

The Spirit  
of  
Gregorian Chant



Marie Pierik

+

BRUCE

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ST. GREGORY THE GREAT. The Saint is represented between his Father and Mother in the house of his birth on the Caelian Hill in Rome. Taken from a fresco of the VII Century.



## PREFACE

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# INTRODUCTION

*It must be holy — it must be true art — but  
it must at the same time be universal.*

PIUS X, *Motu Proprio*.

It is difficult to formulate a theory of simple facts: one does not propose to prove the self-evident. We shall therefore present our subject matter with no attempt at proving anything, merely revealing.

On entering upon a course of teaching, we try to impress upon our class the thought that the memorizing of a series of facts is, in itself, as abstract an operation as that of a man who, in seeking the cause of his being, spends all of his time looking at a skeleton, stopping right there. What ultimately interests him, or should, is the moving, vital force which made possible this framework of facts as the *residue* of life. The idea is but the beginning: we must go in quest of the *nature* of this idea.

We are impelled to share with many others the riches which have meant so much in our own life. We feel encouraged in this, since, during the now many years which it has pleased God that we should labor in the field of Gregorian Chant, we have yet to meet our first associate among the various peoples of different countries, among those of varying creeds and diverse walks of life, among those of differing ages from eight to eighty—yes, we repeat—we have yet to associate with any student or personal pupil of this subject who, having entered upon his course of study with an open mind and persevered with active cooperation, has not been captivated, some more, some less, not alone by the beauty of this supreme musical art, but even more by the spirit of truth which penetrates the very substance of the elements which go to make up this sung prayer of the Church.

Nothing less than normal good will can long remain impervious to the beauty which carries with it the stamp of the Divine.

In considering "What is Gregorian Chant," we shall proceed, at first, not from an academic analysis, but rather from a given idealism. Let us then start on our way in quest of the holy that leads to the beautiful, and not run the risk of courting the perils which often beset the paths of those who would start with the beautiful to arrive at the holy. Let us with caution and reverence go in search of the Divine source of culture rather than be concerned as to whether we are gracing ourselves with "culture of the soul."

When we speak of proceeding with caution, we do not mean to exclude from our search that hardiness of faith which is so essential to one who would enter resolutely into the realm of the as yet—for him—unexplored.

We must be on our guard against our ear and the prejudice of our spirit in judging Gregorian Chant, Dom Mocquereau tells us, because it dates from the sixteenth century *back*.

Dom Pothier, in his enlightening treatise *Les Mélodies Grégoriennes*, which we feel justified in calling the "New Testament of Gregorian Chant," since it restored to light secrets in the realm of Plainchant which for so many centuries had been lost and forgotten, speaks of this musical art in the following manner: "There is in the Church, in the Catholic liturgy, a music which is at the same time a word and a chant, a music rich and powerful although simple and natural, a music which does not seek itself, which does not harken to itself, but which bursts forth like the spontaneous cry of the thought and of the religious sentiment, a music, lastly, which is the language of the soul touched by God, and which, coming from the bottom of the heart, goes straight to the heart, takes possession of it and raises it gently to heaven. . . ."

"True devotion produces as of itself song: song, in turn excites devotion; and this reciprocal action augments the value of both, like two mirrors, which, facing each other, multiply the same image even to the profundity, so to speak, of the infinite. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

In referring to the words with which these melodies associate themselves, the same author continues: "These texts are formed, for

<sup>1</sup> Ch. I.

a notable part, from those which the Church has inherited from the Ancient Law, and principally from the royal prophet; others are borrowed by her from the inspired writers of the New Law, or again from apostolic tradition; others, lastly, are those which the Church herself, in the course of ages, has produced under the breath of the Spirit which was promised to her to teach all truth; we still have these texts, of which the greater part expose themselves to us with the majesty of a tradition so many centuries old, in the Breviary, the Missal and the other books of the sacred liturgy.

“To accompany these texts, so venerable and so sacred, the Church has also received from antiquity, or produced herself by the genius of her Pontiffs—and most particularly of St. Gregory the Great—incomparable melodies which the ancients did not fear to call inspired by God; melodies assuredly more appropriate to the texts and more intimately united with the sacred rites than compositions, even the most vaunted, of modern art, more apt especially for expressing religious thought and sentiment, more intelligible all the while to the mass of the people and more powerful in moving souls, more grave lastly and more sacred, precisely because of these hieratic forms which can appear strange at first, but which are for the initiated a source of beauty of a superior order . . .

“ . . . The word here has the art of saying simply that which the soul thinks, of expressing spontaneously that which the heart feels: and it is in that that great art resides. Does not true grandeur, in fact, lie in simplicity? Veritable art in the natural? Real force in gentility?

“But in order that the Chant in our churches may conserve, and if need be reconquer, that preponderance over all other music which belongs to it, it is necessary that it should be or become again as St. Gregory in the seventh century, after having collected it from antiquity, regulated and completed it, handed it down to tradition, which preserved it intact during long centuries with a truly marvelous fidelity.

