clearly. The curtains, other stage drapes, and any carpeting on the stage, all of which have some effect on the sound, can be taken into account during the rehearsal. It may sometimes be necessary to perform in front of drawn curtains if this results in a more comfortable sound. It is important for the children to feel secure, and their mental perception of the sound is a vital contributor to that security.

If the choir is asked to sing, for example, in the living room in an old peoples' home, then the carpeting and curtains may cause similar problems, and it might be wise to suggest to the organizer that the choir sing rather on the verandah or some other more suitable place, or perhaps the carpet can be temporarily rolled up. Singing outside, whilst it may provide more room for the singers to stand in comfort, is not usually ideal, since the sound tends to disappear easily unless a wall or roof can act as sound reflectors. On the other hand, it is sensible not to be too fastidious about the finer details if the pleasure one can give to an audience is not much affected one way or the other, as long as the ensemble operates reasonably well.

The choir will usually perform on a stage, and if the concert is to take place in the school hall the circumstances prevailing there must be considered. Some stages have a permanent step-like frontage, others have extended steps at the side, and the choir-master will have to decide whether to make use of these to stage the choir. Steps which are too wide or too narrow, or which stretch for too long in a straight line hindering the necessary semicircular arrangement of the singers, are all unsuitable.

It is most useful to have collapsible benches tailor-made for the choir by the school's woodwork department. These are probably best stained dark-brown or painted a dark colour because it looks neat and is also most serviceable. A strip of tidy cloth can be attached in front of each bench in order to mask the legs. These benches, which must be easily transportable, may be straight, but those constructed in such a way that they dovetail into a gentle V-shape from the centre are preferable since the choir members will more easily be able to face slightly towards the conductor.

Because he feels that it is important for the sound to be audible to all the choir members, Jipson⁴ gives as the ideal situation one in which

enough risers⁵ will be available so that members can stand a reasonable distance from one another. When the group becomes tightly packed tonal reference can only be drawn from the immediate neighbor instead of the entire group accompaniment. The wider risers are preferable for this same reason; not more standing space, but more hearing space.

This is an interesting point of view, especially if one is thinking of the choir primarily as an educating body, rather

4. Wayne R. Jipson, The High School Vocal Music Program, Parker, 1972, page 148.

5. The Americans call choir benches 'risers'.

than as a performing one. Whilst each member should have an aural perception of the total sound spectrum, this aspect can be catered for mostly in the preparatory rehearsals. For the actual performance it is wise to have all the singers standing close together without being unduly cramped. This means, firstly, that the benches will have a suitable width and height which will not force the children too far apart, in other words the rows will be fairly close together; and secondly, that the children to either side of the centre should stand slightly turned towards the conductor and, most important, with their shoulders overlapping a little in order to eliminate any gaps between the choir members. This results in a closely-knit group and is most likely to produce a good aural ensemble.

Another consideration is how far forward the choir should be staged. This depends to some extent on the acoustics of the stage. It will never do to have the sound disappearing into the flies, as sometimes happens. Care needs to be taken to ensure that all singers can be seen by the audience. If the piano is placed in front of the choir, and the choir is staged as far forward as possible, then there must be just enough room left for the piano stool, in order to give the conductor-cum-accompanist a sufficient margin of safety.

If the acoustics allow this, a further method of staging when the conductor accompanies is to have the benches set up across the stage from the piano, both at suitable angles to each other, so that the singers face mostly towards the audience but sufficiently towards the piano as well in order to see the conductor clearly. The advantage of having the piano separated from the choir in this way is that not much, if any, re-arrangement of the stage need take place when solo or

ensemble items are performed. If the piano is in the centre and is needed for such an item, the stage has to be altered before and after such a piece or group of pieces.

The choir benches are set up before the concert, but any restructuring of the stage during the concert needs careful organization, though the use of a curtain makes this less critical. It can be achieved with a minimum of time and difficulty if certain willing members of the choir or stage team are given this task to do and also some training in efficiency. Good stage-management is very important and forms a substantial role in the success of a concert. An audience is usually impressed or amused by those who set up the stage, as long as everything goes smoothly, though an occasional hitch has been known to inspire sympathy.

Roe⁶ makes the sensible statement that stage lighting should be such that the audience can see the faces of the children, with enough amber and red lights to produce a natural effect rather than one which drains the performers of colour, and the shadows eliminated. The lights should, if possible, present a picture that is neither too dazzling nor too dull for the audience, and they should not shine into the eyes of either the singers or the conductor. They should be bright enough for the music to be seen without strain. The accompanist, be he conductor or another person, should also have no trouble reading his music, and likewise if the conductor uses a music-stand for his score, the copy should not be indistinct. Obviously, one has often simply to accept what is provided when a choir is touring. However, one ought to have reasonable control over one's own school hall, with some help being obtain-

6. Roe, op. cit., page 343.

ed from members of other departments which make use of the stage facilities for the provision of suitable lighting equipment.

Apart from the vital factor of the choir's vocal competence, the appearance of the singers on stage in front of an audience is very important. Roe⁷ writes: "Attractive staging will greatly enhance the effectiveness of any kind of program. Good staging creates visual appeal."

The way the choir enters and leaves the stage is part of that staging. If there is a stage curtain and the choir is a large one, possibly lacking in stage experience, it may be wise to set up the singers behind the curtain and to open the stage when everyone is in position. This is a sensible procedure if the stage is a small one since it avoids climbing over benches, which disturbs the dignified appearance of the choir. However, whenever possible, the curtain should be opened to reveal an empty stage which creates a measure of dramatic speculation that enhances the start of a concert. Either the choir-master himself or another responsible person operates the curtain.

It is the trainer's task to give the signal for the choir to enter the stage, since he is best able to judge both when everything is ready and the right dramatic moment. It is certainly unwise to protract this entrance. Depending on the size of the choir and the nature of the stage, the children either lead in in one line from the side of the stage, or in two lines from both sides simultaneously, meeting in the centre. It is less satisfactory though also possible for the choir to walk through the audience towards and on to the stage, grouped in twos and dividing in front of the stage if they are going

7. Roe, op. cit., page 343.

to use steps at the side, or making use of centrally-situated ones.

It must be decided which row will lead in first, the rear one or the front one, with the others following. Both entrances are suitable, though a front row that is formed first will mask any inadvertant wobbling as the children climb to higher regions. The entrance should always look attractive and will do if each choir member looks relaxed yet poised, confident and friendly. The choir-master's last duty before the concert begins is to create this confidence. An enthusiastic and committed choir evokes a sympathetic response from the audience, especially if these qualities are communicated from the moment the choir appears. The audience are delighted to discover that their misgivings about the school choir they have come to hear are unjustified, the choir's assurance makes them feel secure, and their natural reaction is to respond with equal pleasure and enthusiasm. For a further discussion of these points, see Roe⁸.

The arrangement of the singers on the stage also needs attention. As far as the voice parts are concerned, this naturally depends on the constitution of the choir. An SATB choir will usually have the boys behind the sopranos and altos. An SSA choir will have the choir divided from the front in three groups, or have one of them in the rear behind the other two. If the physical arrangement changes from song to song, it can look quite impressive for a few children to change places, arriving at a new temporary positioning of the forces; but this should be done sparingly and is mainly necessary when a new timbre is needed rather than in consideration of range,

8. Roe, op. cit., page 356.

since children can usually be situated in a neutral area if they are needed in an additional group for a song. This could occur, for example, when an SATB constitution becomes five-part for a particular song.

Since the choir programme will invariably be divided into sections, with the children leaving the stage during solo or ensemble items, a regrouping can easily take place in the wings if a new section requires this, for example, when a group of songs leaves out the male voices. Although it is always better for the children to leave the stage, it may sometimes be necessary for them to remain seated on their benches in a neat manner during a solo item, in which case the new grouping can take place as they return to their standing position. Redundant singers can at the same time leave the stage and re-enter when they are needed. The size of the back-stage area will be a determining factor in what is done.

To a certain extent, the physical build of the children has to be considered when arranging them on the choir benches. Fortunately, most children seem to have a similar height and a little shuffling will usually cater for someone who is awkwardly tall or short. A problem may arise when someone who is short has to stand behind someone who is taller. If necessary, a covered brick or other form of step can be put in for such a person. A good choir arrangement on the stage is not simply having the tall children at the rear and the shorter ones in front. Choral sound must obviously take precedence over physical appearance, but one must strive for the happiest balance between the two.

If the conductor acts as his own accompanist, it is most

likely that the piano, if it is an upright model, will be placed in front of the choir. In this case, it might be necessary to have the front row of children stand on the front benches rather than on the floor. This depends on the age and hence the size of the singers. They should not simply peer over the top of the piano but be seen clearly.

The conductor will enter the stage a little after the choir and all will take a bow together. At the end of each song, the conductor gives a nod or other suitable gesture, such as a calm, small-scale lowering and raising of the hand, and the choir bows as a group. If the applause warrants it, a second bow can follow. At the end of a section or of the concert, the conductor should turn to face the audience and bow with the choir, preferably standing to one side so that nobody is obscured. No more than a head bow should be used: it looks both neat and self-effacing. Soloists also take bows.

Under normal circumstances, a school choir in South Africa will wear some neat form of school uniform, which may be with or without ties and blazers. An important consideration is the length and corresponding uniformity of the girls' skirts. Boys should all wear the same type of trousers, long or short as the case may be. Shoes must all be the same colour. A member of staff ought to have the task of scrutinizing the appearance of each choir member before they appear in public. A shoe polishing kit can be carried. No jewellery should be worn.

In a private school, some type of chapel robe may be the most appropriate form of dress. If the choir is somewhat more specialized and the intention is to give more than a few concerts, a choir costume can be designed. The colours chosen

for it should be appropriately tasteful, the overall need being for a neat, smart appearance. Any such uniform should be provided out of choir funds, and a group of willing parents and staff members could make them. The greatest advantage of a choir outfit, or the usual school uniform, is that it ensures that everyone is equally well turned out, whatever his or her financial background may be. It would be unwise and indeed thoughtless to insist on an elaborate and perhaps expensive costume, which could well result in embarrassment for a singer.

The conductor should, of course, be equally neatly dressed, wearing clothing that is appropriate for the occasion. Formal evening dress lends dignity to a choir concert but it is not essential. An academic gown can be worn, but it may be very hot and it can restrict one's movements.

Another aspect of the choir's stage appearance concerns music folders. Many trainers rely entirely on the memory of the singers and have no need of these, but there can be no real objection at all to singing with music copies. Naturally, the music must be well rehearsed so that the presence of the music is simply to reinforce the memory and give confidence. Jipson⁹ writes:

A folder should serve two functions. It is a temporary storage place for music being studied and it provides a neutral, uniform appearance of music in a concert situation. Any folder that will adequately provide these functions, and is durable enough to stand up under daily use, is acceptable.

There is room for both rehearsal and performance folders, which ensures that the latter are kept neat and do not become dog-eared from much use. The concert folders should not be at all bulky and must be able to be held easily on the bent forearm. Singers to the left of the conductor use the left forearm and

9. Jipson, op. cit., page 109.

those to the right use the right, so that both the conductor and the music can be kept in view. The folders can make use of one or more of the school's colours. Their general appearance should be neat and tasteful.

Stage decoration should not be extravagant, though a tasteful flower arrangement looks pleasant. However, no stage frills should detract from the choir's importance or efficient functioning and should not obscure the audience's view of the choir nor the accompanist's of the conductor. It is surely not necessary for elaborate displays of greenery, flowers or bunting to decorate the front of the stage, but this naturally depends on circumstances. Good taste should always predominate.

It is wise to have a sympathetic staff member act as house manager; usually, however, the choir-master has to take over-all responsibility for the complete organization of the concert. This is particularly the case when the choir is touring or singing away from the school.

Seating arrangements have to be organized, with the use of a labelling system if seats are to be reserved. The first few rows will be set aside for any important guests who are to be invited. Tickets will correspond. If one is performing away from the school, presenting a complete concert, a seating plan must be obtained from the renting authority. On a choir tour, it is necessary to have a local person prepared to take bookings, unless all seats are to be sold on the day of the performance. The school secretary will probably be involved when the concert takes place in a school hall. Local arrangements will rely heavily on the sympathetic co-operation of the headmaster and other staff members, especially the music teacher.

A choir tour is often undertaken to raise funds for the school in general and more especially for the music department in particular, whatever its educational value may be. Naturally, touring expenses have also to be covered, and no child should be excluded because he cannot afford to go. The primary objective must certainly be to provide opportunities for enjoyable choral singing, but the financial rewards are a pleasant additional consideration. A teacher, or senior pupils under a teacher's supervision, can sell tickets from a table or tables placed strategically in the foyer. Suitable prices must be decided on and the public should be well aware what these are from the literature advertising the concert. When appropriate, complementary tickets must be given to important people. Most schools have a list of such people available.

Programme sellers, preferably choir members already dressed in their uniforms, should be situated in the foyer, near the entrances, and in the hall itself. They must be given small change to begin with, possibly in little money-bags, purses or boxes, but in any case readily manageable. Ticket takers must be organized for each entrance to the hall, and there must be well-instructed, friendly ushers to show people to their seats. Roe¹⁰ feels that

Ushers create a favorable or unfavorable first impression of the program. When ushers are properly dressed for the kind of program and are courteous and friendly, proudly welcoming the audience to an enjoyable evening, they set the mood for the program. The ushers must know their business and usher the audience into the correct seats quickly and efficiently. The ushers must see that the doors are closed before a number begins and that no one enters until the number is ended.

