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Studies in Sacred Chant and Liturgy

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Bulletin of the School of Solesmes

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August 8, 1958

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BY WAY OF EDITORIAL

The education of children in the techniques and theory of music is a matter which should constantly be part of the church musician's food for thought. We have discussed certain aspects of this subject in earlier issues of the *Review*, but it is a gem of many facets, and each of the main problems deserves to be considered alone.

Perhaps the most common problem of training children in music, one which pervades the school systems of most dioceses and public administrations, is that of repertoire. When it is possible to give enough time to music to enable the school to operate a full-scale music program, the question of what to sing and play becomes more urgent than the purely administrative problems of when and how to present the material.

It is of course no problem in some areas, since tradition has often established a heritage consisting of a handful of pieces which the teacher passes on from year to year without doubts being raised as to the musical value of the repertoire. Some school systems have also seen their repertorial problems relegated to the category of the academic question through the wholesale adoption of this or that music course for use throughout the general program. Neither situation really solves the problem of repertoire, however, for neither has anything to do with the exercise of those principles which are essential to development of taste and true appreciation of musical values.

Only when the selection of good music becomes a positive function instead of a matter of luck does the music program stand a chance of carrying out its most important duty: that of shaping the taste of the student and of giving him a preference for the bread-and-butter elements of music in the broad sense. Of course, this remark will immediately pro-

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voke the observation that we are faced with a vicious circle in which those teachers who do not present music properly are often responsible for the upbringing of those very students who will eventually become teachers themselves. Thus is the standard of mediocrity or outright bad taste propagated from generation to generation.

Of course, this is not true of all teachers or of all school systems, and this fact is the glimmer of hope for millions of children of the future. In spite of the fact that the teachers and musicians of sound taste and techniques are unquestionably in the minority . . . a very small minority at that . . . it is important to understand that they can exert a more powerful influence on the teachers of the future than can persons of vague and half-baked knowledge. Quality can make up for quantity, not because the general public can distinguish between that quality and the ubiquitous mediocrity, but because teaching based on real knowledge is ten times more effective than that based on shallow notions.

What goals can be sought by the trained minority of music teachers, and what means can be applied for their attainment?

Stravinski has asserted, in his *Chroniques de ma vie*, that public taste is never sufficiently elevated to enable the average man to grasp the concepts of the contemporary creative artist. He points out that we cannot expect the man-on-the-street to appreciate the upper strata of the musical life of the day.

This is true, if what we know from experience is a mark for the future. Even though we cannot be certain that future education will move through the same phases and processes as that of our own times, we must assume that its manifestations will be similar to those of today. This means that the music educator, including the choirmaster, must view his work in the light of what he can hope to accomplish and in the light of what he considers to be the ideal result. Whether or not the ideal seems attainable is beside the point. Unless a standard well above the probable level of attainment is

aimed at, it is unlikely that any educational effort will approach fulfillment of its potential.

If we were to try to show the far-reaching effects of defective repertoires in the music programs of the schools, we would have merely to point out the number of teachers who include sentimental trash in their purchases of records for personal listening, the organists who prefer Batiste and Dubois to Bach, and the current decline in study of the stringed instruments in favor of brass and certain woodwinds. Although widely divergent in their manifestations, such things are indicative of a failure somewhere along the path of elementary education.

If someone should be inclined to doubt that repertoire is largely responsible for the weakness of our programs in music education, let him open nearly any currently popular school music course book. The watered-down classical melodies, taken completely out of context, the sweet and spineless trivialities that pass for songs, the sentimental tunes which are wedded to doggerel texts of no consequence, the pompous drivel which passes for patriotic marches and songs . . . all these are fed to the receptive mind of the child with the institutional approval of the school and the impressive formality of the classroom. To be sure, one can learn reading techniques from this sort of music, but it would be better to emphasize taste than to invent trivial ditties to answer this or that technical requirement.

Here in our files we have copies of nearly every major course book for use in teaching elementary school music, plus a library of materials for secondary schools. In examining these items, whether they be Catholic or secular in design, we find that high quality is conspicuous by its rarity. We note, however, that a Catholic music series is obliged to include a certain amount of indisputably fine music because of the integration of chant study with other aspects of the music course. Certain traditional hymns, too, are also of excellent quality, although there is no guarantee that the editors will choose the best in this category. When it is a

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matter of secular songs, the Catholic and public school series are not greatly different, except for certain texts; the music is equally feeble in any case.

It is remarkable that, of the handful of Catholic methods and syllabus-type manuals now in use, one of the finest from the standpoint of repertoire is less widely used in the United States and in other English-speaking nations than is its translation in one of the countries of western Europe. Its remarkable success in that country is directly traceable to two factors: good teachers and a good repertoire. It is full of ancient airs and folk-songs, plus great hymn-tunes, chants, and compositions by children themselves. The catch is this, however: it needs good teachers and careful preparation, for which not all schools can provide.

This is undoubtedly the crux of the whole matter, for the teaching of good music requires deliberation and planning, and those who teach it must be discerning enough in their tastes to seek out such music and sufficiently patient to learn the most effective ways of presenting it. Since, as we have said, there are not many teachers or choirmasters of the requisite calibre, those who feel this situation most keenly must be the ones to act upon it.

Anyone who has taught children in any capacity whatsoever knows that two years is enough time to establish any tradition among them. Since the grade school operates on an eight-year basis, two years represents a fourth of the time during which the music teacher can deal with the children. This, too, is why we are insistent that the choirmaster be included as part of this discussion, for it is he who can achieve unique results through training the children of his parish and by maintaining a musical tradition for parish ceremonies which embodies the best of his teaching. Whatever excuses the choirmaster may offer, then, for the maintaining of this or that sentimental hymn-tune, he cannot justify exposure of the parish children to such trash. Wholly apart from the natural duty to present the finest possible art in public worship, the obligation to safeguard the tastes of

the children would be enough in itself to eliminate any temptation to compromise with unworthy traditions.