“All art has its traditions, and it is to the care that one takes in maintaining them that genuine progress is attached, while on the other hand forgetfulness and, for a stronger reason, contempt of the past are the certain harbingers of a prompt decadence. From the simple standpoint of art, it is necessary, then, to conserve in Gregorian Chant its traditional forms; because with the manner of being which is proper to it, it would otherwise lose all reason for being. In fact, once an art which has, like Gregorian art, its special character and its kind of beauty, finds itself despoiled of these, it soon no longer has either character or beauty of any sort; and ceasing to be that which it is, it soon ceases to be anything. To wish then to modify Gregorian Chant is to attack its very existence. . . .

“ . . . These melodies are the works of a master: one does not touch with impunity that which has received the stamp of genius. And indeed, because our times have not known how to respect this music, cultivated long ago with so much love and conserved with such care, to what state has it not been reduced? If we wish to give life and vigor again to Plainchant, is it not time to revive it at its sources by a return to the ancient traditions? . . .

“However, tradition in the Church is not immobility, and cannot be likened to unintelligent and inert routine. Each century, in remaining faithful to those preceding it, carries to the trust received its share of perfecting, and bequeathes to future ages an inheritance which goes on in this way ever increasing. That is true tradition, living tradition, tradition as it is seen in the Church, for the sacred sciences as well as for the arts—what shall I say—for the Symbol itself, the stable thing, the preeminently immutable; for the Symbol receives, it also, perfections and additions. All subsist together in the Church, everything obeys the same law, a law which is at the same time preservative and yet always progressive, but which is so only because it is tradition. This law of living and traditional unity is so much law that we shall have occasion to bring it to observation in that which might appear quite

accidental, we mean even in the very hand-writing of liturgical chant.

“Let us not forget, however, that true unity is not that which would be restricted to the usages of a single epoch: such, even if one should obtain it, is not that great and vast unity which characterizes the institutions of the Church: not only is it necessary for unity that all places should be united, but that all epochs should be. Through it, each age is put in communion with previous ages. Thus it is, for that which concerns Plainchant, that during long centuries the melodies of St. Gregory, preserved intact, remained the same everywhere, with certain variants no doubt, but slight variants, which do not hinder our finding them again, everywhere and in every epoch, always easy to recognize and always similar to one another.”<sup>1</sup>

Thanks to the tremendous archeological labors of this venerable monk and his successors, we shall see that a tradition existed which preserved not alone the modulation as well as the rhythm of Gregorian Chant, but even the forms of a notation proper to this musical art.

Not only is the necessity for a return to history and tradition the prerequisite for a proper understanding of any art, whichever it may be, but the genuine student owes it to his personal development to inquire into the labors which have made possible the harvest which awaits him; nor will he know how to appreciate it adequately, to say nothing of adding unto the same, until he has relived, so to speak, the generations which have preceded him.

Let us hear of this cultivation of the ideal from the mouth of a master who both taught and practiced it. Vincent d'Indy, in his opening address at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, November 2, 1900, spoke the following words: “Art is a microcosm, which passes like the world itself through successive periods of youth, maturity and age; which never perishes, but continually renews itself. It is not a closed circle, but a spiral, perpetually ascending and progressing. I intend to make my pupils follow

<sup>1</sup> Ch. I.

the same movement as the art itself, so that having gone through the transformations to which music has been subjected in the course of centuries, they may emerge from their period of study better equipped for the conflict of these modern days, because they will have lived, so to speak, the life of their art, and will have assimilated in their natural order the forms which have succeeded each other logically through the various periods in the development of the art."<sup>1</sup>

Gregorian Chant is, as the medieval authors teach us, a veritable art, submissive not alone to the general laws of music, but to certain *particular* laws, as well, which we must know, in order to finally understand and respect them. We must, then, seek to find the *nature* of the art we wish to possess.

We have all learned that art is in no way opposed to nature. Rather, as the enlightening teaching of Dom Pothier expresses it, art is nothing other than nature "corrected, uplifted, aided, perfected, idealized; and if it is religious art," he adds, "it is nature transformed, supernaturalized, deified; but it is always nature."<sup>2</sup>

This is the place, we think, to point out that a distinction exists within each of the liberal arts between that which is spiritual in a general religious sense, and that which is spiritual in a liturgical sense. Let us hear how Dr. Peter Wagner points out this distinction in the realm of music: "All Church music is spiritual, but all spiritual music is not Church music, and many epochs in the decline of Church music have been brought about through failure to observe the distinction between the two aforementioned kinds of musical art."<sup>3</sup>

Within each of these two classifications of music, the liturgically spiritual and the general religiously spiritual, there are various degrees of perfection.

Gregorian Chant is a spiritual music which has no role other than its association with the liturgy of the Church. It is free of all else other than this association; the sole influence to which it is subject is the liturgy, with all that the liturgy embodies in its

<sup>1</sup> Vincent d'Indy, *César Franck*, Introduction, Rosa Newmarch. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél Grég.*, Ch. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Einführung in die Katholische Kirchenmusik, Einleitung.*

Latin text, which acts not only as melodic generator and model of constructive form,<sup>1</sup> but which, in the intimacy of this union, at times reverses the role and yields to the exigencies of the melody. Whether it be performed in the church, school or concert hall, it still remains liturgically spiritual music in the character of its sentiment; nor has it reason for existence, properly speaking, other than its association with the liturgical text.

