

NOVELLOS ORIGINAL OCTAVO EDITION.

ODE
ON
ST. CECILIA'S DAY

BY
ALEXANDER POPE

SET TO MUSIC BY
C. HUBERT H. PARRY.

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TO
MY FRIENDS
OF THE LEEDS CHORUS
AND
THEIR ZEALOUS CHORUS-MASTER,
ALFRED BROUGHTON,
1889.

ODE ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

CHORUS.

DESCEND, ye Nine! descend and sing;
The breathing instruments inspire,
Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre!
In a sadly-pleasing strain
Let the warbling lute complain:
Let the loud trumpet sound,
Till the roofs all around
The shrill echoes rebound;
While in more lengthen'd notes and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.
Hark! the numbers soft and clear
Gently steal upon the ear;
Now louder, and yet louder rise,
And fill with spreading sounds the skies:
Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,
In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats:
Till, by degrees, remote and small,
The strains decay,
And melt away,
In a dying, dying fall.

ARIOSO (*Baritone*).

By music, minds an equal temper know,
Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;
Or, when the soul is press'd with cares,
Exalts her in enlivening airs.
Warriors she fires with animated sounds:
Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds:
Melancholy lifts her head,
Morpheus rouses from his bed,
Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
Listening Envy drops her snakes;
Intestine war no more our passions wage,
And giddy factions hear away their rage.

CHORUS.

But when our country's cause provokes to arms,
How martial music every bosom warms!
So when the first bold vessel dared the seas,
High on the stern the Thracian raised his strain,
While Argo saw her kindred trees
Descend from Pelion to the main.
Transported demi-gods stood round,
And men grew heroes at the sound,
Inflamed with glory's charms;
Each chief his sevenfold shield display'd,
And half unsheathed the shining blade:
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound
To arms! to arms! to arms!

SOLO (*Soprano*).

But when, through all the infernal bounds
Which flaming Phlegethon surrounds,
Love, strong as death, the poet led
To the pale nations of the dead,
What sounds were heard,
What scenes appear'd,
O'er all the dreary coasts!
Dreadful gleams,
Dismal screams,
Fires that glow,
Shrieks of woe,
Sullen moans,
Hollow groans,
And cries of tortured ghosts!
But, hark! he strikes the golden lyre;
And see! the tortured ghosts respire,
See, shady forms advance!
Thy stone, O Sisypheus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance;
The Furies sink upon their iron beds,
And snakes uncurl'd hang listening round their
heads.

CHORUS.

By the streams that ever flow,
By the fragrant winds that blow
O'er the Elysian flowers ;
By those happy souls who dwell
In yellow meads of asphodel,
Or amaranthine bowers ;
By the heroes' armed shades,
Glittering through the gloomy glades ;
By the youths that died for love,
Wandering in the myrtle grove,
Restore, restore Euridice to life :
Oh take the husband, or return the wife !

SOLO (*Baritone*).

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer ;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.
Thus song could prevail
O'er death, and o'er hell,
A conquest how hard and how glorious !
Though fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her,
Yet music and love were victorious.

SOLO (*Soprano*).

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes :
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies !
How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move ?
No crime was thine, if 'tis no crime to love.
Now under hanging mountains,
Beside the falls of fountains,
Or where Hebrus wanders,
Rolling in meanders,

All alone,
Unheard, unknown,
He makes his moan ;
And calls her ghost,
For ever, ever ever lost !
Now with furies surrounded,
Despairing, confounded,
He trembles, he glows,
Amidst Rhodope's snows :
See, wild as the winds, o'er the desert he flies ;
Hark ! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals'
cries—

Ah see, he dies !

Yet even in death Euridice he sung,
Euridice still trembled on his tongue,
Euridice the woods,
Euridice the floods,
Euridice the rocks, and hollow mountains rung.

SOLO (*Baritone*) AND CHORUS.

Music the fiercest grief can charm,
And fate's severest rage disarm ;
Music can soften pain to ease,
And make despair and madness please :
Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above.
This the divine Cecilia found,
And to her Maker's praise confined the sound.
When the full organ joins the tuneful choir,
The immortal powers incline their ear ;
Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire ;
And angels lean from heaven to hear.
Of Orpheus now no more let poets tell,
To bright Cecilia greater power is given ;
His numbers raised a shade from hell,
Hers lift the soul to heaven.

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