

tenor solo 'Whilst undisturbed his happy Consort reigns' take us into the final solo and chorus. First a solo tenor and the two trumpets announce the theme, and then in augmented counterpoint the entire ensemble end the work in triumphant vein.

- 1 Symphony [2'24]
high tenor (RC-C) - chorus
- 2 Welcome, welcome, glorious Morn, [1'36]
Nature smiles at thy return.
duet (RC-C, MG) - ritornello - chorus (solos NS, JMA: ET, CP)
- 3 At thy return the joyful Earth [4'01]
Renews the Blessings of Maria's Birth.
The busy Sun prolongs his Race
The youthful year his earliest Tribute pays
And Frosts forsake his head and Tears his face.
Welcome, welcome, glorious Morn,
Nature smiles at thy return,
For Nature's richest Pride with thee was born.
duet (JB, MG)
- 4 Welcome as when three happy Kingdoms strove [2'39]
In glad confusion to express their Love,
When ev'ry heart did ev'ry tongue employ
To speak its share of Public Joy,
And great Maria's Birth proclaim
The noblest Theme, the loudest song of Fame.
tenor (JMA)
- 5 The mighty Goddess of this wealthy Isle [1'33]
Rais'd her glad head, and with an awfull smile
She look'd, whilst thousand Cupids hover'd round
And thousand Graces the fair infant crown'd.
trio (JB, RC-C, MG) - chorus - ritornello
- 6 Full of Wonder and Delight [1'53]
She saw and bless'd the noble sight.
tenor solo (JMA) - chorus
- 7 And lo! a sacred Fury swell'd her Breast, [3'17]
And the whole God her lab'ring Soul possest.
To lofty strains her tunefull Lyre she strung
And thus the Goddess play'd and thus she sung.

soprano solo (GF) - chorus

- 8 My Pray'rs are heard, Heav'n has at last bestow'd [3'55]
The mighty blessings which it long has ow'd,
At length the bounteous Gods have sent us down
A Brightness second only to their own.
I see the round years successively move
To ripen her Beauties and crown 'em with Love;
A Hero renown'd in Virtues and Arms
Shall wear the soft Chain and submit to her Charms,
And Hymen and Hebe shall make it their Care
To pour all their Joys on the Valiant and Fair.
Then, then, our sad Albion shall suffer no more,
She shall fly to his Aid and be free'd by his Pow'r,
And date all her Blessings from this happy hour.

duet (CP, MG)

- 9 He to the Field by Honour call'd shall go [1'43]
And dangers he shall know and wonders he shall do.
The God of Arms his Godlike Son shall bless
And crown his Fleet and Armies with success.

high tenor (RC-C)

- 10 Whilst undisturb'd his happy Consort reigns [1'47]
And wisely rules the Kingdoms he maintains.
Britain at last shall see her peace restor'd
And pay new Vows for her returning Lord:
Maria then shall all her Cares unbend
And she shall still adorn and he defend.

tenor (JMA) - chorus

- 11 Sound, all ye Spheres; confirm the Omen, Heav'n, [2'19]
And long preserve the blessings thou hast giv'n.

Great parent, hail to thee!

An Ode upon the Ninth of January 1693/4, the first Secular Day
since the University of Dublin's Foundation by Queen Elizabeth

(Nahum Tate)

On January 9th 1694 Trinity College Dublin celebrated the hundredth anniversary of their foundation by Queen Elizabeth with a service at Christ Church Cathedral 'sung by the principal Gentlemen of the Kingdom' which was accompanied by orations in Latin and 'an Ode by Mr Tate' (the Poet Laureate) 'who was bred up in this College'. That Purcell accepted the commission to set Nahum Tate's trite Ode is maybe an indication of his financial state, for he appears on no court list of the time for extra payments. The librettist of *Dido and Aeneas* this time produced one of his most contrived sets of words: at times the composer must have been hard-pressed to make any sense of them at all!

It is perhaps a sign of Purcell's genius and his professionalism that, despite this weak material, he still produced extraordinarily fine music for the Ode. The Symphony is suitably celebratory, with the imitative second section neatly crafted, and the opening chorus full of variety and vigour. The alto solo 'Another century commencing' finds Purcell writing gloriously lyrical music for his favourite voice, and the duet that follows ('After war's alarms repeated') contains effective word painting in the echos of the word 'repeated'. The bass solo 'Awful Matron' is an outstanding movement which shows marvellous control of the solo line, supported by equally inspired string writing. The tenor solo and chorus 'She was the first who did inspire' also makes charming use of echos, the duet 'Succeeding Princes' is full of lovely harmonies and the chorus 'But chiefly recommend to fame' opens out gloriously at its end. The soprano solo 'The royal patrons sung' (one of the few extended arias for soprano in the Odes) is another triumph of Purcell's fertile imagination over a silly piece of text, effectively written with the two recorders bringing added pathos, and the closing chorus is liltingly joyous.