If there is one thing which we may consider as a source of personal grievance, it is the often-heard remark that an obviously bad piece of music is "so sweet when the children sing it." This execrable evasion of the vital point, that is, the real musical worth of the piece, is exercised at First Communion masses, at school graduations, at Confirmation services and at any of the hundred and one occasions in parish life for which children are brought together as an organized group. The annual May-crowning ceremonies are flagrant examples of emotional self-indulgence by adults who foist such revolting concoctions as *Bring Flow'rs of the Fairest, On This Day, Mother Dear O Pray for Me* and similar tear-jerkers on the children, reminding us of the parent who, for selfish reasons, keeps a child in baby clothes or hair-styles long after these things have become sources of acute embarrassment to the child. There is one difference, however. The children who are forced to wear baby clothes are all too painfully aware of their sacrifices to parental sentimentality, whereas the victims of the above-mentioned musical sabotage may never understand what has been done to their tastes. Thus, not realizing that music has values based on something other than the sentimental gamut, these very same children will more than likely grow up to treat their own children in the same way.

The cycle must be broken somewhere if it is ever to be interrupted at all. The Catholic music teacher or choir-master can be a powerful influence in this regard, if he will take the time and make the effort so greatly needed. Once aware of the true nature of the present situation, the Catholic musician cannot, in conscience, remain indifferent to it. The course is clearly marked; the tools are at hand. Nothing remains but the effort.

ERRORS OF LATIN ACCENTUATION IN THE LITURGICAL BOOKS*

by M. H. Gavel

Examination of Individual Cases

Treatment of the Enclitics

We have indicated in our previous remarks that the term *enclitic* designates a word which is not accentuated in itself and which, from the point of view of the accent, is treated as though it merely formed a single unit with the preceding word.

The grammarian Diomede enumerates as enclitics existing in Latin the interrogative particle *ne* and the conjunctive particles *ve* and *que*. To this list Priscian adds the preposition *cum* in certain few combinations which we shall mention later.

Diomede and Priscian teach us that the enclitic word causes the accent of the main word to move up to the final syllable of that word. They make no distinction in this regard as to whether or not this syllable is formed with a short vowel. Among other examples, Diomede cites *liminaque*, which he gives as being accented on the syllable *a*, even though this syllable does not end with a short vowel. Priscian notes that when the adverb *ita* is combined with the enclitic *que*, the accent is on the *ta*, whereas the modern books place it in quite a different manner. In *ita*, on the other hand, the final *a* was short, in classical Latin. From this we can see that the practice of modern publishers of liturgical books, who, when the final syllable of a word joined to an enclitic ends with a short vowel, move the accent back to

* Second part of this article, begun in the preceding issue.

the preceding syllable, is manifestly wrong. In the first verse of Psalm 146, for example, they give *decoraque laudatio*, on the supposition that the syllable *ra* concludes with a short vowel. This accentuation must be corrected.

Priscian observes that when an enclitic is added to an unaccented word, the combinations remain also without accent. He gives as examples *propterque illum* and *interve homines*. *Propter* and *inter* being in this case without accent, since they are prepositions placed before the noun they govern, *propterque* and *interve* are also left unaccented.

Priscian notes that the preposition *cum* is enclitic in *mecum*, *tecum*, *secum*, *nobiscum* and *vobiscum*, but that it is accented when it is added to other pronouns, for example, in the combinations *quocum*, *quacum* and *quibuscum*.

Priscian also notes that when the particle *ne* loses its constituent vowel, the accent still remains on the last syllable of the word to which the particle is added, and he gives as examples *Pyrrin* (for *Pyrrine*) and *tantum* (for *tantumne*).

He also seems to classify the adverb *quoque* among the enclitic words, but since the way he expresses himself in this regard is not what we could call perfectly clear, we shall leave this point unresolved, while waiting for the discovery of more precise information which will permit us to treat this word directly.

Words Ending with the Suffix Que

According to every indication, the suffix *que* must have been originally the same word as the enclitic *que*. It was not, however, treated in the same way in regard to the accent, and it was considered as an intrinsic part of the word to which it belonged. Priscian observes, as we have noted previously, that when a form like *itaque* is really the adverb *ita* with the addition of the enclitic conjunction *que*, it is accented on the second syllable, whereas it is not the same case with the regular conjunction *itaque*. In the same way, he

tells us, *utique*, when a combination of the word *uti* and the enclitic *que*, is accented on the second syllable, whereas the pure adverb *utique* is accented on the first. Yet, Priscian adds, the words *utraque* and *pleraque* are accented on the second syllable. Rather than a difference of historical periods in the formation of the words, this apparent anomaly seems logically explicable by means of the fact that all the other trisyllabic forms of the declension of *uterque* and *plerique* were paroxytonic by the mere action of the ordinary laws of Latin accentuation; the analogy of these forms undoubtedly generalized the paroxytonic accent.

Oxytonic Words

Naturally, those monosyllables which were normally accented were oxytonic. There were, however, oxytonic words of two or more syllables.

I. Words ending with the letter C. Among these Priscian mentions the words *produc* and *illic*. As is well-known, the words which used to end, in ancient Latin usage, with *ce* lost, at some point in history, their final *e*, when the *c* was preceded by an accented vowel (except in those cases where certain analogies with other words were sufficiently strong to maintain the final *e*). The accent, however, which was established before the elimination of this terminal vowel, has remained in the original position, on the original syllable, in such a way that these words have become oxytonic. We have noted previously that at the time when this final vowel was dropped the laws which had determined the position of the accent in the days of formation of the language were no longer in force. For example, if the law which required that words of two syllables be accented on the first of these had not been dead, or nearly so, it would have been applied lock, stock and barrel, and *produc* would have become a paroxytonic word. The original results of the ancient application of these principles persisted, however, and the accent remained wherever it had been put in the protoform of the word, even though the principles which originally had de-

terminated the place of the accent were no longer strong enough to exert an influence over new formations.

