

**Chelmsford Chronicle,  
6th July 1883.**

Musical Service at Dedham Church.

An effort to introduce special musical service into the sanctuary was made in the parish church of Dedham on Wednesday evening in last week under the direction of Mr. Edwin Mens. The choir consisted of between 50 and 60 voices, selected partly from Dedham, Stratford St. Mary, and some of the surrounding villages, and partly from members of Mr. Mens's choir and pupils from Chislehurst. The church was crowded in every part, and the reverent behaviour of the congregation showed how thoroughly they entered into the spirit and intention of the service. Evensong having been intoned by the Rev. S. B. Simons as far as the third collect, (Goss's anthem "O taste and see how gracious the Lord is" was sung by the choir. The Vicar then delivered an address, which spoke of the service as an effort to give to sacred music its proper place and to assign to it its appropriate office. It was claiming for the music of the sanctuary the use of the sanctuary itself. Sacred sounds were surely better fitted to the house of God than to the concert room or the music hall. It was not the highest end of religious music to gratify the taste of man, but rather magnify the name and set forth the praises of God. The subject was Stainer's cantata, "The daughter of Jairus," with illustrative passages from other works. The cantata opened with a brilliant introduction upon the fine organ, played with the fine taste and perfect instrumentation which characterise all Mr. Mens's musical performances. The

choral recitative, "In that day shall the Lord of hosts for a crown of glory," was finely rendered by the sopranos and basses. A good effect was produced by separating the voices, the sopranos and tenors being placed in a gallery immediately above the organ and the trebles and basses below.

The bass solos were taken throughout by Herr Guither whose fine manly voice was well heard in every part of the sacred building. The pathos which this gentleman threw into the words of Jairus, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death," and again, "My little daughter even now is dead; but lay thine hands upon her, I pray thee; come and lay thine hands upon her, and she shall live," brought vividly to mind the anguished fears of the father, as well his sustaining faith in Jesus as the deliverer from death. One did not know which most admire, the exquisite tenor voice or the devotional rendering of the airs, "Be thou faithful unto death" and "My hope is in the Everlasting," by the Rev. R. M. Hawkins. Miss Edwards's fine contralto voice rang out with its usual clearness in some of the recitatives, and in the beautiful air from Mendelssohn, "But the Lord is mindful of his own," there was a perfect, blending voices in the duet sung by Mrs. Brewster and Miss Bartrum. The last-named lady well sustained several of the soprano solos, and when she sang the words, "And her spirit came again, and she arose and walked," it led to a realising of the scene.

Many fine voices were harmoniously blended in the choruses, especially that wonderfully effective one, "Awake, thou that sleepest," and in the grand description of praise, with which the service concluded, "To him who left his throne high," in which the soprano voices several times rose to a clear C.