Now there is another spiritual music to which every folk, as well as every artist, have their right; this music is free in character and sentiment of other than a general religion; it may be subjective in character and expression, in that one may not only use any language which he wishes, but in like manner the composer is unrestricted in his interpretation of the text. Consequently, a composition in this sphere may become a musical expression of a subjective nature which verges even on a worldly expression, for it gives all play to the composer.

Liturgically spiritual music, on the contrary, is bound to the Church in composition, and its freedom from all else arises out of its sole function of serving the liturgy.<sup>2</sup>

So, if either composer or singer feels a certain constraint in the composing or rendering of liturgical chant, which seems to throw a shadow on his freedom, he must remember that his art in the Church is only a *serving* one<sup>3</sup>—the means to an end—which end is not self. It must surely have been with a like sentiment that the composers of the early songs of the Church went about their work in the writing of such beautiful, often sublime, melodies.

We quote now Pius X, who so clearly defines the attributes proper to liturgical music in his Encyclical *Motu Proprio* of 1903:

“Sacred music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It contributes to the decorum and the splendour of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and since its principal office is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the under-

<sup>1</sup> Ref., Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Einf.*, *Einkl.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

standing of the faithful, its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that through it the faithful may be the more easily moved to devotion and better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries.

“Sacred music should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and in particular sanctity and goodness of form, which will spontaneously produce the final quality of universality.

“It must be holy, and must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself, but also in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it.

“It must be true art, for otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.”

We next have those instructions of the Holy Father in which is made clear the compatible association of tradition and progress in the musical art of the Church:

“But it must, at the same time, be universal, in the sense that while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music, that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them.

“These qualities are to be found, in the highest degree, in Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the Chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient Fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity.



“On these grounds Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is fully legitimate to lay down the following rule: the more closely a Church composition approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.

“ . . . The fact must be accepted by all that an ecclesiastical function loses none of its solemnity when accompanied by this music alone. . . .

“The above-mentioned qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by Classic Polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the sixteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina, and continued subsequently to produce compositions of excellent quality from a liturgical and musical standpoint. Classic Polyphony agrees admirably with Gregorian Chant, the supreme model of all sacred music, and hence it has been found worthy of a place side by side with Gregorian Chant, in the more solemn functions of the Church, such as those of the Pontifical Chapel. . . .

“The Church has always recognized and favored the progress of the arts, admitting to the service of religion everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages—always, however, with due regard to the liturgical laws. Consequently, modern music is also admitted to the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.

“Still, since modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces.

“Among the different kinds of modern music, that which ap-

appears less suitable for accompanying the functions of public worship is the theatrical style, which was in the greatest vogue, especially in Italy, during the last century. This of its very nature is diametrically opposed to Gregorian Chant and Classic Polyphony, and therefore to the most important law of all good sacred music. Besides the intrinsic structure, the rhythm and what is known as the *conventionalism* of this style adapt themselves but badly to the requirements of true liturgical music."<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the Church has seen that when she lets an artist indulge himself too long, he tends toward worldly music and gradually becomes accustomed to writing in this vein. Pius X defines indirectly the characteristic of holiness in Church music, by claiming for it that which is the contrary of worldly music. A composition corresponds to the holiness of the Church, he implies, when it portrays a tone language that is negative to that of the world.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Wagner, in following its course, tells us that the composition of worldly music goes along ceaselessly and restlessly further and further. In observing that it can develop slowly and through study into Church style, more or less, he adds: "I hope that no one will misunderstand me and presume that the style of Richard Strauss, for instance, could, after some generations, become suitable for the Church. For that, too distant worlds separate him from the elevation and clarity of sacred art."<sup>3</sup>

The Church compositions of former epochs and style were doubtless easier to comprehend before the advent of the varied impressions which one receives in a large share of modern music, not only of the lighter type, but even in certain compositions which claim to be the logical evolution of the classics. This makes the natural attachment of the Church to the music of its *past* understandable.

This does not mean that the Church song should be joyless, merely because one must use caution both in its composition and in its interpretation. On the contrary, "there is room for joy and feastly jubilation even as there is place for sadness and penance,"

<sup>1</sup> Chs. I, II. <sup>2</sup> Ibid. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. IX.

and the composer has but to study the text in order to be enlightened regarding which to use. The Church liturgy is like the Church feasts, but the joy does not go beyond bounds and to the delight of the senses, nor does the sadness sink into worldly afflictions and pessimism. The joy emanates from, and is ennobled through, the majesty and sublimity of the sentiment of the Feast. "Sadness and penance embrace the consolation of devotion in the hope of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Joy and jubilation as well as sorrow and fear have their regular place in Church music. It was, however, particularly with the advent of Richard Wagner that these different emotions of the soul took on a manner of portrayal which until his time had not even been suspected. Now we find a "virtuoso presentation of languishing desire (as in the Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*) and of the most rapturous sensuousness (as in the Overture to *Tannhauser*)."<sup>2</sup> Then, too, the gradual advent of unprepared dissonances into our modern music has made us somewhat "wider-hearted" and less sensitive than the musicians of past generations, especially those of the more distant epoch of pure diatonic music. So we of the present age must be especially on our guard in making the distinction between that which is liturgical, and that which is purely subjective in Church music.