This last point is worth remembering - though in this case the ushers would have to be pupils who are not singing - since,

10. Roe, op. cit., page 350.

unfortunately, many members of audiences in South Africa are still not aware of the accepted rules of behaviour at a concert. Moreover, it is worth bearing in mind that most audiences for this type of concert will tend to consist of a high proportion of children, who are usually somewhat more noisy and restless than adults besides being unsophisticated and unschooled in the etiquette of concert going.

The foyer should be suitably decorated with flowers, a few posters and, if possible, a few good photographs of the choir and soloists, and maybe the conductor, though this latter should be avoided when the choir is performing on its home ground.

Amongst the printed material, or stationery, required for the staging of a concert, the programme is the most important. This can be simply a duplicated sheet which is neatly folded and sets out the items in an orderly manner. It is more stylish to have it printed, and this need not be costly to produce since one can sell advertising space or obtain sponsorship. The format ranges from a single sheet to a more elaborate booklet which contains information about the choir and the school, and possibly a photograph or two. It is important to print a list of the choir members in the programme, either on its own or attached to a photograph. Once again Roe¹¹ has something useful to contribute:

A four-page program is likely to be preferable. The first page must have an attractive eye-catching design and general information. Play up other people's names and the school; the conductor must play down his own credits... Place any program notes and names of numbers and composers on the two center pages. The songs should be arranged in systematic groups. Publish the names of all singers and officers of organizations on the final page... The teacher must check the proof of the program himself to be sure that the format is good

11. Roe., op. cit., page 342.

and that all titles, composer's names, and other words are spelled correctly, particularly students' names. An attractive program has a definite favorable effect on the audience and makes a souvenir of importance for student scapbooks.

One may particularly endorse the need to ensure that the pupils' names are correctly printed. It is also a good idea to arrange the items in groups. There are various ways these can be set out, but one should at all cost avoid the often-encountered list of items that simply runs chronologically from beginning to end. Two main headings suggest themselves, namely, Sacred and Secular. Negro Spirituals, Christmas Carols, Hymns and the like will fall under the first, and songs like Sea Shanties, Folksongs and Lullabies under the second. Composed music will be included in the appropriate group. Whilst it is possible to give programmes away - and certainly invited guests and choir members must receive one as a gift, without forgetting the several copies necessary for the departmental and school archives - it is better to sell them. This increases their value, enhances the status of the choir, and brings in additional revenue.

Other necessary stationery has to be considered. Posters can be made by the children, especially those studying art, but printed ones look more professional and are more appropriate if the choir is touring. They should not be too big, except when needed for the notice-boards outside public halls; they should be bright, bold, and should attract attention by their neatness. Their public display has to be organized efficiently. If the choir is to tour, a package will have to be sent to the local organizer.

It is an excellent idea to have small but neat thank-you cards printed which choir members can sign and send to anyone

who has provided accommodation or given assistance of any kind. Children are usually loath to write letters, and the cards are a means of avoiding this yet at the same time of spreading goodwill. Car stickers are another useful form of publicity material which can be distributed by choir members and other pupils. If the choir is travelling by bus, a banner attached firmly to the side of the vehicle is another means of advertising the concerts, but some people may consider this rather too flamboyant.

Usually, house lights are operated from the stage, as is a warning bell if one is used - it is a most useful device for attracting the audience back into the hall at the end of the interval, though dimmed house lights will also accomplish this. Roe¹² writes:

With a formal program, it is usually desirable to leave the houselights on, but lowered, so the audience can see its programs and the soloist or choir can see the audience response. Ordinarily, for any kind of program, use a lower illumination for the audience.

Nevertheless, the children must always look at the conductor while they are singing, particularly since he should have trained them to react spontaneously to his symbolic gestures during an item. Choir members who look at the audience, even if they do so unobserved, are not concentrating on the matter in hand. Part of the trainer's work is to develop this self-discipline. However, it is pleasant to see the audience reacting favourably at the end of a song.

Although the audience will usually buy or be provided with programmes, it is a good idea for the conductor or, much better, an announcer or team of announcers within the choir ranks to introduce each song. This has the effect of retaining the formal atmosphere of the concert, yet of bridging the gap

12. Roe, op. cit., page 343.

between the choir and the listeners, who invariably respond favourably to such a method of presentation. Naturally, the children who do this must have strong voices, good diction, and a measure of charm and self-confidence. Suitable younger members of the choir undoubtedly appeal to an audience and this helps to evoke sympathy, which is always useful. Moreover, the conductor can control these announcements unobtrusively and even alter the programme during a performance if another arrangement of songs is likely to be more successful - though this can be done only if the children have had some stage experience and are not disturbed by such a change. If one has a few more songs prepared than are needed, perhaps with a view to having one or two available as encores, it is possible to assess an audience's reaction to a certain type of song, including tempo variety, and re-arrange the programme accordingly. If the choir is showing signs of tiredness, with the resultant danger of flat singing or loss of concentration, this flexibility allows the omission of a slow song. The element of spontaneity which this method makes possible is preferable to being strait-jacketed by a strictly-adhered-to programme which must run as printed from beginning to end.

Children must be encouraged to look bright, happy and involved, unless the nature of a song dictates another emotional response. However, unnaturalness or exaggerated gestures or smiles must be avoided at all costs. The choir is going to respond to the conductor's facial gestures and general warmth of expression. Affection rather than affectation must be aimed at.

The choir conductor also has to have more than a trace of showmanship in his make-up in order to operate successfully.

Often, a fairly mediocre performance can be saved by an offering of charm, humour, or good nature on the part of the conductor. Sometimes choir members who are normally very reliable do not sing in tune, or they react sluggishly. On a tour, the excitement of their experiences has probably denied them sufficient sleep or rest, in spite of the measure of adult supervision that is possible, and one has to take this in one's stride and 'save the day' if necessary.

Reginald Jacques¹³ feels that a choral concert should not last longer than "one and a half hours of actual music", and that an interval should be included with "its length (ten minutes is usual and convenient) clearly stated on the programme and strictly adhered to." Encores should be avoided since they "always upset the balance of a well-arranged programme and prolong it unduly, ultimately tiring both the choir and audience." Certainly, a concert should end before the audience becomes bored with the proceedings. However, ten minutes does seem rather too short a time for the interval, particularly if refreshments are served. Moreover, if the audience has obviously enjoyed the musical offering, there is no reason why an encore or two should not reward their sympathy. On the other hand, it is always wise to end while that sympathy is still clearly in evidence.

One should not begin the second half of the programme until most if not all of the members of the audience are back in their seats. The opening song in this section needs to be chosen carefully since it has to have the threefold function of reconstituting an efficient ensemble, of settling down the audience, and of rekindling an interest in the choir's singing.

13. Reginald Jacques, Voice Training and Conducting in Schools, Oxford, 1963, page 148.

The following further observations are also based on personal experience. Naturally, no smoking must be allowed in the hall. No bottles should be allowed into the hall since they are easily knocked over and can prove most annoying. If it can be arranged, it is wise to have the singers rest during the interval rather than mingling excitedly with the audience. Toilet facilities must be readily available for the choir. Some form of non-gaseous liquid refreshment ought to be provided for the singers during the interval. No food should be eaten - in fact, only a light meal should be given or allowed before a concert, and other food should be available after the performance. On the other hand, hungry children will not make good choristers - a happy balance has to be established.

One must beware of long speech-making before or during a concert. This can prove extremely tiring to the singers, especially if they have entered the stage and then have to wait before singing. This can adversely affect the sheen and polish and sparkle of the performance and must simply not be allowed, even if someone is most grateful to the choir or the concert organizers. A short word at the end, graciously accepted by the conductor and the choir, is all that is necessary.

Finally, Rainbow¹⁴ writes appropriately as follows:

The school choir is a shop-window for the school's music. Use it, not to display children who have been drilled against their will like performing animals, but as a demonstration of the way in which efficiency and enthusiasm can infect youngsters where music-making is concerned. If there are signs that the music in his school is beginning to flourish and the school's reputation is likely to be enhanced by it, no headmaster will withhold support.

14. Bernarr Rainbow, Music in the Classroom, Heinemann, 1956, page 19.

THE MAKING OF CHORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR
SCHOOL CHOIRS

A: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

An area of choral training too little explored in school music teaching is that of choral arrangement. There is, of course, a vast repertoire of art music for choirs, and neither is it suggested that the trainer-cum-educator should ignore its abundant delights, nor that his choir's development should be limited by using only folksongs and other music arranged for the choir to sing. There must be a balance between the two. However, it is often the case that a choir is composed of unequal forces with strengths and weaknesses which composers almost certainly cannot cater for because they are involved with writing for an ideal instrument. The trainer may well want his choir to study and perform a delightful piece, yet after much hard, even enthusiastic work, the result is unsatisfactory because he failed to consider his human material. On the other hand, he can select a folksong, or negro spiritual, or something similar, which time has sanctioned and authenticated, and set to work to produce an arrangement in terms which discover and highlight its inherent style, and which take into account the qualities of his choral team.

An otherwise competent arrangement need not necessarily complement the nature of the folksong and often blissfully ignores it. It may be square, correct and dead or, quite often, far too grandiose and clever, and completely lacking those aesthetic qualities which a choral trainer, especially at school level, should seek in order to help his choir develop musical taste and refinement. In fact, a great deal depends on

the choir-master's insight, imagination, cultural experience, refinement, musical skills and personality, both for the way in which he creates his arrangement and in the manner in which he leads the choir to perform it.

Moreover, the choir trainer has his instrument readily available. He can learn empirically by hearing his efforts performed. He can find out what works for his choir and what does not; he can experiment with different vocal combinations and he can develop harmonic and contrapuntal skills. In this connection, Davison¹ writes:

... the rehearsals of choral pieces may be of actual laboratory calibre, in that not only the total effect may be carefully assayed through repeated hearings, but also even short sections and single measures may be sung again and again.

Commending the use of folksong to the student of choral composition, Davison² calls it "a treasure-house of pure melody suggestive of the most varied treatment", comments on the fact that "in this literature may be found an amazingly large assortment of melodic types", and suggests that

the field of folksong arranging, though not a completely original task, is by no means as circumscribed as it may appear, for in setting, say, a hundred folksongs, one has occasion to employ a very wide variety of technical resource.

In fact, even considering the limitations imposed by the nature of one's school choir, the possibilities are varied enough to provide even a whole evening's choral music which satisfies and is enjoyed by all concerned and yet need not be excessively demanding to learn and to perform.

It is wisest to keep to a strophic form of arrangement, basically retaining the same setting for each verse of the song. Although this formal structure may seem to limit the interest

1. Archibald T. Davison, The Technique of Choral Composition, Harvard, 1945, page 12.
 2. Ibid., page 33.

and musical value of the arrangement, it actually allows one quite a range of variety with regard to dynamics, tempi, vocal timbre and rhythm. Indeed, a great deal of freedom to interpret the words and the essential character of the song is possible. Moreover, such an arrangement is most easily and quickly learnt by singers who are often musically illiterate.

Whilst arrangements are important from the point of view of notes, harmonies, rhythms and melodic lines, in practice they provide only the basic working material, which is moulded and shaped as the interpretation is evolved. For this reason, any dynamic indications or those suggesting tempi, phrasing or other interpretative details can be omitted, allowing each piece to be freely developed, though naturally within the bounds of the conductor's good musical and aesthetic taste.³ Choir members can be allowed to contribute ideas, or the conductor can present his views so logically and convincingly that they are accepted intelligently and emotionally - one might almost add spiritually, in the widest meaning of the word - resulting in a co-operative effort rather than in something imposed from without. Obviously the choir must adhere to the expression marks in original compositions and printed arrangements, in order to realize the music with integrity. This trains the children to study the music with careful observation. It is not, however, training in that elusive quality of musicianship, related in choral music to a sensitive perception of the meaning and flow of the words and ideas, which is the mark of really good performances.

It is possible to produce arrangements for every type of musical group one finds or creates in the school, be it purely

3. This is true of the arrangements presented in section B of this chapter.

vocal, purely instrumental, or a combination of both. Theron Kirk⁴ suggests that "the addition of a few instruments to a piano accompaniment can greatly enhance an arrangement", and goes on to specify some possibilities. However, we are here primarily concerned with a cappella arrangements for a selected group of quite musical children who form the school choir. Whilst one may despair at the weaknesses of such a body of singers, it is right here that choral arrangement becomes so useful. For the trainer can take both strengths and weaknesses into account when working on the setting. The arrangement becomes a tailored, unique creation which highlights those very strengths and disguises or transforms those very weaknesses, and allows a satisfying product to result. For example, if one has a group of altos who are a real asset, one is able to give them the melody line at times when the tessitura is suitable, and provide them with little counter-melodies which enhance the interest and sound quality of the arrangement.

There is no reason at all why the sopranos must always sing the melody. This is particularly worth remembering when, as sometimes happens, they produce a rather thin sound, or when other parts are stronger or, especially, sound more beautiful. Discussing which other voice parts can safely carry the melody line, Davison⁵ writes that "as few folk melodies furnish a satisfactory bass, the choice will generally fall either to the alto or tenor." Nevertheless, one should not forget the many arrangements, admittedly mostly three-part, in which the baritones - basses, or adolescent boys - sing the melody, accompanied by the other parts. Some of these published pieces are reasonably effective. One may give the melody to the

4. Theron Kirk, 'Choral Adaptations', in Music Education in Action, ed. Archie N. Jones, Allyn & Bacon, 1960, page 210,
5. Davison, op. cit., page 51.

baritones when there are not enough voices to sustain both tenor and bass parts and when singers are not very reliable. Certainly, a four-part setting with the melody in the bass would tend to be rather awkward unless handled expertly.

