

THE VOLUNTEER ORGANIST

by William B. Gray and H. Lamb

The Preacher in the village church one Sunday morning said
'Our organist is ill today will someone play instead.'
An anxious look stole o'er the face of every person there
As eagerly they watched to see who'd fill the vacant chair
A man then staggered down the aisle whose clothes were old and torn
How strange a drunkard seemed to me in church on Sunday morn
But as he touched the organ keys without a single word
The melody that followed was the sweetest ever heard.

Chorus:

The scene was one I'll never forget as long as I may live
And just to see it o'er again all earthly wealth I'd give
The congregation all amazed, the preacher old and grey
The organ and the organist who volunteered to play.

Each eye shed tears, within that church, the strongest men grew pale
The organist in melody had told his own life's tale
The sermon of the preacher was no lesson to compare
With that of life's example who sat in the organ chair
And when the service ended not a soul had left a seat
Except the poor old organist who started t'wards the street
Along the aisle and out the door he slowly walked away
The preacher rose and softly said, 'Good bretheren, let us pray.'

Chorus:

The service o'er, the Parson from his pulpit hurried down
And sought the poor old organist 'ere he had left the town
'Friend come with me,' he kindly said, 'You have my sympathy
God's love is yours, and all I have is his and yours this day.'
The organist the Parson's hand pressed firmly and through tears
In broken accents told his tale, in sympathetic ears
'My only brother, can it be? So long we've lived apart
Henceforth shall we united be in service and in heart.'

Chorus:

Written and composed - 1893

Performed by Peter Dawson (1882-1961) el al