A discreet use of chromatics at the proper place can be very effective in Church music, but dissonances and chromatics weaken music if they are used too continuously—more as a "padding." In commenting on Guido's statement, "Diatonic music is healthy, chromatic music is sick music," Dr. Wagner observes: "For Church music that statement applies even today. . . . It is a dangerous venture to lead chromatics in as a legitimate constituent of instruction in Church music, as deteriorating for the future of Church music as for the psychical well-being of music students."<sup>3</sup>

The late Dr. Kretzschmar, a distinguished Protestant writer and pedagogue, at one time head of the Berliner Hochschule, signals the "original sin" in music, which justifies the "music police"

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. IX.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*   <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

of the Church. In his *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik*, he refers to the "zealous Chopin cult" at the time of his writing, about twenty-five years ago. He considered it one of the most dangerous of bad habits, and the daily enjoyment of Chopin's music or its application to musical development he terms "one of the most irrational errors that has ever come forth in the territory of pedagogy." And Dr. Wagner, commenting on this, adds: "Not otherwise is to be judged the tumultuous makeshift of chromatics through certain modern Church music. . . . In this connection we would bring to mind the tone painting which seeks to make intimated outward occurrences or inner movements of sentiment in the text appealing to the senses.

"In a general sense, all vocal music is tone painting, therefore also Church music, in that it wishes to interpret artistically the emotions (*Affekte*) contained in the words. However, there exists, as well, a merely exterior and thus inartistic, therefore less churchly, tone painting, which lays stress on a realistic portrayal instead of on a reproduction of the sentiment. This easily disturbs the musical organism, and permits the particular interpretation of the composer to assert itself with impropriety."<sup>1</sup>

This excellent musician and eminent liturgist, who contributed so singularly to the restoration of Gregorian Chant, reflects that this music stands out for the holy atmosphere which it radiates by means of its Modes, its rhythm and its entire style. "A melody in the Dorian or Phrygian Mode, but also in the Lydian or Mixolydian Mode, closer to our major," he writes, "sounds like an invitation to interior reflection and recollection after the impressions which storm around us outside the House of God."<sup>2</sup>

However, any subjective and personal composition or interpretation of a music that is out of place in the Church will never be completely vanquished by the monotonous and heavy rendition of Plainchant, which, as Dom Pothier writes, "deprives it of all rhythm and of all color, which destroys the grace—what shall I say—the very essence of the melody; . . . and that under

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.* Ch. IX.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. X.

pretext of gravity, of dignity, of religious respect; when it is not even in virtue of I know not what principle of spirituality, quite little orthodox, by virtue of which, in order not to flatter nature, all must be taken away from it, even that to which it has the most incontestable rights. And do we not in fact see certain persons, in the fear of laying themselves open to sensuality, demand that Plainchant should be despoiled of all that is agreeable, that it should not be, as they say, 'really music (*de la musique*)?'

"The best minds have sometimes allowed themselves to be deceived by these strange theories. . . .

"We can, then, and we should, affirm with an author of the Middle Ages that to sing well one must know how to do it with art. It is on this condition, he adds, that the sacred melodies will be beautiful and agreeable. This practical knowledge of art, far from being useless in the execution of the chants of the Church, is, on the contrary, more than in every other circumstance absolutely indispensable. And is it not, in fact, when the song has for direct end the praise of the Divine that ignorance and carelessness are all the more inexcusable and lead to an even greater disorder? We see musicians of the world dedicating themselves to assiduous study, condemning themselves to long and tedious exercises, consecrating, for example, weeks and months to the preparation of a concert; so should one not for God and His praises also go to some pains, do some studying, sing with a certain care?

"Without a doubt, the care given to singing well should not degenerate into pretention, into puerile vanity; nor is that which we seek in the chant satisfaction of the senses, auditory pleasure; but one need not believe, however, that to sing the divine praises worthily it is necessary to offend the ear, and to banish from our offices all that is agreeable. The ennui and fatigue which would inevitably proceed from the Chant badly executed would foster both with the singers and with the listeners this other tendency, which, no less vicious than pride or sensuality, is itself a capital sin—*acedia*, disgust for the things of God. It is precisely against

this disgust, against this indolence of mind, that the Chant was instituted: that is, with the aim of sustaining the soul and enkindling in it continually a holy enthusiasm.

“ . . . Gregorian Chant is a song eminently rich, but also eminently simple and natural; the impassioned expression in no way belongs to it; the affected expression is equally opposed to its character of spontaneity, which makes it foreign to the pre-occupation of trying to produce an effect. It is a music capable of producing the most varied effects; but a music which should draw on itself for its resources, in no way on the effort of him who sings, or on his manner of singing.

“ . . . Stay in the natural, that is supreme art. This simplicity and this good taste constitute the principal merit of a good execution of Gregorian Chant; all that which savors of pretention or affectation, all that which from far or from near recalls the theatre, all these things should be banished from the choir as false, and as contrary to the purity of the homage which we should render in spirit and in truth to the Divine Majesty.