A melody line can also be shared by two or more parts, moving from one to another, provided that this is carefully controlled in the performance and is not thought of as a gimmick but rather as an attempt to make the best use of one's vocal material. In this connection, Davison⁶ writes:

The distribution of the melody by sections among the various voices is a delicate manoeuvre. Clearly the thread of the tune must never be lost... The partitioning of the melody among the voices is often a not too commendable tour de force; it is justified, however, when the tune embraces a range too wide to be covered by any one part; or when the range is so limited as to make a change of color desirable.

Swift⁷ feels that it is a good idea when setting for two-part primary-school choirs to give the alto part the occasional opportunity to sing the theme, and that in writing for three-part girls' choir it is good to "pass it around". Davison⁸ reminds us that it is important for the folksong theme to stand out clearly when it is sung by a part other than the soprano, and suggests four ways in which this can be achieved in a setting:

Firstly, the accompanying parts can be reduced or even eliminated for a few bars.
Secondly, the accompanying parts can remain static when the main theme is moving, or move slowly.
In the third place, the rhythm of the accompanying parts should be different from that of the tune.
Finally, the arranger can double the theme in another part.

The arranger can also use a combination of these methods.

Davison is concerned with the techniques of choral composition

6. Davison, op. cit., page 52.

7. Frederic Fay Swift, 'Vocal Part Writing' in Music Education in Action, op. cit., pages 205-206.

8. Davison, idem, pages 51-52.

and does not mention a fifth possibility, namely, that when one is arranging for one's own choir, it is possible to bring out the melody in performance by keeping the dynamic levels of the other voices lower, and by ensuring that it is sung musically, with good phrasing and affectionate care.

The children need to be made to realize that each part - and their personal contribution to it - is important, even if that importance lies in accompanying another part competently. The arranger can assist this process of co-operation by trying to give each part interesting music to sing, even when its function is really harmonic. A singer is much more likely to see the point of giving his full attention and care to a part that makes musical sense than to one in which he is required to sing, for example, a succession of repeated notes. Even when a part is playing a supportive role, it is possible to introduce into it some imitation, of either some melodic fragment from the melody itself or of some musical idea built into the accompanying voices. Such interesting features in a voice part will motivate the singers to sing their music responsibly.

Davison⁹ writes:

As far as is consonant with other considerations, each line must be given its head. All melodies which are worthy of the name have a destiny which is forecast in the first phrase and consummated in the last; and this is not less true of the inner voices so often unduly sacrificed for larger musical interests. Each voice which accompanies a folksong is a musical personality.

Exciting harmonies can be worked into a setting. These may in themselves be difficult to sing, but when they result from a carefully controlled weaving of vocal lines which are musically constructed, and are approached by easy intervals or steps, they prove surprisingly easy to sing, even by largely-untrained, unsophisticated singers. Thus, any reservations that

9. Davison, op. cit., page 57.

the singers may have when they first sing something even mildly pungent soon disappear as they begin to enjoy the pleasure of an enriched choral sound, particularly when such discords are easy to sing because they have been prepared and approached by sensibly flowing, musical lines in each voice part.

In making a setting, it is sometimes appropriate to harmonize the melody in a simple manner. Giving advice to the beginner, Davison¹⁰ writes that he "will make no mistake, even in such unpretentious efforts as the arrangement of folksongs, if he under - rather than over - exploits harmonic resource." While he is not concerned here with the nature of the folksong itself, it is wise to remember that "harmonic understatement", as he calls it, is sometimes precisely what a particular piece requires. Nevertheless, one should not be afraid to use bold harmonies if the style lends itself to such treatment. However, extreme harmonies - except in the most unlikely event of the choir singing something of an avant-garde nature - are always inappropriate. Settings must appeal to both the audience and the singers, and whilst one may at times be daring in the cause of musical expression or the singers' interest, one must beware of trying to be too adventurous.

Davison¹¹ warns against the consistent use of root-position chords, and recommends "plentiful inversions, especially in the field of seventh chords." In fact, unless they are stylistically inappropriate, much use should be made of secondary sevenths, both diatonic and chromatic. These give a much richer harmonic spectrum when used with good taste. Chords of the ninth and eleventh and further afield also enrich the arranger's resources and can, for example, add poignancy in

10. Davison, op. cit., page 42.

11. Ibid., page 42.

settings of negro spirituals. It is, however, important that the character of the original and the sense of the words be taken into account and matched by the harmonies of the setting. A simple folksong should not be harmonized by over-rich chords but rather with a primary-chord style, with harmonic variety being achieved by using inversions and passing notes.

In two-part settings especially, discords can suggest fuller chords when, for example, a second can represent a seventh chord. In such a case it is wise to have all discords resolve in order to avoid aural confusion. Jazz chords, for example, the added-sixth chord, have a place in appropriate music, sound exciting if used sparingly, and tend to endear the piece to the children. Shifting harmonies, for example, E major and D major alternating, can be idiomatically effective in an introduction, if one is not afraid to break a rule of harmony occasionally for an interesting result. Pedal harmonies should not be neglected if they can enhance the character of a song.

When setting, one should consider the possibility of using soloists, or a single voice to each of two or more of the parts, or a small group within the choir, all of which will allow a greater variety within the necessarily simple, even restricted framework which conditions impose. It is also possible to have a section of the setting sung in unison, or by unison males or females, and, if the song or the human resources dictate this, one can also have most of the setting in unison and simply introduce a few chords at the end of the song or a part of it, which, surprisingly, can still give a good effect, though it is likely that some form of accompaniment will be necessary.

Other ways of harmonizing a folksong are to have the melody accompanied vocally with very simple harmonies which come in at sensible points, or to make use of long-value notes to support a quicker melody. Another interesting, easily-learnt type of vocal accompaniment is the ostinato in one or several voice parts. The style of the song, or the capabilities of the singers, or a combination of both, will dictate the use of these methods.

A very useful contrapuntal device, since it sounds well in performance, is to have two parts occasionally move in parallel tenths. Soprano and tenor, or alto and bass moving in this way give a good effect, especially when care is taken during training to point out this feature to the choir and to balance the two parts involved so that they complement each other, with the singers 'focussing' their notes. Horn fifths are also very effective if used sparingly. As mentioned earlier, imitations in various parts also make a setting more interesting to both the singers who are made aware of such devices, and the audience who hear them come alive in the music. The occasional unison between two parts should disturb as little as the use of fourths and fifths, even consecutives, if this does not happen accidentally but is the sound effect one wishes to produce. The so-called rules of harmony and counterpoint are certainly most helpful, but they are by no means binding, and we are, after all, living in the twentieth century. However, the normal conventions of harmonic and contrapuntal practice usually apply and give the most effective results.

It is important to consider the range of the voices carefully, and to set one's upper and lower pitch levels according to the capabilities of the majority of the singers. Actual-

ly, it is sensible to plan most of the setting so that it rests largely in the middle, warm parts of each voice range, in order to obtain a richer, more pleasant timbre. This may appear to be a limitation, and naturally one is involved with the careful development of individual voices whose qualities can be utilized as they grow and improve. However, the rewards of having a predictable, well-tuned, beautiful-sounding choral instrument are great. It may, in fact, be necessary to make use of quite a small range if the choir members are limited in natural capacity. This can prove challenging to the arranger, who should always take the weakest part into consideration when setting for his choir.

It is especially important to think of all high-school boys with settling voices as being either higher or lower baritones, rather than as tenors and basses. Composed music does not cater for these limitations unless it is written with care or specifically and skilfully for high-school choir. Of course, if one is lucky enough to have boys who can reach lower or higher notes without distress and with good vocal character, the possibilities are widened. Those who then cannot produce such notes with ease either sing them lightly falsetto, or softly, or mouth the word or words accompanying such notes silently. This naturally requires care in balancing the sound and in avoiding any strain in the voices of those children who can sing the notes trying to give too much sound. Usually, it is not sensible to give the lower baritones notes lower than G (first line, bass clef) nor the upper baritones notes higher than E (above middle C).

Similarly, girls should not be given notes higher than E (fourth space, treble clef), unless several of them have a

pleasantly developing soprano quality in this area. Boy sopranos can go up to G and higher if they have learnt to support their voices.¹² Girl mezzo-sopranos are often the singers forming the backbone of the choir in both numbers and quality. They should not sing lower than A below middle C except in special cases, though one does come across girls who can sing low G and even F with good sound and no strain. In all cases, the arranger assesses his vocal resources and works accordingly.

One should choose worthwhile folksongs, carols, spirituals, plantation songs, Jamaican and similar songs, and sea shanties for setting. These are pieces which have intrinsic worth, with sensible words related to the interest levels of the children, which lend themselves to an imaginative interpretation. When setting them, one must take care to produce a stylistically tasteful, meaningful version. One must try to match the harmonies, rhythms, syncopations, and so on, to the mood, period and character of the original. A lullaby should, for example, have legato lines with maybe an underlying rocking rhythm, and this gentle character must be explained to the children and brought out subtly in the performance. A shanty should suggest the tang of the sea: if it is rollicking there can be a few jaunty rhythmic touches; if the words suggest a mood of wistfulness and nostalgia, this can be reinforced by

12. One must, however, carefully consider whether one wants to make use of these beautiful notes from the older boys and run the pronounced risk of their voices breaking, or, on the other hand, of gradually giving boys in this category lower notes to sing, thereby losing the quality high notes but ensuring that the boys remain singing without vocal disaster. A boy with a trained voice who is not made to keep singing at the extremes of his top range need not have his voice break nor suffer the consequent cessation of singing.

the harmonies used and brought out by a subtle emphasis and a suitable flexibility of tempo when it is performed. A negro spiritual should be set and performed in such a way that the longing for better things, comfort, fervour, faith, and so on, inherent in the words comes through.

In fact, it is important always to keep the performance in one's imagination when making an arrangement. Moreover, it is true to say that one is creating a setting not only to cater for the needs and capabilities of the singers, but also, since one will lead the performance, for one's own personality as well. The arrangement must take this fact realistically into account.

With respect to dynamics, it is far better, when setting a song, to work from a softer overall sound than to expect an impossible double-forte at a climax, since the qualitative relationship between the sounds - their relative dynamic level - is far more important than a quantitative, uncharacteristic, ugly loudness. Ehret¹³ mentions this in his useful chapter on dynamics:

Know the dynamic potential and limitations of your group. Do not over extend them on ff passages and conversely do not drive them to a dynamically lower level than their controls will allow. Only after these two extreme points of loudness and softness have been established may the in-between levels be determined.

Davison¹⁴ makes the following observation:

The choral composer must know that he may expect no more by way of pianissimo than a capricious vocal mechanism will permit, and that, at the other extreme, if singers are allowed to give their all, the result may be no more than uncontrolled noise.

It is worth mentioning, however, that a well-controlled pianissimo passage can be one of the most effective, even

13. Walter Ehret, The Choral Conductor's Handbook, Augener, 1959, pages 25-26.

14. Davison, op. cit., page 10.

dramatic, interpretative devices available to the choral conductor. Such matters of interpretation must be constantly kept in mind when arranging a song for one's choir.

Rhythmic variety in the accompanying voices should also not be left unexplored. Apart from other considerations, one should not be afraid to use rests. Syncopation is interesting in appropriate music. The arranger should investigate the expressive use of staccato and tenuto, in fact, all forms of accentuation, both subtle and otherwise, in order to improve his technique. Good phrasing, attention to cadence points, and legato singing should also be kept in mind. It is important to choose songs for setting in which verbal and musical phrasing coincide. One often finds a composer who is far more interested in the melody than in the words. For our purposes, there must be equal importance given to both the words and the music. In strophic settings particularly, it is necessary to ensure that the words of all verses to be sung are matched appropriately to the music.

One must beware of using too many verses of a song, unless interest can be sustained. The quicker the song, the greater the number of verses that can be used, especially if there is a narrative or dramatic development, such as the folksong "Dashing away with a Smoothing Iron". A judicious selection of verses may be necessary to avoid everything sagging, especially when setting long hymns, carols or similar music. Each piece should, as it were, conform to its own programme and be completely satisfying and formally neat.

Certain effects, such as whistling, finger-clicking, hand-clapping, tongue-clicking, and so on, if used with care, can be suitable and lend a jaunty character to a song, partic-

ularly if the words suggest such onomatopoeic treatment. One may use whistling in a setting of the Afrikaans folksong "Hoe ry die Boere". Vocal clip-clopping may be appropriate in a song dealing with horse-riding. This playing with sound is especially useful as an accompaniment to two-part settings where it helps to give an added dimension in sound. However, one should beware of spoiling a song by using such effects simply for the gimmick or novelty value they may be supposed to have. Even in an appropriate song, they should never be overdone. When setting and singing even the most unpretentious music, there should always be poise and good taste, so that, if at all possible, a polished gem results.

Many arrangements are best left without any form of accompaniment. When the piano is used, it can give the necessary rhythmic vitality, or help to create an enriched tonal spectrum, especially when used with two-part settings. It can shadow a part, though this is hardly to be recommended but is sometimes necessary. Its use must always be stylistically and musically apt. Occasionally, too, a folksong should not be harmonized but rather sung in unison.

Choral arrangement for school choir has the major advantage of allowing one to experiment practically with real sound possibilities. Swift¹⁵ writes:

Knowing the capabilities of the singers at the various age levels, and expressing ideas that are 'your own' leads to one of the most enjoyable experiences given the music educator - vocal arranging.