Therefore the Latin words of two or more syllables which end with a C ought to be accented on the final syllable. The romance languages confirm the oxytonic quality of these Latin polysyllables ending with C. Of course the imperatives of the type of *produc* have given nothing to the romance languages, but *adhuc* survives in the Spanish *aun*, which is proclitic when it means "even," but is fully accented on the second vowel when it maintains its etymological sense of "still more." Let us also note that *adhuc* exists in Catalanian, but today this is an archaic form which is proper to the literary style. Since it is out of use in the spoken tongue, we no longer know just how to pronounce it; certain interpreters make it oxytonic, while others consider it paroxytonic.

As for *illic* and *illac*, their romance-language counterparts clearly indicate an oxytonic accentuation; these are the Italian forms *li* and *la*, the Catalanian derivative *alli* and the Spanish derivatives *alli* and *alla*.

We shall also be able to find in Gregorian chant itself a confirmation of the oxytonic nature of Latin polysyllabic words ending in C.

Here is the beginning of the antiphon *Domine si adhuc*, which is the second of Lauds of St. Martin:



The word *adhuc* here appears to be accented on the final syllable more than on the first. Dom Mocquereau understood it thus, for in his *Liber Usualis*, edited with great care and knowledge, and in which he published the accent marks for words of two syllables which are actually accented, he

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abstained from marking one for the first syllable of *adhuc* in this antiphon. He did not dare go so far as to write it on the last syllable, for he does not seem to have known in any certain way that the Latin words ending in C were oxytonic, even though he obviously had some doubts in that regard. In the seventh verse of the Psalm *Domine probasti me*, he accented *illic* on the first syllable, but in the ninth verse he gave *illuc* without an accent mark, and in the Offertory of the twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, he treated the word *illic* in the same way.

The word *huic* gives rise to the following observations. The composer of the *Dies irae* treated it as paroxytonic in the verse:

Huic ergo parce Deus.

In this sequence, in fact, the verses are accented on every other syllable. The verse *In quo totum continentur* does not constitute a violation of this rule, for the composer has quite justifiably considered the relative *quo* as being atonal, and applying the process, somewhat conventional perhaps, but perfectly maintainable and observed even today in German poetry, that when two proclitics fall together in a verse, the first may be treated as though it were accented, the composer has considered the preposition *In* in this light. It is clear that in the verse *Huic ergo parce Deus* he has understood the accent of *Huic* as being on the first syllable. He has thus ignored the oxytonic nature of words ending in C, and this shows that in the thirteenth century that peculiarity of Latin accentuation had been forgotten in certain areas.

Not so at the Cathedral of Rouen, as we can see from the old books used there, manuscripts as well as printed volumes. These are, in particular, the manuscripts numbered A 284 and A 445 of the municipal library of the town, which are the volumes from which the canons used to study or rehearse before the ceremonies those parts of the pieces which they were to sing as solos, since the regulation that these chants be sung from memory remained in force in that church until 1790. Also we have the printed antiphonaries,

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one published between 1537 and 1550, and the other in 1650. If we examine in these different books, which are notated *in extenso*, the Psalm *Venite* of the Invitatories, we observe certain interesting points. We know that in the singing of this psalm in the Invitatories of the second mode a single formula served for the words *exultemus Domino* of the first verse and *ipse fecit illud* of the third, with this one special point: that the note on which the first syllable of *illud* is rendered in the formula being accented, it is on this same note that the first syllable of the word *Domino* is sung, the penultimate atonal syllable *mi* being taken as epenthetic:

et ipse fe- cit il- lud

e- xul- té-mus Dó-mi-no

In most of the Invitatory chants the same formula is applied to the words *generationi huic* of the fifth verse. Now in the Rouen versions the chant used for the singing of the syllables is, in this case, not the variant *ipse fecit illud* (which would be expected, if the word *huic* were accented like *illud*), but the variant of *exultemus Domino*, that is, the syllable *hu* of *huic* is treated as an unaccented epenthetic note, exactly like the *mi* of *Domino*. In the chants of the Psalm *Venite*, in the Invitatories of several other modes, formulas of the same structure, merely transposed a tone higher, would call for an identical observation. Comparison with other documents shows that at Rouen (except for the shortened formula called *correpta*), when there was an adaptation of a melodic formula to a part of a phrase ending with an oxytonic word, the process followed was that of treating the next-to-last syllable as epenthetic, so that by contrast the final syllable seemed accented in comparison, and thus the accent on the final syllable was preserved, a fortu-

nate stroke which certainly has a background of considerable antiquity, for it can only date from a time when there was a living awareness of the demands of the accent, and when Latin was truly a living language, learned by children in the oral tradition of the family.

Therefore in the ancient Rouen setting of the *Te Deum*, at the ending *speravimus in te* the preposition *in* is treated as epenthetic. Evidently this procedure had as a consequence the necessity of treating the syllable just before this epenthetic one as being accented. It sometimes happens that this accented syllable is a normally-accented monosyllable or the final syllable of an oxytonic word, but more often it is the final syllable of a proparoxytonic word (for example, *mus* in *speravimus in te*), or of a paroxytonic word (such as *ni* in the words *generationi huic*). But the unsuitability which there seems to be at first glance in thus accenting a posttonic syllable is, in this particular case, purely theoretical and deceiving. We cannot go into the matter here, for we would need another article to do it justice, but we shall merely say that we shall prove by similar examples taken from the romance languages that for an ear accustomed from early childhood to the real use of the tonic accent, this exceptional accentuation of a posttonic syllable is not shocking, undoubtedly because such an ear is aware of the fact that this is a purely musical accent, designed to underscore through contrast the atonal character of the following syllable, which, in turn, also by contrast, is able to bring out the accented quality of the final syllable. This, then, confirms what we have said previously about the certain antiquity of such a process, which obviously could not have been conceived except by a people for whom the Latin language was still a living tongue and who actually *felt* what the accent demands in singing and what it can tolerate. In any case, even if we set aside the supposition of the ancient origin of this process, it nonetheless remains to show the persistent nature of a tradition regarding the true accent of the word *huic*.

