

Items from the Press

From James A. Simpson's column "Wit & Wisdom" in the Presbyterian Herald Jul/Aug 1996.

A Mrs [Joyce] Rawstorne who worships with us, is the grand-daughter of the famous hymn writer Sabine Baring-Gould. She tells how at the time of her wedding, her mother expressed her disappointment that she was not willing to have one of her grandfather's hymns. "But mother," she said, "Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war is not a suitable wedding hymn. Nor is Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow, Onward goes the pilgrim band; Singing Songs of expectation, Marching to the promised land. And I am certainly not having Now the Day is Over, Night is Drawing Nigh". Her mother reluctantly agreed.

David Shacklock.

From James Le Fanu's column. Doctor's Diary, Daily Telegraph 12 Jan 1999.

The problem of "repetitive tune syndrome" mentioned in this column a fortnight ago, has precipitated an avalanche of correspondence. Who would have thought the affliction could be so common and cause so much distress?

Several readers say they have found the solution is to replace the intrusive melody deliberately with another. For Mrs Ann Crosby of Gloucester, "The Skye Boat Song will eradicate an irritating tune, and then itself fades away". Ms Tona de Brett, a singing teacher from north London, describes how "My father used to sing Onward Christian Soldiers at the top of his splendid voice to dislodge a tune from the brain. It expressed sentiments he believed in wholeheartedly".

David Shacklock