15. Swift, op. cit., page 207.

B: A SET OF CHORAL ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements were worked out empirically - aurally rather than theoretically and mathematically, though these factors were naturally not ignored. They were developed mostly at the keyboard. A study of keyboard harmonization helped a lot, particularly the working out of cadences and modulations at the keyboard. The various authorities were available for consultation on matters of harmony and counterpoint, but it is wise to remember that they merely catalogued existing standards and norms and commented on them. Whilst a disciplined study of these subjects is indispensable to the choral arranger, no system should be followed slavishly. How the arrangement sounds, how logically it is worked out, what refined sensitivity supports it - these are all equally indispensable considerations.

The arrangements are given without dynamic or phrase markings and there are no tempo indications. Where the conductor is also the arranger, he will create arrangements as an extension of his personality, according to the requirements of his choir. Their interpretation will depend largely on that personality and hence his personal feeling, even spontaneity. The conductor will recreate the music in collaboration with the choir. Each piece, even each verse, will have its own individuality, depending on the demands of the words.

Each of the following arrangements is provided with a commentary dealing with any interesting technical features it may have, together with a statement as to the way it was prepared for performance.

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT

The first arrangement is one for SA. The first half of each verse has the melody in the lower voice, but thereafter it reverts to the soprano. Some care is needed with the intonation of the chromatic soprano line at the beginning, and in the alto line in the last repeat of the opening melody where the two parts are exactly inverted for bars thirteen and fourteen. Horn fifths occur in bars nine/ten, and there are occasional seconds and sevenths to be dealt with. Otherwise, this is an uncomplicated arrangement. Care must be taken when the two voices end in unison in order to balance the sound.

The second setting is partly in three parts and partly in four. The baritones sometimes sing in unison and sometimes divide into upper and lower parts. The range is very undemanding. At first the altos have the melody, as in the two-part setting, but the sopranos take it over in the middle section, and the setting repeats the first part exactly in the last four bars.

There are several word versions of this song, including those treating it as a hymn. The original Welsh words could be used, followed by English ones when the song is repeated, making an interesting, well-balanced presentation.

The several discords, for example in bars nine, eleven, and twelve, sound very well in performance and are not difficult to sing since each part approaches them melodically. The end of the middle section, bar twelve, needs special care in phrasing so that the atmosphere is not ruined, with a flexible easing of the tempo, guiding the parts around the musical

corner, as it were.

The song needs a very legato style of singing. It should be sung no faster than a moderate tempo, and the phrasing needs to be 'long'.

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT

THROUGH THE DAY I WALKED RE-PIN-ING } ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT
 DAY-LIGHT BROUGHT NO MESS-AGE CHEER-ING }
 THROUGH THE DAY THE TREA-SURE NIGH ME }

BUT THE GLO-RIOUS STARS ARE SHIN-ING } ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT
 PROUD I WAS AND YET WAS FEAR-ING }
 LUR-ING, TEMPT-ING CAME TO TRY ME }

THROUGH THE DAY THE PATH BE-FORE ME LOOM'D IN SHAD-OW DARK AND STORM-Y
 NOW THE WRONG THING HATH BEEN RIGHT-EN'D NOW THE DARK-NESS HATH BEEN LIGHT-EN'D
 NO, I SEE THE GREAT UN-VEIL-ING SEE THE FAR OFF THE UN-FAIL-ING

NOW THE STARS ARE SHIN-ING O'ER ME } ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT
 NOW THE WATCH-ING HEAVNS ARE BRIGHT-EN'D }
 STARS OF HEA-VEN BECK-MING, HAIL-ING }

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "WHILE THE WORLD HER WATCH IS KEEP-ING ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT WHILE THE WEARY".

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The key signature is D major and the time signature is common time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "WORLD IS SLEEP-ING ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT OVER MY BOS-OM GENT-LY STEAL-ING".

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The key signature is D major and the time signature is common time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "VIS-IONS OF DE-LIGHT RE-VEAL-ING BREATHE A PURE AND HOL-Y FEEL-ING".

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The key signature is D major and the time signature is common time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT".

BONNIE CHARLIE

This is partly a two-part setting and partly three-part. It should be sung with much legato and attention to long phrase lines. The second voice begins with a scale-like accompaniment to the melody which is meant to enhance this smooth flow. The fifths and fourths which occur here and elsewhere in this arrangement are meant to suggest the mood and background of the song and as such are not disturbing but rather interesting features. In bars thirteen and fourteen, the alto temporarily takes over the melody. The unison convergence of the parts in bar eight, again in bar sixteen, must be handled carefully in order to avoid unmusical phrasing.

This is a lovely folksong and can sound most effective. A piano accompaniment can be added, though the setting works well without any such support if the voices are not too thin and lacking in resonance.

BONNIE CHARLIE

BON- NIE CHAR- LIE'S NOW A- WA- SAFE- LY OWRE THE FRIEND- LY MAIN
 HILLS HE TROD WERE ALL HIS, AN' LANG BED- BE- NEATH THE BIRK- EN TREE
 SWEET THE LAV- ROCK'S NOTE AN' LANG HILT ING WILD- LY UP THE GLEN
 MONY A HEART WILL BREAK IN TWA SHOULD HE NE'ER COME BACK A- GAIN
 THE BUSH THAT HID HIM HE ON THE PLAIN NONE ON EARTH CAN CLAIM BUT HE
 BUT EYE TO ME HE HE SINGS AE SONG "WILL DYE NO COME BACK A- GAIN?
 WILL YE NO COME BACK A- GAIN? WILL YE NO COME BACK A- GAIN?
 BET- TER LO'ED YE CAN- NA BE WILL YE NO COME BACK A- GAIN

DEEP RIVER

This arrangement sets out to clothe the spiritual in rich harmony, with quite pungent, appropriate dissonances, such as those in bars nine to eleven. Although generally a four-part setting, the harmony is richer in the middle of the song. There is parallel movement, for example, in bar one between the alto and the tenor voices, in bar four between the alto and the bass parts, and in bar thirteen where it again occurs between the alto and the bass voices, all of which serves to bind the music together and give it a good sound. An interesting feature is the fact that from bar thirteen the altos sing the melody, in order to avoid too high a tessitura in the soprano line.

This piece needs a very sustained, legato style of singing, much care with phrasing, and careful handling of the rhythm in bar seven, where the semiquavers must be short but not jerky. Although the sound at the beginning must be full, it must nevertheless be restrained, slow-moving, and mindful of the fervent hope for future bliss that the words convey. One must not forget that this is a Negro spiritual, with the implication that whilst present troubles may be many, the future holds out hope for release and freedom.

The middle section of the song can be sung more loudly, but it seems sensible to end this part in a more introvert, wistful, softer way. The recapitulation can be sung very softly, thereby ending the song with a strong dramatic impact; or it can be sung mezzo-forte and then repeated very softly as a meditative echo.

DEEP RIVER

Handwritten musical notation for the first system of "Deep River". The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "DEEP RI-VER MY HOME IS O-VER JOR-DAN DEEP DEEP DEEP". The word "DEEP" is written above the first measure of the treble staff and below the first measure of the bass staff. There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and bar lines.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system of "Deep River". The system consists of two staves. The lyrics are: "RI-VER, LORD. I WANT TO CROSS O-VER IN-TO CAMP GROUND O DON'T YOU WANT TO WANT W-TO CROSS". The word "WANT" is written below the bass staff in the final measure. There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and bar lines.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system of "Deep River". The system consists of two staves. The lyrics are: "GO TO DAT GOS-PEL FEAST DAT PRO-MIS'D LAND WHERE PROM PROMIS'D". The words "MIS'D" and "LIG" are written above the treble staff in the fourth measure. There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and bar lines.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system of "Deep River". The system consists of two staves. The lyrics are: "ALL IS PEACE". The words "DA CAPO" and "AL fine" are written to the right of the second measure. There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and bar lines.

DER GUTE KAMERAD

The poignancy of this song appealed to the children for whom it was arranged, since many of them were studying German as a school subject and could readily understand the words.

The piece needs to be sung with good legato phrasing, a gentle flowing rhythm which nevertheless hints at military drums keeping time. The tenor and bass parts, sometimes in unison, keep this steady tread going. Horn fifths, in bars two/three, four/five, and in augmentation in bars ten/eleven, have a suggestion of quiet fanfares about them, and other dissonant harmonies, for example, in bar seven, help to build up the character of the piece, as does the parallel movement which occurs in bar seven.

This arrangement, which could be sung simply and in a restrained manner yet with the emotion felt, sounds well. It usually succeeded in performance.

DER GUTE KAMERAT

ICH HATT EINEN KA-MER-KA- WEN. SICHEN DAS-SEIN PINGST DU NIT DIE DIE
 EINE KU- HEN KAM GE- FLO- GEN. GILT SIE MIR WEL OD-ER GILT SIE LAD- EN
 WILL IHR DIE HAND NOCH REICH- EN DER DER ICH EBEN-EN LAD- EN KANN

TROM-MEL SCHLUG ZUM STREI- TE, ER GING AN MEIN-ER SEI- TE, IM
 RAT ES WEG- GE- RUSS- EN, ER LIEBT ZU MEIN-EN, RÜCK- EN, ALS
 DIR DIE HAND NICHT GEI- BEN, BLEIB DU ER MEIN-EN, BEI- BEN, MEIN

GLEI- CHEN SCHRITT UND TRITT, IN GLEI- CHEN SCHRITT UND TRITT,
 WARS EIN STÜCK VON MIR, ALS WÄRD EIN STÜCK VON MIR,
 GU- TER KA- MER- AD, MEN GÜ- TER KA- MER- AD, AD

DIE PÊREL SE KLOKKIES

There is nothing pretentious or especially exciting about the technique used in this arrangement, yet it always worked most effectively and satisfyingly in performance, with a rich sound. There is quite a bit of parallel movement between parts, which certainly adds to the harmonic and rhythmic beauty of the music, and there is some melodic interest in all the parts. There are some striking harmonies, for example, in bars six and seven, which are nevertheless easy to sing.

The words allow for some quiet humour, which appeals to the children and, via them, to the audience. For example, the choir can make a slight hesitation before the word "miskien" in the last verse.

The choir's enjoyment in singing this song projects easily to an audience.

DIE STEM VAN SUID-AFRIKA

This is a three-part arrangement of the national anthem, for two soprano parts and an alto. In order to avoid the sopranos, who were really mezzos, having to sing too high, the melody was given to the altos in bars six to eight and from bar twenty-one to the end. This setting was worked out for performance at an occasion celebrating the author, C.J. Langenhoven, and for this reason all the verses of the anthem were sung. It is rather unlikely that such an opportunity to sing the entire anthem will arise very often, but it may well be appropriate to sing two verses, possibly the first and the last ones.

The anthem should never be included as a regular item in a concert programme, except under the circumstances mentioned above. Under normal conditions, it should be accompanied, with a suitable piano part supporting the voices.

DIE STEM VAN SUID-AFRIKA

UIT DIE BLOED VAN ONSE HE- MEL UIT DIE DIEP- TES VAN ONS SEE, OOR ONS
 IN DIE MORG VAN ONSE BEEN- TE IN ONS HART EN SIEL EN GEE, GEE, OOR ONS
 IN DIE SON- GLOED VAN ONSE SO- TER W- TER EN SE, GEE, GEE, OOR ONS
 IN DIE VAS VER- DER- E GE- VA- DER- E GE- ROU: IN DIE SKENK DER

LE- WIG- E GE- BERG- TES WAAR DIE KRANS- E ANT- WOODU GEE, DEUR ONS
 ROEM OP ONS VER- LE- DE, IN ONS HOOP OP WAT SAL WEES, IN ONS
 LEN- TE VAN ONS LIEF- DE, IN DIE LAN- FER VAN ONS ROU, BY DIE
 ONS DIE KRAAG, O HE- RE! OM TE HAND- HAAF EN TE HOU- DAT DIE

VER VER- LA- TE VLA- TES MET DIE KREUN VAN OS- BE- WA - RUIS DIE STEM VAN ONS GE-
 WIL EN WERK EN WAN- DEL, VAN ONS WIEG TOT AAN ONS AN- DER ONS GE-
 KLINK VAN HUN- LIK- NOK- BY DIE WIEG TOT AAN ONS AN- DER ONS GE-
 ER- WE VAN ONS VAAD- 'RE, VIR ONS KIND- ERS ER- WE BLY: STREELJOU KNEG- TE VAN DIE AL- LER

LIEF- DE, VAN ONS LAND SUID- A- PRI- A- KA. ONS SAL ANT- WOODU OP JOU ROEP STEM ONS SAL
 LIEF- DE, VAN ONS TREKGEEN AN- DER ONS TROU ONS VA- DER- OP JOU SAL ONS SAL
 NIET NIE, WRET JY WAAR JOU KIND- ERS IS. VRY. SOOS ONS VA- DE- RE VER- TROU NIE, SAL
 HOOG- STE, TEEN DIE HE- LE WE- RELD VRY. SOOS ONS VA- DE- RE VER- TROU NIE, SAL

OF- FER WAT JY VRA: ONS SAL LE- WE ONS SAL STER- WE ONS VIR
 NAAM HET E- RE DRA: WAAREN OM TE TROU AS ONS SAL STER- WE ONS VIR
 AL- TYD AL- TYD JA: HET ONS MET ONS LE- WE AS ONS SAL STER- WE ONS VIR
 ONS VER- TROU, O HAAR HET ONS MET ONS LE- WE AS ONS SAL STER- WE ONS VIR

JOU VAN SUID- A- FRI- KA
 KOM WEL WEES, GOD RE- G- ER

DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH

This is a simple two-part setting of a well-known Christmas carol, which was easily learnt and effective. It begins in unison, which helps to launch it strongly. Diction here and also throughout the verse needs neat articulation. The fifths at the end of bar two and in bar three were introduced in order to give a bell-like effect, as was the harmonization of the chorus. Here the singers of the lower part should sing the words clearly, cleanly, and above all resonantly, in order to suggest the ringing bells. The sopranos should watch their intonation here, and practise staggered breathing so that the whole phrase is not broken up but sung in one line.