II. Words ending with an L. The very obviously fragmentary indications of the ancient writers do not tell us much

about the accentuation of words of the *animal* type, which had lost a previously existing *e*, when *animale* was shortened to *animal*. Did a paroxytonic such as *animale* become an oxytonic word after the loss of the *e*? We have seen in previous considerations that when the reduction of *produce* and *illuce* to *produc* and *illuc* took place the ancient laws or principles which had originally determined the place of the accent in words of two syllables or more had ceased to exert an influence, so that they were not strong enough to adjust the accents of the shortened words or to move them from their given syllables. Now if these laws were already dead at the time *illice* became *illic*, they must have been, for even more significant reasons, dead at the time *animale* became *animal*, which event in the history of the Latin language does not seem to have been earlier than that of the reduction of the C-ending words. We may, then, view as reasonably certain that the words of the *animal* category were oxytonic. The romance languages do not furnish us with any decisive proof of this, but there is one observation which seems to confirm in an indirect way this view of accentuation of the L-ending words.

If we leave aside the proclitic conjunction *vel*, we can see that most of the Latin words ending with an L are either accented monosyllables, such as *fel* or *mel*, or words which have lost a terminal E, such as *animal*, for which we must admit an oxytonic accentuation. In this light nearly all the words ending with L were oxytonic, and the few words of paroxytonic accentuation ending with L, such as *consul*, *praesul*, *exul*, *vigil*, *simul* and *semel*, must have seemed somewhat strange next to the great number of oxytonic forms. From the fourth to the sixth century the two most commonly used of these words must have been *simul* and *semel*. We may ask ourselves if it was not precisely this unique and somewhat strange paroxytonic accentuation which, in most of the Latin countries, caused these two words to lose their final *l* in the common, spoken tongue. The *l* of *simul*, or of its archaic variant *semul* (with open *e*) which remained common to the popular form of Latin, was preserved in northern Gaul, as the French derivative *ensemble* shows us, but in

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Spain *semul* was shortened to *semu*, from which came the ancient Spanish *ensiemo*; in Italian we have *insieme*, which evidently represents *in + semel* (reduced to *seme*; in the ancient Langue d'Oc we have *ensem*, which may represent *in + semu* or *simu*, or even *in-seme*. It is likely that although popular Latin had dropped the *l* of these two words, it was through a more or less conscious desire to eliminate the anomaly resulting from the existence of two L-ending words which were not oxytonic.

III. Words ending with *r*. In certain neuter paroxytonic nouns ending in *-are*, the final *e* was discarded. Thus we have *pulvinare* and *laqueare* which became *pulvinar* and *laquear*. The reasoning given above which brought us to admit that the words formed like *animal* were oxytonic is equally valid for the words of the *pulvinar* type. We therefore consider these latter as oxytonic, too. We would like to point out, however, that their case presents a difference from that of the oxytonic words ending in L. Whereas the greater part of the words ending in L were originally oxytonic and caused the smaller number which were not to seem odd in the view of the public, a similar situation could not arise for the words ending in R. In these, in fact, in regard to the polysyllabic words, the oxytonic words were clearly in the minority. The romance languages show us a myriad of paroxytonic and proparoxytonic words ending in R which have maintained unchanged the place of their accentuation, uninfluenced by the insignificant number of oxytonic formations ending in R. A few examples will suffice to show this: the Latin *cantor* becoming the French *chantre*; the Latin *amator* becoming the old French *amedre* (later *amere*), and the ancient Languedocian *amaire*; the Latin *arbor* becoming the French *arbre* and the Spanish *arbol*; the Latin *marmor* becoming the French *marbre*, Spanish *marmol* and Italian *marmo*.

(to be continued in a later issue)

THE "TRUTH" OF GREGORIAN CHANT

by Dom Joseph Gajard, O.S.B.

Choirmaster of Solesmes

In his splendid article, "Le Chant gregorien. A l'Abbaye de Solesmes,"¹ published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1898, the eminent music critic Camille Bellaigue, while explaining with unusual clarity a few of the qualities which mark Gregorian art and which prepare it wonderfully well for serving to express great Catholic prayer through music, said the following:

"If it is true that, according to an ancient expression, the goal and the very nature or essence of art is suitability (*caput artis decere*), there is no art which is superior to Gregorian chant . . . A single and dominant thought is here expressed in the most appropriate and most adequate form for this very thought. This is not all: above and beyond this basic suitability others, which are broader and higher in scope are no less obvious. One at once perceives that this art is, more than any other, impregnated and saturated with truth, and that it is wholly removed from deceit, or even falseness and vain appearances . . . Thus we perceive the closing of the harmonious circle of supreme suitabilities. Thus, through a union which is perhaps unique, the elements of truth, beauty and goodness are here blended, and their sublime trinity, absent from so many other masterpieces of art, and I am speaking even of the greatest, appear to be fully realized in all their living power in the chapel where these humble monks kneel to pray through music."

A true art, "impregnated and saturated with truth" . . . this is perhaps the essential aspect of Gregorian art, that by means of which it is *the* religious music par excellence; why,

1. Reprinted in *Epoques de la Musique*, Paris, Delagrave, 1909, I, 59-120.

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too, it is perhaps the only music to be completely at home in the Church, and not only because of the text which it conveys, but because of its own qualities. This is the theme of these few brief comments.



