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Meeting of the Committee at the Jamaica Coffee house Febry 16 1812. [An error for 1813.]

Present Newman, Thos. Thomas, Wm Shenstone, Douglas, Hutchings and Ivimey.

Bro Cox in the Chair.

The report of the Sub-committee was read by the Secretary and after some alterations was adopted, viz.

1. Agreed that the Secretaries write to brethren Hall and Sutcliff requesting them to preach at the next Annual Meeting.
2. Agreed that the invitation to the Churches and County Associations be given through the medium of the *Baptist Magazine* for April next, and that the Messengers appointed be in Town by Tuesday the 23rd of June to meet the Committee at Dr. Rippon's Vestry at 3 o'clock in the Afternoon precisely, to prepare a Report to be read to the General Assembly.

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3. Agreed that brethren Rippon and Ivimey be appointed to look out a suitable place of worship for the annual meeting, and report the next meeting.

4. Agreed to request Dr. Rippon to draw up an address of invitation to our brethren in the Country agreeable to the second Resolution.

[page 13 is blank]

[*To be continued.*]

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

## Bunyan as a Lover of Music.

THE preparation of a Cantata on "Bunyan, the Dreamer" has made needful a further and fuller study of his works. This study has clearly revealed Bunyan to be both a music-lover and child-lover; two phases of his character that have not received much attention from his biographers. Here, I deal only with the former of the two characteristics.

As to music—it is but natural that its charm should be felt by one who was, in spirit, a poet, and whose being was so dominated by imagination. In early boyhood he was fascinated by the bell-chimes of Elstow Church. As a young man, he tells us he had "taken much delight" in ringing, and this delight led him, for a time, to ally himself with the band of village bell-ringers. His confessed love of dancing also brought him under the sway of other forms of instrumental music; and, doubtless,

when mingling with his boon companions, he became familiar with songs and ballads of the day. That the fondness for music thus awakened in life's prime remained with him throughout later years none can doubt who are familiar with his writings.

#### I.—BELLS.

The chiming and pealing of bells seemed to be in his ears throughout his life. When Christian and Hopeful had the Celestial City in view, "they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring to welcome them thereto." After they went through the gates, "all the bells in the City rang again for joy." In Part II of the Allegory, Mr. Valiant, speaking of Tell-True's arrival in heaven, says that "all the bells of the City did ring for joy at his reception"; and when Christiana and her company reached the land of Beulah they were regaled by the tuneful notes of the bells.

In the *Holy War* the misguided inhabitants of Mansoul, thinking Diabolus had gained some advantage, "rang the bells and made merry." Later, when the Recorder read Prince Emmanuel's pardon for the rebels, order was given to the young men "that they should ring the bells for joy. So the bells did ring, and the people did sing, and the music go in every house in Mansoul." Yet once more, when the Prince bestowed freedom on the inhabitants, the boon was hailed by bell-ringing and shoutings of gladness. Later the faithless folk turned to Diabolus. The news reached the "rabblement" of Lucifer, Apollyon, and Beelzebub. As soon as the letter announcing it was read, "command was given that, without let or stop, Deadman's bell should ring for joy. Now the clapper of the bell went: 'The town of Mansoul is coming to dwell with us; make room for the town of Mansoul!' This bell, therefore, they did ring because they did hope they should have Mansoul again." At the end of the story, the final victory of Emmanuel is celebrated by bell ringing.

#### II.—TRUMPETS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS.

But greater even than Bunyan's love of bell music was his admiration for the sound of the trumpet. This seemed almost to be a passion with him, doubtless having its birth in his earlier experiences of soldiering. Constant references to trumpets and other instruments are found in his two best-known works.

Faithful was carried up through the clouds "with the sound of trumpet." The Heavenly host coming forth to meet Christian and Hopeful were accompanied by "several of the King's trumpeters" who were clothed in "white and shining raiment," and with their melodious and loud noises they made "even the

Heavens to echo with the sound." These trumpeters are pictured as saluting Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes. As the two redeemed pilgrims walked on towards the gate the royal musicians remained with them, ever and anon "greeting them with joyful sound," and by looks and gestures signifying how welcome they were.