A suitable, unobtrusive, yet rhythmically secure piano accompaniment can be improvised to support the voices, with notes occasionally being played in a ringing, bell-like manner.

The carol should not be sung too quickly, but nevertheless with a virile, merry swing.

DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH

DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH THE BELLS ARE RING-ING
 GLEN SO HERE BELOW BE-LOW PRIME IN LET HEAV'N THE BELLS ARE RING-ING
 PRAY YOU DUTIFULLY YOUR MA-TIN CHIME YE BE SWUNG-ERS

GLO DING DONG DING DING DONG DING DING DONG DING

CEL - SIS CEL - SIS

EK GROET VIR LAAS MY GRYSE BERGE

There are two settings of this song, the first being in two parts, the lower of which does not go to extreme limits. The occasional use of fourths and fifths, even consecutively, as in bars two/three and fourteen/fifteen, is done deliberately in order to create the poignancy of the song in harmonic terms. This is also true of the implied ninths, suggested by the thirds in bar fifteen, where there are also embryonic horn fifths, and the eleventh suspension in bar fourteen. The lower-voice semiquavers in bars three and seven should move very smoothly and tranquilly, with good attention being given to intonation.

Part of the chorus of the second setting is in three-part harmony, namely SAB, but the setting is mostly for SATB. There is some melodic interest in the supporting voices, especially in the bass part, which flows pleasantly. The dissonant appoggiatura eleventh chords in bars two and three, six and seven, reflect the inherent sadness of the words, as do similar chords in the chorus.

The song, which should be sung relatively quietly and thoughtfully, including the chorus, sounds well in performance. There should be subtle phrasing and dynamic handling in order to bring out the simple beauty of the melody. One should, however, beware of too much rubato and allargando. The ending of the chorus after the last verse can be taken more slowly and quietly, which has much more dramatic impact than a less sensitive approach to this type of song.

EK GROET VIR LAAS MY GRYSE BERGE

EK GROET VIR LAAS MY GRYSE BER-GE, FRAAI-STE OP DIE GAN-SE AARD. WANT MO-RE
 GOD DIT IS MY JOU, AF- MY SKEIDS-ROET BE-LE JOU BLY GE- OP HAND IN DEUR LIEF EN NOU. HOE LANK DIE
 MOET LOT WEE EK ONS OP WEG NA OOK MAG BLY- E LAN- DE SKEI- E, VER VAN DIER- BAAR HUIS EN HAARD
 WEE OP WEG NA OOK MAG BLY- E LAN- DE SKEI- E, NA STEEDS HER- MY LANG MY SWER- NE HART NA JOU HEBT
 U- A- HO, HO- LI- A. HO- LI- A- U- A- HO, HO- LI- A. HO- LI- A
 U- A- HO, HO- LI- A. HO- LI- A- U- A- HO.

EK GROET VIR LAAS MY
GRYSE BERGE

Handwritten musical notation for the first system of the song. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "EK GROET VIR LAAS MY GRYSE BERGE. REE-IGE, FARRI-STE OP DIE IN GRIN-SE. GOD DIT, SY 18, AF-I. MY SREDS GRY-ER LIE-STE. MIN-DE, HIN-DE, LE, BLY-DE. TROU, DEUR D, LIEF EN".

Handwritten musical notation for the second system of the song. The lyrics are: "AARD NOU LEED. WANT HOS TOT, MO-RE LANK DIE, MOET LOT WHER, VEK DRE OP, NER DOR, NA MAG BLY-ER. LAN-SKEI, DIE MO-RE, VER STEED VAN MY, VAN VER-BAAR, LANG MY SWERNE, DIER-BAAR MY HART NA WEL-KOM, WEL-KOM".

Handwritten musical notation for the third system of the song. The lyrics are: "HAARD JOU HREET, HO-LI-A, U-A HO HO-LI-A, HO-LI-A, U-A HO HO-LI-A, U-A HO HO-LI-A".

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system of the song. The lyrics are: "LI-A, HO-LI-A, U-A HO HO-LI-A, HO-LI-A, U-A, LI-A, U-A".

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system of the song, showing a final measure with the lyrics "HO".

HOE RY DIE BOERE

This is an uncomplicated setting, written for a two-part boys' choir. It makes quite a fair use of parallel thirds, in order to create a rich harmonic sound - it is always a problem to produce a good tone quality when one is arranging for two parts, particularly when the singers' voices are still young - but other implied harmonies have been introduced by making use of seconds and horn fifths.

The song should be sung with a pleasant swing and not too fast. The humour of the words should be subtly brought out. There are opportunities for onomatopoeic sounds here, such as whistling and clip-clopping, but these should be done judiciously and used with affection rather than ostentation.

In this instance, an accompaniment has been provided in order to give an idea of how such instrumental support can be given on the piano. When such accompaniments have been used, especially when working with a choir singing in two parts, they have usually developed spontaneously until an interesting version has emerged. A sensibly improvised keyboard accompaniment can add rhythmic and harmonic interest to a performance, but it should always enhance and never usurp, be unobtrusive yet keep all the forces vitally efficient.

HOE RY DIE BOERE

First system of musical notation. Treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature. Grand staff with piano accompaniment. The piano part features chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

Second system of musical notation with lyrics. The lyrics are: HOE HOE HOE RY FLUIT SKIET RY DIE DIE DIE BOE - RE SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM BOEM BOEM SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM BOEM BOEM SIT SIT SO.

Third system of musical notation with lyrics. The lyrics are: ISIT FLUIT BOEM SIT SIT FLUIT BOEM SIT SO HOE HOE HOE RY FLUIT SKIET RY DIE DIE DIE BOE - RE SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM BOEM BOEM SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM SIT SIT SO SIT FLUIT BOEM SIT SIT SO HOE - HOE - HOE - HOE - HOE.

Fourth system of musical notation with lyrics. The lyrics are: DIE KAAP - SE MOOI SE (WHISTLE) NOG LING - E LING LING LING LING HOE - HOE - HOE - HOE - HOE.

RA!
RA!
RAAN!
RA!

DIE KAAP-SE NOOI SE

TING-E LING-E LING
(WHISTLE) SKIET TING-E NOG LING-E EEN LING

TING-E LING-E LING HOE- HOE- RA! HOE- HOE- HOE

(WHISTLE) SKIET TING-E NOG LING-E EEN LING

DAL SEGNO AL FINE

HOE HOE DAL SEGNO AL FINE

ALTERNATIVE ENDING FOR LAST VERSE

HOE RY DIE BOE-RE SIT SIT SO SIT SIT SO HOE- RA!

Sva...

I GOT A ROBE

The four-part version of this song is another setting which has pleasant harmonic sound in performance. It embodies some characteristic syncopations and some interesting melodic ideas in the supporting voices. It is mostly in four parts, but here and there, for example, in bars three and four, there are three female parts, with upper and lower mezzo-sopranos. The counter-melodies in bars three and four and bar nine are particularly effective.

The three-part version was derived from the earlier four-part arrangement, and this time the interest in bars three and four and bar nine is given to the alto. At times, there are only two parts, the mezzo-soprano and alto voices singing the same notes. One may perhaps rather consider it a two-part arrangement in which the harmonies are sometimes enriched by dividing the lower part. Although the last chord is effective as a first inversion - though a heavier quality in the altos may result in its sounding as a second inversion - it is also possible to have the altos sing middle C.

The song should be sung at a moderate tempo with a gentle, underlying swing. There should be reasonable emotional involvement in order to project the meaning of the words suitably.

I GOT A ROBE

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: HEA-VEN, HEA- VEN. I GOT A ROBE SHOES HARP. ALL GOD'S CHIL-LUN GOT A ROBE. SHOES. HARP. WHEN I GET TO HEAVN GUNTS.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. It consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: PUT ON MY ROBE SHOES HARP. SHOUT WALK ALL O-VER GOD'S HEA-VEN. HEA- VEN, HEA-VEN, HEA- VEN. HEA- VEN. HEA- VEN. HEA- VEN. SHOUT WALK PLAY SHOUT WALK ALL O-VER PLAY.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. It consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: EV-RA-BODY TALK-IN' BOUT HEAVN, AINT GO-IN' DERE, HEAVEN HEAV- EN HEAVEN! GUNTS SHOUT WALK ALL O-VER GOD'S PLAY.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. It consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: HEAVN.

I GOT A ROBE

Handwritten musical notation for the first system of the song. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "I GOT A ROBE SHOES HARP YOU GOT A ROBE SHOES HARP ALL GOD'S CHILDREN GOT A ROBE SHOES HARP".

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "WHEN I GET TO HEAV'N GONNA PUT ON MY ROBE SHOES HARP GONNA SHOUT WALK ALL O - VER GOD'S PLAY".

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "HEAVEN HEA - VEN HEAVEN HEAVEN HEAVEN HEA - VEN EV'RY - BO-DY'S TALK'N 'BOOT SHOUT WALK PLAY SHOUT WALK PLAY ALL O-VER HEAVEN".

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The melody continues on the treble clef staff, and the bass line is on the bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "HEAV'N AINT GO-IN' DERE HEA-VEN HEA - VEN HEA-VEN GONNA SHOUT WALK ALL O - VER GOD'S HEAV'N PLAY".

JAN PIEREWIET

This three-part arrangement has the baritones singing the melody in the first section. At the end of bar ten, the melody is shared by the sopranos and the altos, in order to keep the range small and to give variety. Of course, it is important to make the change from voice to voice very smoothly and unobtrusively. The unison ending needs care to avoid an awkwardly loud cadence.

There is some parallel movement, for example, between bass and soprano in bars five and six, nine and ten. There are a few passing dissonances which are not difficult to sing because they are approached melodically in each part, for example, in bars two and sixteen.

The song should be sung in a leisurely manner with, nevertheless, a firm underlying rhythmic neatness.

JAN PIEREWIET

JAN PIEREWIET

JAN PIEREWIET
 JAN ZIM PIEREWIET

STIL PIEREWIET PIEREWIET PIEREWIET STAAN STIL GOEIE
 STIL JAN PIEREWIET JAN PIEREWIET JAN PIEREWIET STAAN STIL GOEIE

MÔ-RE MY VROU HIER'S 'N SOEN-TSIE VIR JOU GOEIE MÔ-RE MY
 GOEIE MÔ-RE MY

MAN DANK IS KOFFIE IN DIE KAN

OTHER VERSES:

2. JAN PIEREWIET STAAN STIL, JAN PIEREWIET DRAAI OM
 HY DRAAI OM EN HY LEEN VAN SY OUMA 'N BRIL
 EN HY SOEK MET DIE BRIL NA 'N VROUWIE VIR HOM
3. "TANT HETTIE" SÊ PIEREWIET "GEE LETTIE VIR MY
 OF BETTIE OF NETTIE OF WIE EK KAN KRY
 ALHOEWEL EK IS ARM EN SO LELIK DANKY GEE VIR MY
 TOE 'N SKAPIE DAN TROOS DIT VIR MY."
4. "JAN PIEREWIET" SÊ HETTIE "JAN PIEREWIET LOOP
 SLAAN EN DROOM JY 'N SKAPIE GESOEK BY 'N
 SKAAP EN TOE DANK 'N A PIE BERRY BY 'N AAP
 HAAR DIE APIE BE HA HET GESIEN JY'S 'N SWAAP
 (LANGENROVEN)

LES ANGES DANS NOS COMPAGNES

The original French words were preferred when working with this lovely carol, but it is, of course, available with English words as well. Using French, it is possible to obtain a more luminous, gentle, flowing character, with subtle nuances and undramatic dynamics.

The setting is four-part in the verse section and three-part in the refrain, and caters for an inexperienced baritone group by having the boys sing almost throughout in unison, with repeated note patterns in the first section of the song. The alto part in the verse section is also deliberately simple and repetitive, as is the mezzo-soprano one.

The song should be sung legato throughout, with broad phrasing, particularly in the refrain.

LES ANGES DANS NOS COMPAGNES

LES ANGES DANS NOS COMPAGNES
 BER-BER QUIT-TEZ VOS RE-TRAIT-ES
 ONT EN-TON-DE L'HYM-NE DES CIEUX,
 ON-ISS-EZ-VOUS A LEURS CON-CERTS,

LES ANGES
 BER-GER QUIT-TEZ L'HYM-NE DES CIEUX
 LEURS CON-CERTS

ET L'É-CHO DE NOS MON-TAGNES
 ET QUE VOS TEN-DRES MU-ETTES
 RE-DIT LE CHANT MÉ-LO-DI-EUX
 FASS-ENT RE-TEN-TIR LES AIRS

ET L'É-CHO
 ET QUE VOS TEN-DRES MU-ETTES MÉ-LO-DI-EUX
 RE-TEN-TIR LES AIRS

GLO ————— RI — A

IN EX-CEL-SIS DE DE

LISA LÂN

Being a simple Welsh lyric, this song gave the opportunity for harmonic variation, with the soprano part singing the words and all the other parts accompanying in a slow, chant-like harmonic progression. The formal melodic structure of two plus two bars, which are then sung in reverse order (ABBA), knits everything compactly, almost naïvely, together, which underlines the character of the song.

