

Preface to "Psalms, Sonets, and Songes of Sadnes and Pietie" (1588)

by William Byrd (1543–1623)

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Reasons briefly set down by th'author, to perswade every one to learne to sing.

First, it is a knowledgē safely taught and quickly learned.

- 2 The exercise of singinḡ is delightfull to Nature, & ḡood to preserve the health.
- 3 It doth strengthen all parts of the brest, & doth open the pipes.
- 4 It is a singlar ḡood remedie for a stutting and stamerinḡ in the speech.
- 5 It is the best means to procure a perfect pronounciation.
- 6 It is the onely way to know where Nature hath bestowed the benefit of a ḡood voyce.
- 7 There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of Men.
- 8 The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honour and serve God there-with : and the voyce of man is chiefly to bee imployed to that ende.

"Omnis Spiritus Laudes Dominum"

Since Singinḡ is so ḡood a thinḡ, I wish all men would learn to sing.

*The original spelling and punctuation are carefully preserved here, except for the Elizabethan use of "f" for "s" and "u" for "v". (e.g. Eliz. "ferue" = modern "serve").*

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