Gregorian chant is true, first of all, because of its *musical language*, completely adapted to its object, and, in a sense, given special rank, freed of everything that might be able to modify the strength, nobility and purity of its line, the tranquil and harmonious flow of the sonorous movement. There is no leading tone, no chromaticism, no intervals, no syncopations, no division of the simple, basic pulse; this is something, then, which is eminently tranquil, sober, austere and lean. It is a severe musical discipline, to be sure, but who can fail to see how this discipline “preserves the Gregorian melody from softness” and that it “conveys to it a robust health and masculine beauty”, as Bellaigue puts it?

This is an austerity, moreover, which has its compensation, and a magnificent compensation at that, in the infinite flexibility which the chant gains from its modality and its rhythm, with the many modal scales and frequent modulations, from which comes a variety, a flexibility, a richness of expression unknown to our modern music. These qualities also spring from the complete freedom of the ancient rhythmic plan, independent of our modern concept of “measure,” squareness, strong beats, and, in short, of every mechanical and material element.

From all these factors together comes an exquisite expression of tranquility, equilibrium, serenity, profundity and also freedom and joyful brightness. This is a marvelous kind of music, in its healthy sobriety, with its perfect distinction, expressive to the highest degree, and yet completely disciplined and self-controlled, completely in the service of the mind, shaped and animated by it, capable of lending itself to the most intimate and delicate sentiments of the heart and

soul. Is this not the ideal for an art which is completely devoted to prayer?



Gregorian chant is true, too, in its *architectural structure*, in which we find the same marks of simplicity, sobriety, discretion, proportion and economy, as well as flexibility. You may know of the comments of Taine regarding the simplicity of Hellenic art: [The temple] . . . is proportioned to the senses of man . . . In a hundred steps in the sacred enclosure which surrounds it, we grasp the direction and accord of its principal lines. Moreover, they are so simple that a single glance is sufficient to understand their ensemble. There is nothing complicated, nothing bizarre, nothing strained about the edifice. Three or four elementary geometrical forms serve to form all the parts . . . All these special aspects of ancient life derive from the same cause, which is the simplicity of a civilization without precedent. All, moreover, tend to the same effect, which is the simplicity of a well-balanced soul, in which no group of aptitudes or penchants is more developed than the others, which has never been given an isolationist twist and which none of its functions has deformed.”

Just think, for a moment, of our sacred melodies. On paper they are contained in a few lines, and a few minutes . . . three or four at the most . . . will suffice to perform them. Think, in particular, of our tiniest antiphons, the almost completely syllabic of them, forming a single line, or two at the most. What is their crowning value? Emphasis or grandiose manner or a seeking after effect? Of course not. They gain their value from the design, the “line”, completely simple, straightforward, extremely sober, without a recurring complacency of device, and in which the ancient modality has achieved a fine solidity. There is a little protasis followed by its apodosis, and that is all. A few notes serve to achieve the design. There is no fioritura, no preoccupation with effect. Nothing but the line is significant.

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Now, then, these little antiphons form, together with the psalmody they are intended to accompany, the very corpus of the liturgical Office. Several psalm verses, with, at the beginning and at the end, an antiphon, and this is the whole of the psalmodic scheme, the whole basis of the Office. A few verses of the psalms, with an antiphon at the beginning and at the end, and that is the basis of the Office. We can even say that the Office is made up for the most part of psalmody, for the larger pieces, such as Responsories of Matins, the Graduals, Allelulias and the like, are often merely amplified and ornate psalmody. This is not, of course, the *entire* Gregorian repertoire, but it is at least its main substance, and we can examine this part of it, without fear of going astray, in order to find something of what the old composers had in mind.

Are these little antiphons, simple as they are, impressive? Certainly not. They are marvelously expressive, as are the larger pieces, of a state of soul . . . or better, an attitude of the soul. Basically there is everywhere the same sentiment of reverence and adoration of the creature before his Creator, a sentiment of humility, absolute confidence, deep tenderness, and of filial, joyous and total resignation . . . in a word, "faith" in the fullest and most ancient sense of the word, that is, active and total devotion to God and to each of His mysteries, a devotion of the spirit, heart and will.

If we were to wish to characterize Gregorian chant in a single word, we would have to say that it is primarily *interior*, and if we may be permitted to coin a word, *interiorizing*, for its particular power is that of leading us back within ourselves, not for introspective self-analysis, but to find within ourselves Him Who dwells there, to speak, converse and live with Him in a more intimate way.

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We are, then, by these reflections, brought to a new area and led into the very heart of our subject. Modal and rhythmic techniques, laws of composition and such elements are merely the exterior. With the *object* and *inspiration* of the Gregorian melody we enter the sanctuary itself.

What is the object of this music, taken all in all? Is it a “moving interplay of lines and colors”, or effects to be produced, brilliance to be brought out, success to be obtained? This is, obviously, far from the truth. Those who find in Gregorian chant only the material for a spiritual concert are making a sad error. With the chant we leave the purely aesthetic, artistic and musical domain, for although art in the chant is quite real, it is so simple and spontaneous that it is concealed by its very objective. Gregorian chant is not something which is an end in itself; it is essentially a function of something else. Before anything else, it is prayer, and nothing but prayer. This is God alone Whom the chant is concerned with, and not the rest of the congregation, except in a secondary and additive fashion. If we may be permitted this comparison, we can say that between the finest of other religious music and Gregorian chant there is the same difference as between a layman living in the world as an excellent Christian, as good and as religious as can be supposed, and a member of a religious community. Not that a religious is necessarily a saint, unfortunately, but in any case, the religious is by his state of life withdrawn from all profane customs and consecrated only to God, very much like a chalice.