The piece should be sung with a gentle lilt and with under-statement, and with subtle dynamic balance. This is a piece which sounds well in performance, being unsophisticated yet beautiful. The parallel movement between the alto and tenor parts makes the passing dissonances easy to sing.

LISA LÂN

HOW LONG A- WHEN WE TO- NOW WE ARE
 GO IT SEEMS GETH-ER WENT FAR A- PART LI-SA LÂN
 SINCE WE THOSE THROUGH FIELDS ALL AND YOUTH HAS
 CARE- JEW'LL'D FLED FREE MO-MENTS WITH COW-SLIPS AND JOYS ARE
 PASS'D BUT S'LL THEIR GAY AND JANE AND THE LOVE WE
 FEW

LI - SA LÂN LI - SA LÂN

MEM- LAUGH'D THE HOURS A- THE BYSS WE
 RIES WITH ME LAST WAY KNRN
 LIKE FRAG-MENTS WHAT HAPP-Y RE- MAINS WITH-
 FROM OLD DREAMS WE SPENT LI-SA LÂN
 IN MY HEART

LI - SA LÂN LI - SA LÂN

LITTLE DAVID

The first of the two settings of this song has always been a favourite with choirs, and it invariably succeeds in performance. The first section consists of a four-part ostinato pattern supporting a soprano melody-line. The piece can be performed by starting the ostinato voice by voice, beginning with the bass, then adding the tenor, then the alto, and finally the mezzo-soprano, with the sopranos eventually entering to sing the tune. This seems the easiest and most effective way, but the piece can really be started in several other ways as well.

It is perhaps best to repeat the first part of the song, without repeating the first four double bars, and omitting bar thirteen the first time round, as this gives the presentation more weight and shape - and, of course, the repeat can have dynamic variety.

The middle section is in the expected four parts to start with, but the second half of it reverts to five parts. There is no ostinato here, and the melody is mostly in the alto, except for bar twenty where it is in the tenor and in bar twenty-one where it is in the bass or soprano, depending on how one thinks of it. The dissonances in this section are easy to sing, since they result from largely step-wise melody converging in all the parts. The syncopation of the soprano and tenor parts here adds an interesting character to the setting, as does the parallel motion between the alto and the bass parts, and the tenor and bass. The bass does go down rather low, to one F sharp, and the intonation of the short

chromatic group may be a little difficult to keep true, but these have by no means proved to be insuperable problems and give a good effect if they can be managed.

The first half of the piece is then repeated, ending with a full, warm tone. The interpretation should have a pleasant swing about it, without being either too quick or too slow.

The second setting, this time for three-part SSA ostinato, supporting a soprano melody, follows the same overall scheme as that of the first. The middle section has the melody mostly in the alto central range. There is some four-part writing here, as well as some in three parts. Whilst lighter in weight than the first setting, this one also works well in performance.

LITTLE DAVID

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in the key of D major (two sharps) and common time (C). The melody in the treble clef includes the lyrics "LIT-TLE DA-VID" and "PLAY LIT-TLE DA-VID". The bass clef provides a simple accompaniment. There are repeat signs at the end of the system.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff contains the lyrics "LIT-TLE DA-VID PLAY ON YOUR HARP, HAL LE- LU, HAL LE-". The bass clef continues the accompaniment with the lyrics "PLAY LIT-TLE DA-VID".

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The treble clef staff contains the lyrics "LU, LIT-TLE DA-VID PLAY ON YOUR HARP, HAL LE- LU". The bass clef continues the accompaniment with the lyrics "PLAY LIT-TLE DA-VID".

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, starting with the word "FINE" above the staff. The treble clef staff contains the lyrics "DA-VID LIT-TLE DA-VID WAS A SHEP-HERD BOY ON THE". The bass clef contains the lyrics "LIT-TLE DA-VID WAS A SHEP-HERD BOY".

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system. The treble clef staff contains the lyrics "KILL'D KILL'D GO GO LI-AH AND SHOUT-ED FOR JOY DA-VID DA-VID SHOUT-ED FOR JOY PLAY LIT-TLE DA-VID". The bass clef contains the lyrics "KILL'D KILL'D GO GO LI-AH AND SHOUT-ED FOR JOY".

DA
CAR
AL
FINE

LITTLE DAVID

Musical notation system 1. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), common time (C). The system contains three staves. The top staff has the lyrics "LITTLE DAVID" written across the first three measures. The middle staff has the lyrics "LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures. The bottom staff has the instruction "PLAY LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures.

Musical notation system 2. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, common time. The system contains three staves. The top staff has the lyrics "PLAY ON YOUR HARP, HALLELU, HALLELU, LITTLE DAVID". The middle staff has the lyrics "LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures. The bottom staff has the instruction "PLAY LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures.

Musical notation system 3. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, common time. The system contains three staves. The top staff has the lyrics "PLAY ON YOUR HARP, HALLELU". The middle staff has the lyrics "LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures. The bottom staff has the instruction "PLAY LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures. The word "FINE" is written at the end of the system.

Musical notation system 4. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, common time. The system contains three staves. The top staff has the lyrics "DAVID WAS A SHEPHERD BOY HE KILL'D GOLIATH". The middle staff has the lyrics "DAVID WAS A SHEPHERD BOY HE KILL'D GOLIATH". The bottom staff has the instruction "PLAY LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures.

Musical notation system 5. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps, common time. The system contains three staves. The top staff has the lyrics "LI-AM AND SHOUT-ED FOR JOY SHOUT-ED FOR JOY FLY". The middle staff has the lyrics "LI-AM AND SHOUT-ED FOR JOY SHOUT-ED FOR JOY FLY". The bottom staff has the instruction "PLAY LITTLE DAVID" repeated in each of the four measures. The words "DA Capo" and "FL FINE" are written at the end of the system.

LOCH LOMOND

This two-part arrangement probably needs the support of a sensible, unobtrusive piano accompaniment in order to provide sufficient harmonic interest. However, there are some interesting features in the lower voice part, for example, the fourths in bars five and thirteen - suggesting the Scottish character of the song, the horn fifths from bar three to bar four and in bar seven and elsewhere, and the consecutive seconds in bars two and fourteen, which really come at the end of one phrase and at the beginning of the next, and which imply chords such as sevenths or those with added dissonances. The convergence of the parts to the unison in bars eight and sixteen must be phrased carefully to avoid an unmusical accent on the G.

The song must be sung with much legato in long phrases, and with an appropriate rhythmic lilt and tone quality.

LOWLANDS

This short ballad, with its sad story, lends itself to quiet yet dissonantly rich harmonization. The dissonances should not be over-emphasized but should rather underline the legato melody as the different vocal lines converge to form them. Dynamics and phrasing should be subtle, and the piece should be sung with refined emotion. The major ending of the last verse should be approached carefully in diminuendo, without losing resonance or good tone colour. The repeated C at the beginning in the bass is a deliberate attempt to create atmosphere and should be sung with this fact kept in mind.

Where the arrangement becomes temporarily five-part, the mezzo-sopranos can easily be divided, unless they are a really weak group, or unless there are some developing altos who are ready to take such a part when it occurs. This applies to all multi-harmonized areas of these arrangements.

Some use is again made of parallel movement to obtain both legato lines and good sound, for example, in bars two to four, first between alto and tenor parts, and then between the alto and the bass.

LOWLANDS

I SHE AND SHE DREAM'D A DREAM CAME TO ME BRAVE-LY MADE NO SOUND THE AT HER NO ST-ER MY RED- GO-FOR WORD SHE NIGHT SID FAIR SAID LOW-LANDS LOW-LANDS A-

WAY MY JOHN MY LOVE SHE ALL DRESS'D IN A RED, RED AND THEN I CAME WHITE ROSE KNEW ALL LIKE MY HE DRESS'D IN SOME FAIR LOVE DID LOVE WAS WHITE BRIDE WEAR DEAD MY LOW-LANDS A-WAY

LAST VERSE

WAY

POLLIE, ONS GAAN PEREL TOE

This is a three-part setting except for bar eleven, where the alto A or C sharp could be left out if necessary. Throughout, the melody is in the alto, and the baritone part is very simple, underlying the tonic and dominant harmonies. The introduction, alternating E and D major, seems a suitable way to begin such a song, and should be sung in a droll, easy manner.

There are ten verses. They could all be used if the song were sung quickly, but this would not really be in character; the piece needs a gentle lilt which emphasizes the inherent humour of the words, and ideally about half the verses should be omitted. It is difficult to keep the interest alive for longer than that.

The phrasing and cadence points should be carefully controlled.

POLLIE, ONS GAAN PÉREL TOE

8

LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
 POL-LIE ONS GAAN PÉ-REL TOE

POL-LIE ONS GAAN PÉ-REL TOE
 POL-LIE ONS GAAN PÉ-REL TOE
 EK EN JY AL-

LEEN
 EK EN JY AL-LEEN. LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

LA LA LA LA LA
 FINAL
 LA LA DAL. SEGNO

- ORIGINAL VERSES:
1. POLLIE GAAN MOS PÉREL TOE — WAT GAAN SY DAAR MAAK?
 2. SY GAAN NA HAAR KEREL TOE — SOOS DIT NIEHAND TRANK.
 3. EN WAT SAL DIE WERELD SE? — POLLIE GAAN ALLEEN.
 4. SY SAL VIR DIE WERELD SE — SKEER VIR MY PART HEEN.
 5. GAAN SY REGTIG PÉREL TOE — POLLIE STOKALLEEN?
 6. STOKALLEEN, JA, STOKALLEEN — EK EN SY ALLEEN.
 7. EN WAT SAL HAAR KEREL SE — JY EN SY ALLEEN?
 8. SY GAAN OM HOM AF TE SE — DAN ALY ONS ALLEEN.
 9. WAT GAAN JY EN SY DAN DOEN — JY EN SY ALLEEN?
 10. ONS GAAN IN DIE PÉREL SOEN — EK EN SY ALLEEN.
- (LANSEN HOUTS)

POLLY - WOLLY - DOODLE

This jolly plantation song should be sung at a fairly brisk tempo, with careful attention being given to neat, rich chording and diction.

The setting is mostly three-part, with a few four-part chords, particularly at the end. The intonation of the chromatic bass note in bar three and bar eleven, and the chords in bars nine and ten need care, as does the quaver movement in the penultimate three bars.

The words, dealing as they do with courting, are easily appreciated by the choir members, and if the conductor treats the theme sympathetically and with touches of humour, it becomes an easy matter to communicate the light-hearted fun of the song to an audience.

POLLY-WOLLY-DOODLE

OH I WENT DOWN SOUTH FOR TO SEE MY SAL. SING-ING POL-LY WOL-LY DOO-DLE ALL DE DAY. MY DOO-DLE ALL DE DAY. WITH
OH MY SAL, SHE AM A MAID-EN FAIR. SING-ING POL-LY WOL-LY DOO-DLE ALL DE DAY. WITH

POL-LY WOL-LY

SAL, SHE AM A LIVE-LY GAL. SING-ING POL-LY WOL-LY DOO-DLE ALL DE DAY. FARE-THEE
SAL, SHE AM A LAUGH-ING EYES AND CUR-LY HAIR. SING-ING POL-LY WOL-LY DOO-DLE ALL DE DAY. FARE-THEE

WELL FARE-THEE WELL FARE-THEE WELL FARE-THEE WELL FARE-THEE WELL MY FAI-RY FAY FAI-RY FIN. OH I'M

OFF TO LOUIS-I-A-NA FOR TO SEE MY SU-SY AN-NA, SING-ING POL-LY WOL-LY DOO-DLE ALL DE

DAY

SARIE MARAIS

Two arrangements of this song are included. The first is a two-part setting in which an attempt has been made not only to make the second voice interesting but also support the melody. A legato character is created by using a fair amount of step-wise movement, both functional and of a passing nature. Horn fifths, for example, in bar one, and embryonic seventh chords and other implied harmonies are also present. The occasional use of fourths and fifths does not sound unattractive and, in fact, increases the range of resources available in this limited field. An improvised accompaniment supplies an enhanced harmonic framework for this type of setting.

The four-part setting is uncomplicated, sounds well, and is easily learnt. Each part has some melodic interest, for example, the bass throughout, the alto in the refrain, and the tenor a few phrases here and there. There are some interesting harmonic ideas, such as the horn fifths between soprano and alto voices in bar one, which are reversed in the tenor and bass parts to fill up bar four. There are also some passing dissonances, for example, in bar one beat two, and also some appoggiaturas, such as in bar one beat four. Quite often, two parts follow each other a tenth apart in parallel motion, which gives a good aural effect as well as keeping the rhythmic flow smooth, for example, in bar two beats three and four between the alto and the bass, in bars nine and ten, again between the alto and bass parts. Similar parallel movement occurs between the soprano and the tenor in bar seven beats two and three.

This folksong is so often performed unimaginatively, with

no thought at all being given to the meaning of the words, which, of course, refer to the longings of a soldier away from home during the Anglo-Boer War. Real character can be given to the interpretation by emphasizing the different emotional atmosphere of each verse. The first is wistful and unhappy, the second agitated and fearful, and the last joyful. The refrain, though the words remain the same, should follow this emotional scheme, brought to life by the use of different tempi and dynamic levels for each verse, and by getting the children to project the implications of the words, which they can easily understand and identify with.