No sooner had Christiana and her children entered the house through the Wicket Gate than the Keeper summoned a trumpeter who was above "over the gate" and bade him to "entertain the guests with shouting and sound of trumpet for joy." He responded to the summons and "filled the air with his melodious notes." What a pæan of gladness was heard when Mr. Standfast and his comrades were received into Heaven! "Glorious it was to see how the upper region was filled . . . with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players upon stringed instruments to welcome the pilgrims."

One would expect to find references to martial music in a book of battles, and in the *Holy War* the "blast of trumpets" is heard again and again. The first reference occurs in the Prologue:—

I saw the Prince's armèd men come down;

I saw the Captains, heard the trumpets sound.

As the story unfolds, time after time trumpets are named at almost every stage. The heralds, when bringing Emmanuel's messages, approach the gate to the sound of the trumpet, and in each charge the trumpet call is heard. Diabolus and his myrmidons also use the instrument, and when they are defeated the unbounded joy of Mansoul's people is expressed in a fashion that stirs the blood of the reader. "The bells rung, the minstrels played, the people danced, the captains shouted, the colours waved in the wind, and the silver trumpets sounded." At the final triumph "all the King's trumpeters" climbed up to the Castle battlements and there made "the best music that heart could invent," and Bunyan tells us how the men of Mansoul were greatly cheered at "this melodious charm of the trumpets."

On occasion, Bunyan refers to other instruments. We read concerning the prisoners pardoned by the Prince that they "went down to the camp with heavy hearts but came back again with pipe and tabour playing before them." When the triumphant Prince was escorted to his Palace it was ordered that "His Blessed Majesty should be entertained by them that had the best skill in music in all the town." Then, quoting from the Psalm, Bunyan adds: "The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after, and among them were damsels

playing on timbrels." For the conquering Prince "what music the town of Mansoul would afford, that they might play before him to the Palace!" On his arrival there, during the feasts there was "music all the while at the tables." The musicians are described as "masters of songs sung at the court of El Shaddai."

It will be remembered that in the second part of the "Pilgrim," when Christiana and her companions were entertained in the House Beautiful, they saw there a pair of excellent virginals. The damsel Prudence played upon these, and turned what she showed to Christiana and the children into "an excellent song."

Again, Bunyan displays more than a superficial knowledge of music and musical instruments when he describes Mr. Fearing. After pointing out that some must pipe and some must weep, he says: "Now Mr. Fearing was one that played upon the Bass. He and his fellows play upon the Sackbut whose notes are more doleful than the notes of other music are; though, indeed, some say that the Bass is the ground of music." He then states that musicians usually make the bass the first string they touch when intending to put all in tune. Taking up the parable he points out that God also plays upon this string first when He sets the soul in tune for Himself. Bunyan excuses his musical metaphors by explaining that he uses them "for the ripening of the wits of young readers." He finds a further excuse in the fact that "in the book of Revelation, the saved are compared to a company of musicians that play upon trumpets and harps and sing their songs before the Throne."

In the last scene, when Christiana had entered through the gates, "her children wept, but Mr. Greatheart and Mr. Valiant played upon the well-tuned cymbal and harp for joy."

### III.—SONGS AND SINGING.

When from instrumental we turn to vocal music, we are led to conclude without a doubt that Bunyan loved songs and singing. After Christian had lost his burden at the Cross he "leaps for joy and went on singing." At break of day, when he awakes from slumber in the Chamber called Peace, again he bursts into song. Thenceforth, he is pictured as a singing pilgrim; his songs being given after (1) leaving the Giants Pope and Pagan, (2) the passing Heavenward of Faithful, (3) the parting with Demas and By-ends, (4) the fray with the Lion and the Bear, and, (5) leaving Castle Doubting.

The companions of Christian also make their hopes and desires vocal in song. Faithful celebrates his "shaking off of shame" by singing. Christian and Hopeful cheer one another

with melody and, on leaving the meadows with lilies and the river with its fruitful trees, they sing:—

Behold ye how these crystal streams do glide,  
To comfort pilgrims by the high-way side.