“So see, then, that which it is necessary to know and to observe in order to sing in a proper manner the praises of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we learn from this wise teacher that we must sing Gregorian Chant with art, but that at the same time we must stay in the natural; by which he wishes to imply that a genuinely supernatural interpretation (contrary to one of a purely *human* character, lacking Divine enlightenment and schooled discipline) should be delivered with the ease of a “natural second nature”—if we may use such a term in bringing out the distinction between that which becomes natural to man through the workings of Divine grace, and that which is natural to him through the mere phenomenon of his being.

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél Grég.*, Chs. I, II.



## CHAPTER I

### HISTORY AND TRADITION

*I seek everywhere that which one thought, that which one did,  
that which one loved in the Church in the age of Faith.*

Dom Guéranger.

The song of the Church, as well as its liturgy, was born when art was living. We shall see in subsequent chapters the direct influence exercised on both the word and melody in the organic structure of liturgical expression by the art of the Greco-Roman classical age, as well as by that of Jewish tradition.

The various sources of knowledge for the liturgical song of the Church are the works of the Fathers, those of the liturgists and grammarians, and musical treatises, as well as musical texts, belonging to the Middle Ages. Certain codices of the early VIII century, e. g., those of Monza (*Cantatorium*) and of Zürich-Rheinau 33, simply give the text of the Chant without notes.<sup>1</sup> We have extant manuscripts in neum notation dating from the IX century on, the oldest of which are found at the Monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland.

The four Occidental chants are: the Ambrosian and Gregorian (those of Italy), the Gallican (that of Gaul) and the Mozarabic or "Visigothic" (that of Spain).<sup>2</sup> Dom Mocquereau alludes to them as the same musical language sung by Christian peoples but diffused into different musical dialects, even as was the Latin language into the Romance languages. Which is the oldest, one does not know, but examination of the manuscripts shows that the Gregorian, Ambrosian, Mozarabic and the little that is known of the Gallican are all derived from the same musical language. The affinity between the tonality and the rhythm is the same in each of the four varieties; they have all used a notation of neums, with individual graphic specialties. Archeologists find the Ambrosian and Gregorian manuscripts easy to read, but the Mozarabic are controversial, because of the similarity of the notation of these manuscripts and certain letters used for the signatures of contem-

<sup>1</sup> Dom Dominic Johner, O. S. B., *New School of Gregorian Chant*, Part II, Ch. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Paléographique musicale*, Vol. I.

poraneous documents. Two alphabets were used in Spain, one being that of the Latin countries, the other having come from beyond the Pyrenees, at the time when these manuscripts were written, in the X, XI and XII centuries. Dom Mocquereau reasons that it would seem simpler to interpret the Mozarabic notation as one of neums, since neums succeeded alphabetic notation and not vice versa.<sup>1</sup>

The habits of certain peoples, the customs of certain churches and religious orders, the fantasy of copyists and the systematic theories of masters of Chant each correcting according to personal authority, were all causes for variations in manuscripts. Among the pieces contained in the ancient monuments, many have ceased to be in use in the Roman liturgy. Besides the manuscripts belonging to the Roman liturgy there are those which belong to certain churches, or to certain religious orders: the Benedictines, Carthusians, Cistercians, Dominicans, Franciscans, etc.

St. Ambrose (d. 397), Bishop of Milan—the “Father of ecclesiastical music”—holds a most important place among those responsible for the development of the musical liturgy of the Church. He cultivated hymnody and antiphonal singing in the West, but there is no way of proving that he ever actually composed any of the melodies of the Milanese Chant. However, both the music and the liturgy which bear his name arrived at a distinction of form which has survived with a degree of independence not approached by that of either the Mozarabic or Gallican, although greatly surpassed by that of the Gregorian.

A good many of the Ambrosian chants, especially those of the Psalter, are preserved today. This Chant reveals in its syllabic melody (one note for each syllable), a type easy and sweet, moving in intervals of seconds and thirds, with little melodic flow and no determined Modes. It was born as the fruit of a civilized art, and retains the “naive innocence which precedes the law, ignoring barriers of convention, with no need for the variety of an art which, having arrived at full consciousness of itself, seeks to satisfy.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



Between the antiphon and the psalm verse there is no "shock" in either Ambrosian or Gregorian melody, which reflects the image of a cultivated, literary society, one accustomed to the finest nuances of the language. In the revisions attributed to St. Gregory (d. 604), however, there is evidence of the work of a skillful hand in the classification, precision and development of forms indecisive previous to his time, which ideal of perfection Gregory realized by responding to the demands of unity and synthesis as they exist in the *language*. The melodies of the post-Ambrosian period are artistically more finished; they are more withheld, respecting their alliance with the word; in the psalmodic chant (the verse of the Gradual, for instance), the melodic designs are more developed at the Intonation and Mediant, and the cadences have a more studied contour. The modal system, as well, affirms itself—the dominant is fixed. The phrase and the movement of the rhythm have a firmer allure in Gregorian melody and are, in all, more perfect. And it is particularly in the intimate alliance in the psalmody between the melody and the words that is produced a chant "most suave and religious." Nothing could be more false than the assertion of some historians that "St. Gregory made a barbarous music to please a barbarian people."<sup>1</sup>