Gregorian chant, too, is consecrated. It exists only for God and for His adoration. It is intended to thank Him and bear to Him all the love of redeemed mankind. It in no way seeks to produce effects, to draw attention to itself or to create a pleasing atmosphere. It has but one goal: to serve. It seeks to lead souls to God without taking a measure of attention for itself. In the chant, then, the beautiful expression of St. John the Baptist is magnificently verified: *Illum oportet crescere, me autem minui.* ¹

If one should object that there is the goal of sanctification of the faithful, the answer is easy. The concern for edification of the faithful comes only as secondary in the liturgy and in an additive way. It is not, strictly speaking, a goal of the liturgy, but rather an effect. The liturgy is addressed

1. It is meet that He increase and then diminish. (John, III, 30)

primarily and essentially to God. God *first*. It is for God that we are and we live; in our prayer it is for Him that we speak and not to those who merely listen to us. It is to Him, too, that we render homage in the name of creation. By all means, then, when we pray—and we must undoubtedly consider the Mass and Office as prayer—let us maintain the necessary values.

The Abbot of Solesmes stated particularly well the essence of this nature of the liturgy in his *Commentaire sur la Regle de S. Benoit*, p. 154: “The supernatural beauty of the Lord within us, that perfect resemblance with Him which the whole supernatural complex seeks to make manifest, that divine imprint which the turn of the liturgical cycle makes perpetually on our souls, these are not given to us for our isolated enjoyment in a sort of inner pleasure . . . And it is merely because God seeks men to adore Him in spirit and in truth that He has made us one with His Son through His Holy Spirit. In that extraordinary phrase with which St. Paul begins his letter to the Ephesians, he clearly states that the supreme end of creation and the Redemption, of the recapitulation of all things in Christ, is the liturgical witness of infinite excellence and beauty: *Elegit nos in Ipso, ante mundi constitutionem, ut essemus sancti et immaculati in conspectu ejus in caritate; qui praeordinavit nos in adoptionem filiorum per Jesum Christum in Ipsum, secundum propositum voluntatis suae, in laudem gloriae gratiae suae, in qua gratificavit nos in dilecto Filio suo.*¹ There is thus a close connection of these three elements: union with God, praise to God and glorification of God. Our individual and collective sanctity is conveyed in this same liturgical prayer which expresses it most effectively. Our blessedness is to enter, even here on earth, the life and joy of our God, and to cause by means of the Spirit and the Word, every created and increate being which descends from that source of the

1. Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish in His sight in love, He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ as His sons, according to the good pleasures of His will, unto the praise of the glory of His Grace, with which he favored us in His beloved Son. (Ephesians, I, 4-6)

Word and Spirit, to flow back eternally toward that principle without principle which is the Father.”

Examine attentively our Gregorian melodies. It is obviously this very note which they strike. They are “true”, then, to an immeasurably thorough extent.

As we have remarked previously, these melodies express marvelously not only whatever we say to God, but also, and perhaps more strongly, what we are before Him, our attitude of soul. Now St. Benedict summarizes this attitude in a single word, just as he sums up his entire spirituality in a single comprehensive virtue: *humility*, which to him is the fruit of a double viewpoint, that of God to us and of us to God, that fundamental disposition of profound humility, reverence, adoration, thanksgiving, praise, absolute confidence, unchanging peace and love, and the total and joyful abandon of which we have spoken. And this is precisely the very element which forms the basis of the greater part of the beauty and of the effectiveness of the sung prayer of the Church.

We know two kinds of spirituality: the modern kind with its perpetual reflections of itself, its repeated examinations, etc., and the ancient kind which, in contrast, places its entire interest in God and forgets more readily the “I” aspect of this relationship in order to depend more completely on the unique efficacy of the Redemptive Act: *Oculi mei semper ad Dominum, quia Ipse evellet*¹ . . . The Gregorian melodies are singularly eloquent and expressive of the ancient and beautiful kind of spirituality, and this is the source of their extraordinary power in the souls which they pacify, illuminate and carry to God. There would be much more to say on this point, but for the present we must limit ourselves to the question of principles.

Peace, softness, these are the words to which we must always have recourse when speaking of Gregorian chant, and in particular, love. If, indeed, there is one thing which is

1. Mine eyes are always on the Lord, for it is He Who draweth forth my feet from the snare. (Psalm XXVI, 15-16)

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clear from the study of our traditional melodies, it is that they are virtually saturated with gentleness; regardless of the particular sentiment they convey, it is always done in an atmosphere of love, but one of true, deep love; these melodies are living expressions of charity. It is truly the spirit of the whole Church which they embody. *Plenitudo legis dilectio.*² We may say of them what, I think, has been said of the frescoes of Fra Angelico: they have been composed by kneeling artists.

This Gregorian chant is much more than music, much more, too, than mere prayer, for it is *the* prayer of the Church, and thus is primarily a kind of spirit and spirituality, that very spirituality which the Lord taught to us when He defined the true conditions and qualities of prayer: *In spiritu et veritate oportet adorare . . . nam et Pater tales quaerit qui adorent eum.*³ What God wants when we pray is not exterior brilliance or effect, nor does He want even a certain sentimental exaltation. What He wants is that intimate prayer which flows from the soul directly to Him alone. *In spiritu et veritate oportet adorare.*

Perhaps this lesson is more opportune in our own times. Works which are in themselves good seem to multiply without effort, almost in excess. It is not at all impossible that sometimes the exterior and human side is somewhat overemphasized to the detriment of the other. What is important above all, it would seem, is that souls be influenced by a deeper and more inward principle. Perhaps Gregorian liturgical prayer, better understood, better loved and better performed would be of great use for the spiritual progress of souls, and for the re-Christianization of a society which is becoming more and more pagan in outlook.

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Gregorian chant, religious in technique, object and inspiration, is religious in a still more commanding way by

2. Love is the fullness of the law. (Romans XIII, 10)

3. It is necessary to adore in spirit and in truth . . . for it is for those who adore thus that the Father seeks. (John, IV, 23-24)

what we would like to call its *catholic* character. We know through the very certain testimony of the old manuscripts that in the middle ages there was a traditional interpretation of the Gregorian melodies, a tradition which extended to the smallest details of the immense Gregorian repertoire. It was a tradition so precise and universal that it smacked of the miraculous and could only be explained by admitting that the details of the tradition were regarded as sacred and un-touchable, like other properties of the Church. Were not these melodies, too, the great social and liturgical prayer, the “catholic” prayer of the Church?