Indeed, out of three dozen sets of verses in the two parts of *Pilgrim's Progress* twenty-two clearly are songs introduced by such phrases as "he went on his way singing," "then he sang," or, "she turned it into song." Even where the lines are described as "said," probably singing is implied; for with Bunyan the words seem to be interchangeable. Witness the two instances (1) of Prudence:—"She played and showed them this excellent song—*saying*—": and (2) the Shepherd Boy, who "as he sat by himself sung. So they hearkened, and he *said*—."

As Bunyan nears the close of his first part he pictures the pilgrims entering the country of Beulah where they heard continually the singing of birds. In their talk of future glories they speak of the time when they shall serve the King "with praise and with shouting and thanksgiving." Upon entering within the Celestial City they "sing with a loud voice 'Blessing, honour, glory, and power, etc.'" Thus the allegory ends on the note of song.

On coming to the second stage of the story, dealing, for the most part, with women and children, we are not surprised that music and song figure in it even more than in the earlier pages. In the Prologue the writer expresses the hope that the story may to some children bring again the time when they shall raise their "Hosannas" to their Lord. Secret, the King's messenger, brings a summons to Christiana, bidding her start on the journey, and in so doing gives to her "one of the songs thou must sing while thou art in the house of thy pilgrimage." This she was to learn by heart and teach to her children. We are told that the Interpreter "did usually entertain those that lodged with him with music at their meals." One guest sang to them "and a very fine voice he had."

That Bunyan was familiar with the Psalm Versions of his day, especially those of Sternhold and Hopkins, is shown by the fact that three or four times he quotes the versified Psalms, on one occasion making Christiana to hear sung in the Grove a verse from Kethe's one hundredth Psalm—

For why the Lord our God is good,  
His mercy is for ever sure, etc.

Yet one more proof of our author's love for music is yielded by his *Book for Boys and Girls*, consisting of rhymes and verses. The original edition, published in 1686, was, for a long time, lost. About forty years ago when a copy was discovered

it was reproduced in facsimile. Now George Ofor in his edition of the work gives no music because he had before him a later version. But the original edition is of special interest because it contains two *Airs* printed with obsolete clefs that—Dr. John Brown points out—were found in Christopher Simpson's "Compendium of Practical Musik" published 1678. These *Airs* are printed in the old diamond-shaped notes. One is entitled "Of the Rosebush" and under it are three verses to be sung to the melody. The other is headed "Of the Child with the Bird at the Bush," and the verses to be sung are described by Mr. Gwilym Griffith in his *Human Story of John Bunyan* as possessing a "Blake-like" charm. The melodies are quaint and pleasing, having an old-world beauty of their own. In the Cantata above-named they appear with simple accompaniments and so are made available for the boys and girls of to-day. The source of the *Airs* has not, up to the present, been discovered. Were they supplied specially for the verses by an unnamed composer of the day? Did Bunyan write his lines to a familiar country Folk Song? or, did he himself compose the music? None can say. But another melody, well-known in the Baptist Churches of Lancashire, where it is used for Harbottle's hymn "Farewell my friends, belov'd," is, according to tradition, the original for Valiant's song "Who would true valour see." Dr. George B. Cheever, in his *Lectures on Pilgrim's Progress*—published 1846—says of this song "there is an old melody to which this poetry is set which has been said likewise to have been composed by Bunyan: how true this may be we know not; but the spirit of the music is in excellent harmony with the stanzas, the melody being such as any cheerful, resolute pilgrim, fond of music, might hum to himself upon his journey."

This is the only case known to me of any one hinting that Bunyan might have composed music. Certainly such a thing is not impossible, for amidst the ruggedness and crudeness of his many rhymes one comes across some that are highly lyrical in quality, and, here and there, even his prose has a rythmical and musical lilt. Still, until further proof is to hand the matter must be left in the haze of tradition.

Enough has been here written to show that beyond all cavil John Bunyan loved and appreciated music and song, and that, in spirit, he was both a poet and a musician.

In closing we may apply to him the words he put into the mouth of Mercy. Christiana and she, as they lie in their chamber at the Porter's Lodge, hear "a noise of music." Then Mercy exclaims: "Wonderful. Music in the house, music in the heart, and music also in Heaven for joy that we are here."

CAREY BONNER.