Besides the transformations wrought in the already existing Chant during the time of St. Gregory, the great Pontiff himself either completed personally the body of Church music or had the work done under his supervision. This pertains especially to the parts of the liturgy added by him. Thus the Chant called "Gregorian" did not start with St. Gregory; it was rooted in a past where there existed already a heritage of antique classicism "from which literary sap it inherited the sweet and noble. These men knew how to pluck the fruit of civilization and how to use the heritage of human invention to ornament Divine Truth."<sup>2</sup>

St. Sylvester I (Pope of the IV century) is credited with having founded a school for the training of choristers. A Frankish monk in the VIII century mentions Popes St. Damascus (d. 384),

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

St. Leo (d. 461), St. Gelasius (d. 496), Symmachus (d. 514), John I (d. 526) and Boniface II (d. 532) as having labored for the development of Church music. But to Gregory reverts the honor of having personally, or through his Roman singing school, collected and edited the existing melodies. In his *Antiphonarius Cento*, which he arranged for the singers, Gregory gave a uniform and characteristic stamp to the various chants (e.g. *Introitus*, *Graduale*, etc.).<sup>1</sup> John the Deacon (circa 872), among other writers, speaks of this book in his life of St. Gregory. During his pontificate (590-604) Gregory also established singing schools in the Roman seminaries.

These early *Scholae Cantorum*—sometimes called *Orphanotrophia*, in allusion to the number of fatherless children which they sheltered—were governed by an ecclesiastic of high rank, called the *Primicerius*, who, assisted by a *Secundicerius* destined afterwards to succeed him in his office, exercised absolute control over the youths and children committed to his care. Boys were admitted into the preparatory school (*Parvisium*) at a very early age; and if of gentle birth, became at the same time members of the Papal household, holding a status like that of the pages of the secular court. After passing through the necessary preparation, the choristers were permitted to take part in the most solemn services of the Church.<sup>2</sup> John the Deacon speaks of the school in the Papal household during Gregory's time, "which still cultivates the sacred chant of the Holy Roman Church according to the rules drawn up by him . . . to this day is shown near the Lateran the couch from which in his illness he gave instruction in singing; the rod also with which he chastised the boys, and the authentic Antiphonary are there, and are venerated as relics."<sup>3</sup>

This same biographer attributes the diffusion of the Chant in England to the chanters accompanying St. Augustine (d. 604), who had been sent thither by St. Gregory. It was in a solemn procession with the Chant of the liturgy that St. Augustine and his monks, reaching the shores of England (597), were presented to Ethelbert,

<sup>1</sup> Johner, *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> W. S. Rockstro, *Sistine Choir*, *Grove's Dictionary of Music*. <sup>3</sup> Johner, *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. I.

king of Kent. A flourishing school of Roman tradition was founded at Canterbury. Gregory had provided the missionaries with numerous books and all objects necessary for the divine cult. From the history of their activities in England, one infers that Great Britain saw the first copies of the *Antiphonarius Cento*.<sup>1</sup> The introduction of the Chant into the north of England was the work of St. Wilfrid, who borrowed two cantors from Canterbury, the fountain-head in England of all Roman traditions. St. Benet Biscop procured for the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow the instruction of Abbot John, Archcantor of the Roman Church, and all of the neighboring monasteries availed themselves of the opportunity to learn the most correct manner of rendering the sacred chants.<sup>2</sup>

Tradition stayed intact in England with, however, the natural tendencies toward periodic deterioration which afflicted an art dependent practically upon oral training alone for its diffusion. Alfred the Great, a lettered and generous protector of savants and artists, took particular interest in liturgical chant; it is recounted of him that he would not suffer a chanter to exercise his art in a routine way and without possessing fundamentally its technique.<sup>3</sup> St. Dunstan, in the X century, gave a fresh stimulus to Church music, and to him is attributed the composition of the beautiful "Kyrie *Rex splendens*."<sup>4</sup> After the Norman Conquest, however, chanters from schools in France (which country had received the Chant nearly two centuries later than the English) were sometimes brought to England to assist in the endeavor to keep the melody in a state of traditional purity.

At the requests of Pepin and Charlemagne the Popes at various times sent chanters to the Franks and to the Germans to teach Gregorian melody. Charlemagne loved to preside at the liturgical Offices in the palace, and insisted that his ministers assist with him. He sent two clerics to Rome to learn the Chant; he also obtained Roman singers. Petrus and Romanus were two of those deputed, and legend has it that while crossing the Alps Romanus fell sick and stopped at the famous Abbey of St. Gall to demand hospitality,

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>2</sup> Benedictines of Stanbrook, *Grammar of Plainsong*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>4</sup> *Gram. of Plsg.*, p. 8.

while his companion pursued his route as far as Metz, where, in the school established by St. Chrodegang, Bishop, Petrus found a center in which to teach the Roman Chant. Romanus decided to remain at St. Gall, where he founded a school of chant which became the happy rival of Metz. In these two schools, to which Gregorian Chant had been transported in its absolute perfection, the utmost importance was attached to the mode of rendition. The two chanters brought with them books with neum notation, but they taught rather by the spoken than by the written word. Here as elsewhere new compositions began to be produced, and one endeavored to treat the Chant scientifically. It is to these two important schools that archeologists were later to revert in seeking to acquire a knowledge of Gregorian Chant at its origin.