We must have recourse here to certain points of perfectly established doctrine. St. Paul, in the first chapters of his Epistle to the Ephesians, has set forth for us the “theory” of the Church, the *Mysterium Christi*, *quod aliis generationibus non est agnitum filiis hominum, sicuti nunc revelatum est . . . Gentes esse coheredes et concorporales et participes promissionis ejus in Christo Jesu.*³

The Church is not merely a conglomeration of individuals, but rather a single Body, of which Christ Himself is the head. All redeemed mankind forms a single unit, blended into this Body of Christ.

Henceforth all Christians form a unit, to the extent that it is not so much a question of making many saints as it is of making *the* saint, the complete and accomplished man, the Church: *donec occurramus omnes in unitatem fidei et agnitionis filii Dei, in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi . . .*²

Thus before God, the Church is similar to a single individual, a “social body”, a catholic group. The individuals

1. The mystery of Christ, that mystery which in other ages was not known to the sons of men, as now it has been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit: namely, that the Gentiles are joint heirs, and fellow-members of the same body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus [through the Gospel]. (Ephesians III, 5-6)
2. . . until we attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians, IV, 13)

are grouped within it, and they have no other reason for existence other than through the Church and for it. It is thus socially and congregationally that we must go to God. And it seems that this social and congregational character should never be more pronounced than in the celebration of the liturgy, whether or not this be Eucharistic. The Lord knows how often the Church Fathers, in particular St. Augustine, constantly stressed this point, and the Lord knows, too, how profoundly the liturgy partakes of this nature, and how the individual disappears in it to the profit of the whole group.

“There is nothing like liturgical praise,” as Father Clerissac, O.P., used to say to us, “to free and liberate us from egotistic preoccupations. With it, through it and in it, what we pursue are the very intentions of God, the homage which God renders to Himself in the mystery of His inner life. These are the general interests of redeemed humanity. No doubt our personal interests are not wholly forgotten, but, on the other hand, they come to the fore by themselves without it being necessary for us to take the trouble to concentrate upon them, through that very fact of our dedication to divine praise, in the great current where all the interests of the Mystical Body of Christ are borne along, in the Communion of Saints.”

It is not without interest to observe that just as the text has this “catholic” nature, the chant itself partakes of it. And in this very sense it is essentially formative. What a marvelous way is here provided to give the Christian people, and even the clergy, the catholic sense, the profound and filial sense of the things of the Church! There is a great deal of lamentation these days about the aspect of “individualism” in matters of religion. The sense of the *Mysterium Christi*, so living an element for the middle ages, as also for the first centuries of Christian activity, has almost completely disappeared. What is the Church? What, indeed, is Our Lord, Jesus Christ? For many, in fact, for the immense majority, unfortunately, He is merely an extraordinary saint, a fine

model which we should seek to imitate as best we can, at least in regard to outward appearances. But the understanding of His active role, of His place in the Church and in our sanctification, has dwindled away. And since there must be something to occupy our hearts and minds, there has arisen a whole cult of special devotions, in confraternities, societies and the like. Piety, instead of being an affair of faith and charity, is becoming something sentimental. The liturgy, too, of course, has been influenced. Instead of seeking the deeper teachings which it contains and the full life which it provides, we are looking for emotions. This is even more applicable in the case of liturgical singing.

Well, it would seem to us that to renounce, willing in every case, one's personal tastes and personal preferences in understanding and perceiving these things, in order to bend voluntarily and continually to the traditional interpretation of the Church, is the means of easily achieving a reversal of this egotistic tendency and of orienting our souls to the true nature of Christianity. It has been said that the immediate relationship between the voice and the vital instinct is an undeniable fact, and that it is the very manifestation of life. This is no doubt why so many hesitate to adopt, purely and simply, the Church's method of singing. They realize that they would have to renounce their personal ideas, their personal notions of piety in their prayers, and this is too difficult! But in doing just this very thing, faithfully, supernaturally and with perseverance, we quickly find a new temperament, a temperament of the true child of the Church, in understanding that we are nothing as individuals, but merely members of the Mystical Body of Christ, and that therefore the only important thing for our interests is that we blend as completely as possible into the Church itself. Then, too, we quickly see that element which sanctifies in the liturgy. With the personal effort at assimilation of the texts, the slow, quiet and profound action of grace of which the liturgy is the normal vehicle, it is the Holy Spirit Who acts and Who makes “sons of God” those which are willing to be directed

1. All who are led by the Spirit of God, those are sons of God. (Romans, VIII, 14)

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by Him: *Quicumque Spiritu Dei aguntur, ii sunt filii Dei.*¹

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It is now the fashion to object that Gregorian chant is too austere, too remote from our modern mentality. Would it not be more suitable to have something freer and more personal, more popular and up-to-date? How often have we heard this remark, usually from the mouth of persons who belong to the different branches of what are commonly called the "special movements"!

The answer is easy to give. It is enough merely to apply the principles set forth previously. It is not a question of sentiment or of opinion, but one of supernatural faith, pure and simple. It is not for us to decide. Gregorian chant is the prayer of the Church and not that of the individual. It is the Church alone which has received the mission of leading souls to God. It is the Church which knows the paths which lead to God. It is the Church and not we ourselves whose task it is to regulate its prayer, guided as in the Church by the Spirit of God. *Nam quid oremus sicut oportet nescimus; sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inerrabilibus.*²

2. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself pleads for us with unutterable groanings. (Romans, VIII, 26).

