

CHORAL: SONGS: BY: VARIOUS: WRITERS: & COMPOSERS
IN: HONOUR: OF: HER: MAJESTY: QUEEN VICTORIA



1899

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

CHORAL SONGS

BY

VARIOUS WRITERS AND COMPOSERS

IN HONOUR OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA

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TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

MADAM

It was the custom of bygone days for sovereigns to require and for subjects to express respect and devotion in terms of unmeasured hyperbole ; such conventional homage added little lustre to the monarch for whose honour it was designed ; the current coin of compliment rang hollow. Your Majesty has taught your subjects to value sincerity above praise, and genuine affection above indiscriminate adulation ; the auspicious year in which your Majesty attains in health and vigour a patriarchal age, gives your Majesty's servants a natural opportunity for expressing the devotion to your Throne and Person which lies at the heart of all your subjects.

In the year 1601, a collection of Madrigals—"The Triumphs of Oriana"—was published, under the direction of Thomas Morley, Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, in praise of your Majesty's glorious predecessor, Queen Elizabeth. The words of these Madrigals are of inconspicuous merit, and by anonymous authors, but they were set to music by the most ingenious composers of the time ; among them may be noted the name of John Milton, the *virtuoso*, the wealthy scrivener of Cheapside, and father of the great epic poet of England. The work was dedicated to Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral of England, who defended our country so eminently against the Great Armada of Spain.

The present collection is an attempt to express, in a more sedulous form, the same patriotic spirit which breathes so strongly through those ancient lays. It would ill become us to make critical discussion of the form in which this tribute is paid ; but it will be observed that both words and music endeavour, without affected simplicity and with harmonies made possible by the ampler inheritance of the ages, to infuse some of the dignity of antiquity into the brightness of youth.

We submit them with the more confidence because of the sympathetic interest your Majesty has always manifested in the sacred art of Music.

Your Majesty will believe that, however short of their ideal these slender songs may fall, they are inspired by a deep and sincere devotion, and are the offspring of serious labour ; if they are so fortunate as to please your Majesty, the authors and composers will deem themselves to be fully rewarded.

In this spirit we tender to your Majesty our humble gift, with the most loyal desires for the long continuance of your Majesty's beneficent reign.

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