The period from the time of St. Gregory to the year 1000 is known as the golden era of Plainchant (*cantus planus*), the name used after the advent of *Ars mensurabilis* and harmony to distinguish the original monodic type—the *cantilena* or *cantus firmus*—from the new art. Up to the XI century Plainchant compositions retained their traditional spirit. In Gregory's own time, and for ages after, his work was considered so sacred that none might touch or alter it, and the great bulk of the music belonging to the Proper of the Mass has probably come down to us substantially intact from the time of St. Gregory.<sup>1</sup> The Ordinary of the Mass, which had not reached its present form in St. Gregory's time, as well as certain parts of the Office—notably certain Antiphons and Responds—were the work of the period following St. Gregory. Well into about the XIII century we still see certain Plainchant Ordinaries composed, some as late as the XVI century, with rare XVII century contributions.

Since the various factors which worked their way into Plainchant and brought about the decline, which commenced almost imperceptibly about the XI century, will be developed in subsequent chapters of this book, we shall merely bring them to the reader's attention now by enumerating them broadly. They are: Organum,

<sup>1</sup> *Gram. of Plsg.*, p. 9.

Diaphony, and later Discant, which gave birth to harmony and counterpoint; *Ars mensurabilis*, which gave unequal time value to notes; the invention of the four-lined staff, which did away largely with the rhythmic signs used in manuscripts up to the time of Guido; and the improper interpretation, by XVII century musicians, of the ancient art of *Metrum*, which terminated in the *struck* down-beat (an element foreign to the ictus of free rhythm) at regular or periodic intervals, giving birth to measure. This attempt to identify measure with the free oratorical rhythm of Plainchant was not only one of the most injurious influences in the life of this particular art, but rhythm has suffered in the entire realm of music as the victim of the unfortunate consequences of the confusion of that which is *rhythm* with that which is *measure*. In the judgment of Vincent d'Indy: "It is even one of the most deplorable innovations which the XVII century, so fertile in false theories, has bequeathed to us . . . rhythm, subjected to the restrictive exigencies of measure, became rapidly impoverished even to the point of the most wearisome dullness, as in a tree a branch which is tightly compressed by a ligature bleaches and withers, while those around it absorb all the sap."<sup>1</sup>

Whereas in liturgical Latin the accent of the word is used as an element of unity, the Renaissance musicians often treated it in a contrary manner by placing many notes upon the accented syllable, thereby prolonging it. To place many notes on an unimportant syllable, that which Plainchant does freely when the circumstances warrant it, was considered a "barbarism" by this new school. They themselves used primarily the accented syllables for these decorative formulas.<sup>2</sup>

As the various innovations in music came into being and worked their way into the melody of Plainchant, counter movements of reform sprang up, through which various efforts at restoration were made. These endeavors became more and more pronounced, and this in the end proved equally disastrous for the preservation of the integral Gregorian Chant melody, since the authors of these various attempts were seemingly lacking in a clear

<sup>1</sup> *Cours de Composition Musicale*, Ch. I.   <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

conception of the nature of the art itself, however much as laudatory their efforts must be judged.

Following the revision of the Roman Breviary and Missal under Pius V, Gregory XIII, in 1577, entrusted to Palestrina the revision of the Gradual and Antiphony. As a consequence of this commission, the Medicean Gradual, in two volumes, edited by the Medicean Press at Rome in 1614-15, was long attributed to Palestrina. Later discoveries revealed that this false attribution originated from the fact that Iginio, the great master's son, wishing to benefit from the reputation of his father, gathered together after the death of Palestrina, fragments of the work begun but never finished by the latter, and had the manuscripts set in order and completed by a composer of music. Iginio then sold them to a publisher as his father's achievement for the sum of 2105 crowns. The publisher discovered the fraud and obtained a cancellation of his contract. The manuscripts, which were full of errors, were then returned to Iginio, who surrendered the money paid to him, and no one has ever heard of them since. They were undoubtedly destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

Providence plays no favorites in that which has to do with one's familiarity with a traditional art. This is gained only by a return to study of the monuments of the particular art in question, with all the long and detailed labor that little by little brings to light, or restores, the hidden or lost. Because in Palestrina's time such an archeological science was little cultivated, even genius such as his was unable to cope with the task of restoring Gregorian Chant to its primitive integrity. But to Palestrina does revert the honor of having rescued music from the depths to which it had fallen through the excesses of Discant, and of having elevated many-voiced music to a degree of splendor until then unknown, as we shall see in a later chapter.