REVIEWS

Books, Music and Records

Since the commencement of publication of the English-language edition of the *Gregorian Review*, the editorial staff has been urged to initiate a section devoted to reviews of current and perennial items of interest to church musicians and music teachers. With the current issue this service is being made a permanent feature of the *Review*. We hope that the opinions and ideas expressed will be useful to those who wish to maintain contact with the growing bibliography in fields related to church music.

* * *

Apel, Willi, *Gregorian Chant*, Bloomington, Indiana, University of Indiana Press, 1958, 9 x 6, xiv-529 pp., 8 plates, \$15.00.

This ambitious treatise is the fruit of intense research, dating, according to the dust jacket, from about 1954, by a distinguished scholar in a field which has not previously enjoyed his scholarship to any extent.

The justification of this new work in a field already overloaded with deadwood, bibliographically speaking, is easily made on the basis of Dr. Apel's thought-provoking discussion of the origins of what we know as Gregorian chant. The theory that the chant as we know it is not provably Gregorian in the traditional sense, and that it dates from the hundred years between 750 and 850 A.D., while not yet completely validated by research, is given in such a way as to be very convincing. In view of the research done on "Old Roman" chant, this theory is even more deserving of our attention.

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The remainder of this sizeable work contains much that is of interest to the scholar, and in this sense it deserves to be consulted by everyone whose interest is in this field in more than a superficial sense.

Readers of this periodical will, of course, be interested in what the author has said about chant rhythm. This interest, however, is not necessarily to be satisfied with Dr. Apel's treatment of this aspect of chant scholarship. Although he has sought to provide the reader with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," clearly separated from the "sour dough" of conjecture and imagination, it is in this matter of rhythm that he has failed, to some extent, to keep opinion in its proper place.

Dr. Apel states that he believes that the chant had no fixed rhythmic system, and that it was sung in one fashion at one time and other ways at other times. He considers the so-called rhythmic manuscripts as being a Frankish or western European localism, writing off their relationship to the rhythmic scripts of Benevento as meaningless. He treats the non-rhythmic manuscripts as being representative of a general tradition of rhythmic freedom, disregarding the strong likelihood that the unwritten rhythmic scheme was simply so well understood that it needed no notation.

It is somewhat startling to find the fuzzy notions of Houdard still considered as possible solutions to the singing of chant in our churches today. It is still more startling to find that Dr. Apel implies principles of performance in his expressed opinions which would be remarkably close to those followed by Deschevrens many years ago in his attempts to formulate a working method. Neither Houdard nor Deschevrens, however, bothered to try to link their systems with the manuscripts, theorists or other pertinent sources of the middle ages, and it is puzzling that Dr. Apel would have left this question in the loose-jointed form he expounds in this new treatise.

It is also unfortunate that Dr. Apel has not treated the subject of modality more in the light of the research

made in the last few years by men such as Potiron, since he makes certain statements about the use of formulae which betray a certain inexperience in this special aspect of the question. He also seems to pass over the discoveries in the field of processes of composition, vital to understanding of modality as we know of it at this time.

All in all, this is a valuable book for the scholar, since its documentation is very worthwhile and its discussions well-presented and broadening in the aspects they offer for future study. It is not to be recommended to the interested amateur or even to the less experienced student scholar, however, as it can easily send such persons on scholarly wild goose chases. In the library of the specialist it can be a very useful tool, for it gathers in one place the materials of many valuable but less accessible sources and supplies them in a commentary which makes their evaluation a much more feasible matter than in the past.

A chapter on Ambrosian chant by Roy Jesson and one on the Old Roman by Robert J. Snow make this interesting work still more valuable to the serious scholar.

* * *

Parrish, Carl, *The Notation of Medieval Music*, New York, W. W. Norton, 1957, 9 x 6, xvii-228 pp., 62 plates, \$7.50.

This compact volume gathers together in one source a great deal of important information about the notation of music, from that of medieval Latin chant to a relatively late stage of western part-music. While it has not been possible for the author to engage in detailed discussions of the kind found in the major works of his bibliography, he has given a picture of the problems and materials of his subject which should be the means of carrying a student of this subject directly to the basic issues of the various divisions of the field.

It is regrettable that a clearer picture of chant notation could not have been drawn, for the explanations of the

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prevailing chant methods and of the main results of paleographic studies are extremely sketchy, and in what they omit to say, possibly misleading.

Again, although the book presents the early polyphonic notation in capsule fashion, it is not marked by the thoroughness of Wolf, Apel or other writers on the subject, although such is not to be expected in a work of this size.

It seems to us that this work will be of considerable value as reading for advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students, and for those whose work requires them to know this field in a non-specialist sense. It should be in every college and institutional library.

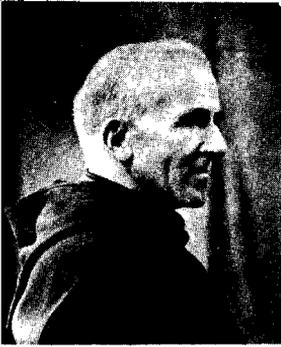
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Morrow, Most Rev. Louis L. R., *My Catholic Faith*, revised edition, Kenosha, Wisc., My Mission House, 1958, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$, 429 pp., \$4.00.

Bishop Morrow has here assembled an attractive resume of the principles and traditions of Catholicism, well-bound and copiously illustrated. The text is concise, but it avoids the dryness of the short, Catechism-type expositions. The language, while accessible to older children, is such as to be acceptable to adults, and in this sense, this is a most valuable publication.

An attempt, generally successful, has been made to relate each point of discipline or dogma to the problems of daily living, and the illustrations and discussions all aim for that same goal.

The book is well-designed, printed and bound, but we wonder why the large format was selected. The book will not fit easily into the small bookshelf common in many homes, and the same material could have been presented in a more compact layout. In any case, this is an exceptionally fine but inexpensive source of material which every Catholic should have at his fingertips.



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