SARIE MARAIS

MY SA-RIE MA-RAIS IS SO VER VAN MY HART HAARK HOOP OM HAAR WEER TE SIEN ISY
 VER- WAS SO BANG DAT DIE EN DIE VER KAKIES MY JOU VANG EN VER OOR DIE SEE WEG STOUR TEE
 LOSNING MET GE-KOM EN DIE HUISTOE GAAN WAS DAAR T'ROG MA DIE DU TRANS-VAAL MY
 HET IN DIE WYK VAN DIE HOOP RI- VIER GE- WOON NOG VOOR DIE OORLOG HET GE-
 VLUK NA DIE KANT VAN DIE UPPING- TON SE SAND DAAR ONDER BY DIE GROOT RI-
 LIE WE- LINGS PER- SION SAL SEKER OOK DAAR WESS OM MY MET 'N KUS TE BE-
 GIN. O BRING MY TRUG NA DIE DU TRANS-VAAL DAAR WAAR MY SA-RIE WOON! RIE WOON DAAR
 VER. LOON. SA-RIE WOON DAAR
 ONDER IN DIE MIELIES BY DIE GROEN DORING BOOM DAAR WAAR MY SA-RIE WOON, DAAR
 ONDER IN DIE MIELIES BY DIE GROEN DORING BOOM DAAR WOON MY SA-RIE MA-RAIS

SARIE MARAIS

MY EK VER-
SA WAS LASSIG
DIE NIE NIA-
SO HET GE-
RAIS BANG-
KOM EN
IS SO DAT DIE
VER RA-KIES
HUIS-TOE
VAN MY SO
GAAN HAE
HART LANG
DAAR
MAARK
EN
HOOP VER
TRUG
DI HAAR
DOE DIE
NA DIE
WEER SEE
OU
TE WEG-
TRANS-

O. IS IEN
ISTWIK
VAAL
SY TOE
MY
HET VLEUGEL
LIENE-
IN DIE WYK
NA DIE KANT
VAN DIE
VAN DIE
SAL
MOOI RI-VIER
GE-
WONN
NOG
DAAR
OH
UP-MIS-
TON SE
SE-KER
DOEK
DAAR
WERS

VOOR DIE
ONDER
MY
DIE
DORING
LANGS DIE
HEER
HET ERGOT
KUS
BE-RI-
TE-RE-
SIN VIER
LOON
BRING MY
TRUG NA DIE
OU TRANS-
VAAL

DAAR NAAR MY SA-RIE
WOON DAAR
ONDER IN DIE MIE-DEK
BY DIE
GROEN DORING BOOM

I. 2.
DAAR WOON MY SA-RIE MA-
RAIS
DAAR
DAAR WOON MY SA-RIE MA-
RAIS

SHENANDOAH

This is a pleasant, rather wistful sea-shanty. The first setting begins with a soloist. A boy could sing this part, but any suitable singer, or even a small group, would probably be equally successful, and the latter may be unavoidable if no single voice is good enough. Nevertheless, a male voice is the most appropriate for an introduction to this type of song.

After the introduction, the setting becomes four-part, SATB. There are a few mild difficulties, such as the seventh leap down in the bass of bar five, and the chromatic B, B flat, A in the next bar, as well as the tenor chromatic sequence in the last two bars, but these are not impossible to deal with and add their own character to the song. The temporary change of time-signature in bar five is an interesting feature of the song.

The second arrangement of this shanty is also in four parts, but this time it is for SSAB, with the bass providing the unison introduction. It is a somewhat more demanding setting, needing some good leaders in each voice part if it has to be learnt quickly.

The song should be sung with a flexible, lilting, rhythmic flow, suggesting, as it were, the gentle movement of the boat. There should be a broad approach to the phrasing, with good control at the end of phrases, and good tone quality throughout.

SHENANDOAH

Solo

O SHEN-AN-DOAH I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER A- WAY YOU ROLL-ING TO THE AND THE SHIP SAYS FREE A GAX' IS BLOWING GET YOU L. L. RIVER'

SHEN-AN-DOAH LONG TO HEAR YOU A- WAY WERE BOUND A- WAY 'CROSS THE BRACCS TANK THE DIE ILL LOVE YOU FLOWING BY-GET

WIDE MISS-OU-

SHENANDOAH

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song "Shenandoah". It consists of three systems of music, each with three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, beams, and dynamic markings.

System 1:

- Lyrics: A- WAY YOU ROLL-ING
- Lyrics: A- WAY YOU ROLL-ING
- Lyrics: OH OH 'TIS OH SHEN-AN-DOAH, I LONG TO HEAR YOU A- WAY YOU ROLL-ING

System 2:

- Lyrics: SHEN-AN-DOAH, I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER A -
- Lyrics: SHEN-AN-DOAH, I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER A -
- Lyrics: SHEN-AN-DOAH, I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER A -

System 3:

- Lyrics: WAY I'M BOUND TO GO 'CROSS THE WIDE MIS-SOU-RI
- Lyrics: WAY I'M BOUND TO GO 'CROSS THE WIDE MIS-SOU-RI
- Lyrics: WAY I'M BOUND TO GO 'CROSS THE WIDE MIS-SOU-RI

SHORT 'NIN' BREAD

This four-part plantation song has a repetitive melodic structure in the supporting voices which is easily learnt. Care must be taken with the bouncy dotted-quaver/ semiquaver rhythmic pattern which occurs in most bars, and also with achieving strong chording, especially the added sixth chord at the beginning, and the ninths in bars four, eight and sixteen. The syncopations in bars eleven and twelve must also be really well felt.

This song was usually performed twice through, without repeating the introductory two bars and reserving the broken last two bars of the script for the repeat- sing them as in bar six the first time. This made the item last longer and allowed some dynamic variation to take place.

The piece should not have too quick a tempo. Its character should be comfortably homely and warm. The children always enjoyed singing it and it projects well to an audience.

SHORT'NIN' BREAD

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The treble clef staff contains the melody with lyrics: "SHORT'NIN' SHORT'NIN' OH YES M- MAM-MY'S LIT-TLE BA-BY LOVES SHORT'NIN' SHORT'NIN'". The bass clef staff contains a simple accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is common time (C).

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff contains the melody with lyrics: "MAM-MY'S LIT-TLE BA-BY LOVES SHORT'NIN' BREAD MAM-MY'S GON-NA MAKE A LIT-TLE SHORT'NIN' SHORT'NIN'". The bass clef staff contains a simple accompaniment.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The treble clef staff contains the melody with lyrics: "MAM-MY'S GON-NA MAKE A LIT-TLE SHORT'NIN' BREAD THAT IS - N'T ALL SHE'S GON-NA DO". The bass clef staff contains a simple accompaniment.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The treble clef staff contains the melody with lyrics: "SHE IS GON-NA MAKE A LIT-TLE COF-FEE TOO MAM-MY'S LIT-TLE BA-BY LOVES SHORT'NIN' SHORT'NIN'". The bass clef staff contains a simple accompaniment.

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system. The treble clef staff contains the melody with lyrics: "MAM-MY'S LIT-TLE BA-BY LOVES SHORT- NIN' BREAD". The bass clef staff contains a simple accompaniment. The system ends with a double bar line.

SILENT NIGHT

This carol has been set in many different ways by countless arrangers. The two settings included were made for personal use with two specific choirs.

The first arrangement is a simple three-part one which made use of the original German words. Both English and Afrikaans words can also be used. In fact, this carol has become so much an accepted part of the music for Christmas that it no longer matters what language is used since the sentiments are universally acknowledged.

The rhythmic 'covering' for the dotted-quaver/ semiquaver pattern, for example, in bars five and nine, should be handled smoothly and no part should sing in a jerky fashion. The unison in the last bar needs care in order to avoid a sudden bump of sound as the voices converge. This is the end of the phrase and everything should be musically and tastefully rounded off.

The four-part setting makes use of some gentle dissonances. Here the dotted rhythm is covered by the bass, joined by the tenor in bars eighteen and twenty-two. The tessitura of the tenor part does tend to be a little high and if this causes problems the music can be transposed down a semitone or tone, provided that the basses can manage a low F sharp or F. A penultimate unison G (as written) would cater for this if sung by the tenors and basses.

The carol should be sung without affectation but rather simply, with thought being given to the meaning of the words. A piano accompaniment can be improvised to support the voices, though another instrument, such as the guitar, could prove

very effective if used to enhance the mood of the song and not simply as a gimmick. It is all too easy to perform such a well-known piece in an artificially over-sentimental manner, whereas a restrained, understated interpretation is really much more effective and is, in fact, more stylistically authentic.

STILLE NACHT

STIL-LE NACHT HEIL-I-GE NACHT AL-LES SCHLÄFT EIN-SAM WACHT
HIR-TEN ERST KUND GE-MACHT GOTT-ES SOHN O WIE LACHT

NUR DAS TRAU-TE HOCH HEI-LI-GE PAAR HOL- DER KNA-BE IM LOCK-ING-EN HAAR
DURCH DER ENG-EL HA-LE-LU-JA TÖN- TES LAUT- VON FERN- UND NA
LIEB AUG DEIN-EM GÖTT-LICH-EN MUND DA- UNS SCHLÄGT DIE RETT-EN-DE STUND

SCHLAF IM HIMM-LICH-ER RUH DA SCHLAF IM HIMM-LICH-ER RUH DA
CHRIST DER RETT-ER IST BURT CHRIST DER RETT-ER IST BURT
CHRIST IN DEI-NER GE- BURT CHRIST IN DEI-NER GE- BURT

SILENT NIGHT

Handwritten musical notation for the first system of 'Silent Night'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 3/4 time. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: SILENT NIGHT HOPELY NIGHT ALL SHEPHERDS OF CALM QUAKE GOD ALL AT LOVE'S PURE.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system of 'Silent Night'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: BRIGHT SIGHT LIGHT ROUND YON RIES BEAMS FROM THY VIRGIN FROM THY MOTHER AND HEAVENLY CHILD FAR FACE HOPELY HEAVENLY WITH IN WANTS HOPE SING DAWN OF BE.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system of 'Silent Night'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: TEN DER AND MILD IN THE HEAVENLY PEACE SLEEP CHRIST IN THE SAVIOUR IS BORN BIRTH SLEEP CHRIST IN THE SAVIOUR IS BORN BIRTH.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system of 'Silent Night'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: HEAVENLY SAVIOUR IS LORD AT THY PEACE BORN BIRTH.

SOME FOLKS DO

This plantation song is mostly written as a three-part SAB setting, with a few tenor notes added very occasionally for a better chord harmony, particularly at the end. Being a simple arrangement, it was learnt easily by the unsophisticated singers for whom it was devised, and they enjoyed singing it.

The words allow some appropriate facial gestures from the conductor, which should result in a natural, relaxed and joyful style of singing from the choir, and this in turn projects to the audience.

The song should be sung fairly briskly, with good enunciation, strong tone, and chordal balance. The discord in bar thirteen is easy to sing, once the singers have overcome their initial surprise.

SOME FOLKS DO

SOME FOLKS LIKE TO SIGH
SOME FOLKS FEAR TO SMILE
SOME FOLKS FRET AND SCOLD
SOME FOLKS DO
SOME FOLKS DO
SOME FOLKS LONG TO DIE
OTHERS LAUGH THROUGH GUILT
ALL SOON BE DEAD AND GOLD BUT

THAT'S NOT ME NOR YOU
LONG LIVE THE MERRY MERRY HEART THAT
LAUGHS BY NIGHT AND

DAY LIKE THE QUEEN OF MIRTH NO
MATTER WHAT SOME FOLKS SAY

STEAL AWAY

This reasonably easy arrangement, with many ideas repeated, has always succeeded in performance. The few problems, for example, the chromaticism in bars two and six, the triplet in bar two, the low F and ninth chord in bar seven, and the few dissonances, are not difficult to deal with. Only verses one and two need be used, but a third is given and may well be useful since the spiritual is a short one.

Legato phrasing is again important. The song should be sung with what one might call a restrained fervour. Apart from the low bass F, the range of all the voice parts is undemanding, resulting in a good harmonic sound.

STEAL AWAY

Handwritten musical notation for the first system of "Steal Away". It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "STEAL A-WAY STEAL A-WAY STEAL A-WAY TO JE-SUS STEAL A-WAY".

Handwritten musical notation for the second system of "Steal Away". It consists of two staves with lyrics: "STEAL A-WAY HOME I HAVN'T GOT LONG TO STAY HERE MY LORD HE CALLS ME HE". There is a circled "3" above the first measure and a circled "13" below the first measure. The word "Fine" is written above the staff.

2. MY LORD HE CALLS ME HE
 3. TOMB-STONES ARE FIRST-ING HE FOUR

Handwritten musical notation for the third system of "Steal Away". It consists of two staves with lyrics: "CALLS HE BY THE THUNDER THE TRUM-PET SOUNDS WITH- IN MY SOUL I". There is a circled "3" above the first measure.

CALLS HE BY THE LIGHT-NING
 SIN-NERS STAND A-TREMB-LING

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system of "Steal Away". It consists of two staves with lyrics: "HAVN'T GOT LONG TO STAY HERE".

D.C. & Fine

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

The first of these two arrangements was devised for a school choir which was newly formed and in which the boys were still rather musically insecure. Most of the song was given to the girls to sing, and the boys joined in mostly in one part. The girls sing in three parts, which gives a good sound, using diatonic harmony. There are a few more adventurous chords when the boys enter, but generally both the harmonic and rhythmic flow are smooth and unabrasive.

The three-part setting for SSA gives the melody to the altos to begin with, then to the sopranos. Occasionally, in bars two and ten, there are four parts, with the altos being divided. Some use is made of suspensions, in bars four and twelve, in order to avoid a static flow and to give additional melodic interest. Again, this version can end with a unison instead of a first inversion.