[12] [Symphony] [2'28]

trio (JB, JMA, MG) - chorus

[13] Great Parent, Hail! all Hail to Thee, [2'16]
Who hast from last Distress surviv'd,
To see this joyful Year arriv'd;
Thy Muses Second Jubilee.

alto solo (JB)

14 Another Century commencing [2'22]
No decay in Thee can trace;
Time with his own Laws dispensing,
Adds new Charms to ev'ry Grace,
That adorn'd thy Youthful Face.

duet (JMA, RC-C)

15 After War's, Alarms repeated, [3'15]
And a Circling Age compleated,
Vig'rous Offspring thou dost raise;
Such as to Juverna's praise;
Shall Liffée make as proud a Name,
As that of Isis or of Cam.

bass solo (MG)

16 Awful Matron take thy Seat, [3'25]
To Celebrate this Festival;
The learn'd Assembly well to Treat
Blest Eliza's Days recall.
The Wonders of Her Reign recount
In Songs that mortal Streins surmount:
Songs for Phaebus to repeat.

tenor solo (JMA) - chorus

17 She was the first who did inspire, [1'57]
And strung the mute Hibernian Lyre:
Whose deathless Memory
(The Soul of Harmony)
Still animates the Vocal Quire.

duet (RC-C, MG) - chorus

18 Succeeding Princes next recite: [1'50]
With never dying Verse requite
Those favours they did show'r;
'Tis that alone can do 'em right
To save 'em from Oblivion's Night
Is only in the Muses pow'r.

chorus

19 But chiefly Recommend to Fame, [1'31]
Maria and Great William's Name;
For surely no Hibernian Muse

(Whose Isle to Him, Her freedom owes)
Can Her Restorer's Praise Refuse,
While Boyne or Shanon flows.

symphony - soprano solo (GF)

[20] Thy Royal Patron sung: Repair
To Illustrious Ormond's Tomb:
As, Living, He made Thee His Care,
Give Him, next thy Caesar's, Room.
Then a Second Ormond's Story
Let astonisht Fame recite;
But she'll wrong the Hero's Glory,
Till with equal Flame she write
To that which he displays in Fight.

[3'54]

chorus

[21] With themes like these, ye Sons of Art,
Treat this auspicious Day;
To Bribe the Minutes as they part,
Those Blessings to bequeath, that may
Long, long remain Your Kindness to repay.

[1'21]

The summer's absence unconcerned we bear

A Welcome Song for his Majesty at his return from Newmarket,
October the 21st, 1682
(Anonymous author)

The return of Charles II and the Duke of York from their usual Autumn visit to Newmarket was celebrated on October 21st 1682, but the diarist Thomas Luttrell indicated that the event was rather more muted than on previous occasions (probably due to the royal finances being in dire straits!). Earlier in the year Purcell had been appointed one of the three organists at the Chapel Royal, an appointment which enabled him and his wife to move into grander quarters in Great St Ann's Lane, and the commission to set an Ode to music was another mark of official favour.

Although the Ode was only the fourth that Purcell had composed, it contains the already established selection of choruses, trios, duets and solos, interspersed with Purcell's deliciously-scored string ritornelli. The opening two-section Symphony is, beneath its veneer of joyfulness, one of his most wistful, leading directly into a virtuoso bass solo which covers a

range of over two octaves. A short trio leads into a chorus and the first of the string ritornelli which are such a strong feature of the early Odes. A four-note ground bass forms the basis for the alto solo 'And when late from your throne' which leads into its melancholy ritornello via a brief chorus. After a series of shorter movements comes another of Purcell's gems, the alto solo 'These had by their ill usage drove', set over a four-bar modulating ground bass, and leading into the last (and finest) ritornello of the work. A solo tenor opens the final chorus, whose reflective ending proved to be prophetic: though the text wishes the monarch a long life, the hope was to prove in vain less than three years later when King Charles's dissolute reign came to a sudden end. Though he had nearly bankrupted the country, he had done much for music and musicians.

[22] Symphony [2'27]

bass solo (MG) - trio (JB, JMA, MG) - chorus -ritornello

[23] The summer's absence unconcerned we bear [3'24]

Since you, great Sir, more charming fair appear,
Scattering the mists of faction with our fear.
Shine thus for many years, and let the sight
Your friends encourage and your foes affright,
Like Joshua's sun, with undiminished light.

alto solo (JB) - chorus - ritornello [2'16]

[24] And when late from your throne Heaven's call you attend,
In peace let your crown on the next head descend,
Let no sham pretences give birth to a guilt
Which would injure the blood of the Martyr was spilt.

bass solo (MG) - duet (GF, ET) - chorus

[25] Ah! had we, Sir, the power or art [2'31]

To grant the wishes of our heart,
Your long and glorious reign should be
One entire piece of harmony.
No day should an ill aspect wear,
But, smooth as seas when calms appear,
All hearts should smile as at that hour
When you from exile blest our shore,
And the ill omens o'er us placed
Should vanish with the time that's past.
Then would we conclude that our Isle, which of old
Was the Fortunate called, had her name but foretold
By some learned bard, who in times past foreknew
How in ages to come she'd be happy in you,

trio (JB, RC-C, MG) - ritornello

[1'32]

26

Happy while all her neighbours bled,
Their countries harassed and untilled,
When Peace to you for shelter fled,
Her garner with rich plenty filled,
When all the blessings of her train
Were at her feet an off'ring laid,
When fearless she did plough the main
And reap rich harvests of her trade.

tenor (JMA)

27

So happily still you your counsels employ,
More blessings that all the whole world we enjoy;
But amidst all our stores some who surfeit on peace
The infection had spread of a mortal disease:
To the plague of rebellion the mischief was growing
And the life of the State to your conduct is owing.

[1'13]

alto (JB) - ritornello

28

These had by their ill usage drove
The beauteous Nymph long since away,
Had she not, vanquished by your love,
Charmed in your soft embraces lay.

[2'30]

tenor (JMA) - chorus

29

But these no more shall dare repine,
Nor shall she ever hence remove,
But totally now her heart resign
And always to you constant prove.
Britannia shall now her large empire bestride
And over the seas she unrivalled shall ride,
Sole Emperess she the vast flood shall command
And awe the great blustering Hectors at land.
Thus strongly secured, mighty Sir, on your throne,
By all nations feared, and beloved of your own,
If of Heaven we could such a bounty obtain,
From our own stock of years we would lengthen your reign.

[2'19]

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