Phrasing is once more important in both settings, in order to obtain a beautiful cantabile line in all the parts.

Dynamically, there are various ways the piece may be shaped, though it is preferable to end softly. Care must be taken with the words to achieve a warm tone colour. For example, the words "low" and "Chariot" need to be well-rounded and resonant, and the latter should not have its last syllable clipped or thinned out. Vigorous mouthing while singing the word "swing" can also have a good effect, particularly if the "ng" is reached early and also allowed to resonate. However, one should at all times aim at a natural, sincerely-felt interpretation rather than an artificial, 'commercial' one.

SWING LOW

SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME HOME

SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME

HOME LOCK'D O-VER JOE-JAN AND WHAT I'D I SEE COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME

This system contains the first two staves of the handwritten musical score. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words like 'COM-IN' and 'CAR-RY' written in a shorthand style.

HOME A BAND OF AN-GEELS COM-IN' AF-TER ME

This system contains the third and fourth staves of the handwritten musical score. The notation continues in the same key and time signature as the first system. The lyrics include 'HOME A BAND OF AN-GEELS COM-IN' AF-TER ME'.

COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME HOME SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME

This system contains the fifth and sixth staves of the handwritten musical score. The lyrics include 'COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME HOME SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME'.

HOME SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME

This system contains the seventh and eighth staves of the handwritten musical score. The lyrics include 'HOME SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME'.

SWING LOW

SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME HOME

SWING LOW SWEET CHA-RI-OT COM-IN' FOR TO CARRY ME HOME *fine*

LOOK'D O-VER JOU-RN AND WHAT DID I SEE COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME HOME A

RAND OF AN-GELES COM-IN' AF-TER ME COM-IN' FOR TO CAR-RY ME D.C. al fine.

THE VIRGIN MARY HAD A BABY BOY

This lovely calipso carol was a particular pleasure to set, and it has invariably been enjoyed by both choir members and audiences. It must be sung with a joyous swing but not too fast, and it should not be lacking in subtle nuance and inflection. The syncopations must be well felt by the singers, also the triplet in bar seven.

There is melodic interest in all the parts, some enjoyable dissonances, and a bass part that sets everything in motion at the beginning. Bars fifteen and sixteen should echo bars thirteen and fourteen. There is much scope for dynamic improvisation.

Phrasing should be broad, care being taken also with phrase endings, particularly in bars twelve and twenty/twenty-one, where "king" and not "dom" must get the accent, though at the end of the piece the latter syllable should nevertheless be sung with warm resonance. The augmented fourth interval sung by the bass in bar six, and the chromatic notes in the tenor in bars eleven and twelve are two mildly difficult problems, but otherwise the parts are easy to sing.

VAT JOU GOED EN TREK

Cillie's arrangement of this South African folksong (Nuwe FAK-SANGBUNDEL, No. 385) is an interesting one for soprano, alto and baritone, and has been used successfully with school choirs. The lowly two-part setting given here was produced for a junior boys' choir and it too served its purpose well. There is much repetition, making for easy learning, but the second part does have some melodic interest and also forms an occasional passing discord with the melody.

The song should be sung with a strong rhythmic swing, suggesting the limp of Ferreira. Because it is so short, it is wise to sing the song twice or three times, changing dynamics, tempo or emphases with each repeat. It is also possible to use a soloist for one of the repeats, though not the last one, unless one wants to give the impression of Ferreira hobbling off into the distance, with the rest of the choir humming or vocalizing an accompaniment, or singing the words of the refrain when they arrive.

It will probably be useful, even necessary, to improvise a piano accompaniment in order to support the voices.

VAT JOU GOED EN TREK

VAT JOU GOED EN TREK FERREI-RA VAT JOU GOED EN TREK
 AG-TER DIE BOE IS 'N KLONPIE PERDE VAT JOU GOED EN TREK SWAAR DRA AL AAN DIE EEN KANT
 SWAAR DRA AL AAN DIE EEN KANT SWAAR DRA AL AAN DIE EEN KANT VAT JOU GOED EN TREK

WAT MAAK OOM KALIE DAAR?

This is a three-part setting for SAB, with some rather angular harmonies, for example, the end of bar two, the beginning and ending of bar five, and bar nine. There is a little rhythmic imitation of the soprano part in the bass in bar two and four in order to fill melodic gaps.

This song should be sung with full sound, a jolly rhythmic flow, and sensible phrasing (two plus two bars, four bars, and two bars), some subtlety in verbal emphasis and flexibility, for example, some minute hesitation to emphasize a word or suggest an idea, and care with balancing the dynamic level of the last unison F so that it both supports the meaning of the final word of each verse and suits the related phrase cadence.

It is not necessary to sing all the verses, though there is more narrative reason for doing so in this piece than in other songs of this type. The range is kept within a very central area for all voice parts, which should result in good resonant quality throughout.

WAT MAAK OOM KALIE DAAR?

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 2/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "WAT MAAK OOM KA-LIE DAAR? WAT MAAK OOM KA-LIE DAAR? OOM KA-LIE MAAK HOM". There are handwritten notes above the treble staff, including a plus sign and some rhythmic markings.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 2/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "KLAAR VIR TROU MET MIE-DIE DIE KWAAI JONG, WE-DE-WROU, EN SY IS VIR HOM". There are handwritten notes above the treble staff, including a plus sign and some rhythmic markings.

OTHER VERSES:

2. WAT DRA NIE MIETJIE DAAR? NIE MIETJIE DRA 'N RODI-SIS ROK, EN ONDER DE ROK 'N HANDSAROK - OOM KALIE DRA 'N KLAAR.
3. WAT MAAK OOM KALIE DAAR? HY'S BASTIA OM HOM VET TE SMER, EN SWEER SO NOOIT AS NIMMENDAR - HY'S MET NIE MIETJIE KLAAR.
4. WAT SKREE NIE MIETJIE DAAR? "OOM KALIE", SKREE SY, "KOM TOG WEEER - MY HARTJIE IS TOG ALTE SEER, NOG SEERDER AS DIE KLAAR.
5. WAT MAAK DIE TWEË NOU DAAR? OOM KALIE STEEK 'N STYNE DOP, NIE MIETJIE SLAAN MET DIE HANDSAROK, EN GOED KOM HULLE KLAAR

(LANGENHOVEN)

Handwritten musical score for the 'OTHER VERSES' section. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 2/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The word "KLAAR" is written below the treble staff.

WERE YOU THERE?

There are two arrangements of this spiritual, one for SATB and the other for SSA. The four-part version has a fair amount of melodic interest in each of the parts. It deliberately goes from unison, through fourth, to the full chord in bar one in order to heighten the implied mysticism of the words and the feeling of awe they arouse. This idea is repeated in bar sixteen. The strong dissonances in bar two have a good aural effect, particularly as they are not especially emphasized but occur during the rhythmic flow, yet give a sense of strength to the harmony. The ninth in bar six likewise occurs in passing. These chords are easily sung because they result from a converging of easily-managed melodic lines.

The middle section begins with the sopranos and altos singing in three parts, giving a different, effective tonal character to the sound. Care needs to be taken to get the singers to pitch absolutely in tune here, and also to phrase to and from the second chord with its fairly high F. The three "tremble" bars give the opportunity for finely-graded dynamics, possibly p, mf, and pp respectively, and for gently emphasizing the first syllable each time. The words naturally lead to a climax in the last verse, though the ending should again be sung softly.

The three-part version is somewhat less dramatic in its harmonization and tonal contrasts, but it nevertheless flows easily, with a measure of melodic interest in the lower voices, some parallel voice movement, and some use of first and second inversions to give a somewhat disembodied effect.

The piece can also be ended on a unison, possibly in the last verse, in which case it will need some care in balancing the sound.

Afrikaans words may be substituted for the original English ones. They work equally well.

WERE YOU THERE?

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY RAISED HIM UP FROM THE DEAD WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: CRU-CE-PTUM RISE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD LORD TOMB DEAD SOME-TIMES IT CAUSES ME TO FEEL LIKE SHOUTING

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY RAISED HIM UP FROM THE DEAD

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: CRU-CE-PTUM RISE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD LORD TOMB DEAD

WERE YOU THERE?

WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRU- CI- FIED MY LORD? LORD?
 WERE YOU THERE? WERE YOU ROSE UP FROM THE DEAD?

THERE WHEN THEY CRU- CI- FIED MY LORD? LORD?
 HE ROSE UP FROM THE DEAD?

SOME TIMES IT I CAU - SES ME TO TREM - BLE, TREM - BLE, TREM - BLE
 FEEL LIKE SHOUTING HAL - LE, HAL - LE LU - IA

WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRU- CI- FIED MY LORD? LORD?
 WERE YOU THERE? WERE YOU ROSE UP FROM THE DEAD?

Finally, I should like to include the following three arrangements which were presented to me at the start of my teaching career when I began the training of an unsophisticated school choir for the first time. They are models of their kind - in a dual sense: they are excellent examples of this type of simple yet effective setting, and they provided the stimulus for my own efforts. For both of which I am grateful.

KOMMET, IHR HIRTEN

ARR. GEORG GRUBER

KOMM-ET IHR
LASS-ET UNS
WAHR-LICH DIE

HIR-TEN IHR
SE-HEN IN
ENG-EL VER-

MÄNN-ER UND
BETH-LÉ-HEM'S
KÜN-DIG-GEN

FRAU- STALL- KOMM-ET
HEUT. WAS UNS
WAHR-LICH

KOMM-ET DAS
WAS UNS VER-
BETH-LE-HEM'S

LIEB-LICH- DER
HEISS-EN VÖLK-
HIR-TEN-

KIND-LEIN ZU
HIMM-LISCH-ER
GAR-GRÖSS-ER

SCHAU'N. CHRIST-US
SCHALL. WAS MIR
FREUD! NUN SOLL

CHRIST-US DER HERR IST
WAS WIR DORT FIND-EN
NUN SOLL ES WERD-EN

HEU-TE GE-BO-REN
LASS-ET UNS KÜN-DEN
FRIE-DE AUF ERDEN

DEN GOTT ZUM HEIL DER
LASS-ET UNS FREI-SEN
DEN MENSCH-EN ALL-ER

WELT HAT ER-KO-REN
IN FRÖHM-EN WEI-SEN
KIN WOHL-GE-FALL-EN

FÜRCH-TET EUCH
HALL-LE- LU-
EH-RE , SEI

NICHT!
JAI
GOTT!

ENTRE LE BOEUF

ARR. GEORG GRUBER

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The vocal line is on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: EN-TRE LE BOEUF EN-TRE LES DEUX E BRAS L'A-NE NE GRIS RIE DORT DORT DORT LES PETIT EN-TRE LES RO-SES ET MA-LIS

HUM

Handwritten musical score for the second system. The music continues in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal line is on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: FILS MILLE ANGES DI-VINS MILLE SERA-PHINS VO-LENT A L'EN-

Handwritten musical score for the third system. The music continues in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal line is on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: TOUR DE CE DIEU D'A-MOUR

DIE AFRIKAANSE POP

ARR. GEORG GRUBER

Handwritten musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics in Afrikaans. The lyrics include: "DIE DIE LAAT", "WRE- RAN SKOT AN- DER", "W RELD - SE DER", "W DIE MOOI BLOD- OOG WAT", "W IS HAAR", "W BAI- O- LASS- AN- DER", "W & GIES - IE DER", "W GROOT GLINK MET WIL", "W DIT BANE HAAR", "W WRET DIE LIEF STEEM NIER-", "W DIE DIT VAN SO", "W AAP MOET SIL- WEA ERK", "W SE EK WEA ERK", "W STERT SA KLANK BY", "W EN HAAR HET JY".

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics in Afrikaans. The lyrics include: "W O- NEU- WANG- KAN", "W RAL SIE AN", "W KRY IS TIES RE-", "W JY SO SOOR TER", "W MEI- PYN RO- WY-", "W SIES EN SE FIE", "W WAT FRAAI EN IN", "W EN EN IN DIE", "W HE- GLAD NIK- HE-", "W LE AS KIE LF", "W BOEL JY LIE- WER- ELD", "W WIL NIE", "W WERD, IS WERD. HE, WIL HE. BLANK, BLANK. SY, KAN KRY.", "W WAAR SY'S HAAR GE-".

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics in Afrikaans. The lyrics include: "W JY BAIE AL- SONO", "W KAN AAN- LA- BE-", "W GAAN LOK- LET SKEI-", "W VAN KEND SY E", "W OOS JA IS SAG", "W TOT DIE TEN EN", "W WER WAAR FYN SORT", "W EN K MAAR TE EN", "W WED KE- TENG- VLY-", "W JOU REL- ER TIG", "W VIR TIE SO- NOE", "W PAS ON GOON", "W WOP OP OP OP", "W W IN PAS BOON BOON", "W WOP OP OP OP", "W DAT GAAN OM JY'S".

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics in Afrikaans. The lyrics include: "W ME- KRY IKOU TOE", "W RENG JOU AN W", "W KRY TIEN- MAL AL- TE", "W JY MAL DIE TE", "W SO LIE WIEL LEK-", "W W WER TE KER", "W NOOI AS 'D' TOE IN ROE 'D' SIT DING DIE", "W W W W W W", "W AF- RI- KAANS- E", "W W W W W W", "W DAT GAAN OM JY'S", "W POP", "W 1. 2.", "W POP", "W SE POP".

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