While granting that the Medicean edition was an unfortunate monument of the unworthy, and of the superficiality of an unripe desire for reform, nevertheless one should not wonder too much at the errors found in these first printed music editions, wherein the psalms were not once arranged with their right notes, neumatic pas-

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. I.

sages were arbitrarily cut up, neums were displaced and melodies frequently altered beyond recognition. These editions were copied from the latest manuscripts of the XIV and XV centuries. The latter, although often very beautiful examples of calligraphy, with exquisite miniatures as well, were ordinarily entirely lacking in an integral reproduction of the melody, especially as regards the proper grouping of notes. The negligence and even the fantasy of certain copyists was singularly encouraged by the singers themselves, who had often become completely converted to the then prevailing type of musical expression, which was a definite departure from traditional Plainchant. Even in the basilicas at Rome, when the singers had an Antiphon or a Respond to sing, with either the manuscript or the editions of Venice or of Antwerp open before their eyes, they had a habit of executing a musical *ritornello* or some other artistic virtuosity which had no relation whatever to the notes in front of them. Besides, the editors did not always give their books a notation that could actually be deciphered.<sup>1</sup>

Even where the melody of Gregorian Chant had been more or less preserved, the rhythm—the soul of this melody—had fallen into a state of complete oblivion by the time of the full Renaissance period. Then, too, the sentiment of all of the arts of the Middle Ages, wherein the artist gave expression to his inner life, was entirely transformed by the Renaissance era, which caused what d'Indy calls “a terrific upheaval in the logical progress of the Arts. . . .”<sup>2</sup> M. Emile Mâle, in his *L'Art religieux du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle en France*, writes of this as follows: “The art of the Middle Ages is like its literature: it has less value for its conscious talent than for its diffuse genius. In it personality does not always show forth, but innumerable generations of men speak by the mouth of the artist. Even when the individual is mediocre, he is raised to great heights by the genius of these Christian centuries.

“From the time of the Renaissance the artists break away from tradition, to their risk and peril. When they were not superior it became difficult for them to escape insignificance and platitude, and when they were great they certainly were not more so than the old

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> *César Franck*, Ch. V.

docile masters who knew how to express naively the thought of the Middle Ages.” And to this d’Indy himself adds: “It is by this character of impersonality, therefore, that medieval art differentiates itself profoundly from that of subsequent epochs.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus all of these forces played their definite role in the decline of the Plainchant song, so exquisitely beautiful in itself, and so hopelessly disfigured if its melody be altered, or if its rhythm be abolished, or even if its execution be faulty.

Small wonder, then, that this art, which demands for its proper interpretation a complete preservation and understanding of its particular characteristics, should have been so severely criticized by Mendelssohn when, in 1831, in referring to what he had heard during the Holy Week services, he wrote from Rome: “It does irritate me to hear such sacred and touching words sung to such insignificant dull music. They say it is *canto fermo*, Gregorian, etc. No matter. If at that period there was neither the feeling nor the capacity to write in a different style, at all events we have now the power to do so.” He goes on to suggest two alternative plans for altering and reforming the service.<sup>2</sup> But fate had not decreed that this reform should be one of the missions of the gifted Mendelssohn.<sup>3</sup>

A re-edition of the Medicean Edition, already mentioned, was started in 1871 at Ratisbon, Germany; there were, however, certain unimportant alterations from the original in the Ratisbon Gradual. The editors had the privilege of a thirty years’ contract for the only approved edition. Pius IX, in an effort to arrive at uniformity in a Chant edition for the Church, advised that that of Ratisbon be used officially. This was, however, never a command, says Dr. Wagner, otherwise the Pontiff would have issued a formal decree to that effect. Furthermore, this edition was incomplete, as it comprised only the Gradual, and not the Antiphony. Since an official Chant edition of the Church, in order to be considered valid, must be complete, this fact, as well, would have disqualified the Medicean Edition from serving as an official Church edition.<sup>4</sup>

Haberl, in his *Magister choralis* (Ratisbon 1893), explains this edition as follows: “Since the XIII century a principle has existed of

<sup>1</sup> *Cours*, Ch. XII. <sup>2</sup> Mendelssohn, *Reisebriefe*, *Grove's Dict.* <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 28. <sup>4</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X.



improving the melodies by cutting down their enormous length, which arose partly through a bad method of execution, and partly through the *Manieren* [executions of virtuosity] of singers. . . . The revision undertaken by the Congregation of Sacred Rites by order of Pius IX, put the foundation of the Roman Chant on the system followed since the Council of Trent."<sup>1</sup>

A very pronounced endeavor on the part of many Catholic musical theorists to arrive at light on the subject of traditional Chant made itself evident during the latter half of the XIX century. The 1784 edition of treatises by the most important writers on music, the great work of Gerbert, Benedictine Abbot of the Monastery of St. Blaise, and the 1864-76 editions of the same matter continued by the Flemish musical historian Coussemaker, were used as authoritative sources for zealous study, and interest in liturgical Plainchant was thoroughly re-awakened.

Germany played an impressive part in this scientific music research, which was taking place at the very time that Richard Wagner was bringing the Opera back to its original destination as a musical drama.

The definite restoration of Gregorian Chant came about as a consequence of the general restoration of the Roman liturgy in France, in which country the greatest confusion had reigned in the realm of Plainchant since the time of the climax of the Gallican movement in the XVII century, with its consequent break with the Roman liturgy. This restoration is owing largely to the efforts of Dom Prosper Guéranger, O.S.B., who founded, and became the first Abbot of, the Benedictine Monastery of Solesmes. The same eminent liturgist gave the impetus to the movement for the renewal of Gregorian music by a return to its earliest known form. He laid down the principle that "where the manuscripts of different periods and different countries agree in their version of a melody, it may be affirmed that the true Gregorian text has been discovered."<sup>2</sup> Much assiduous study of the available manuscripts ensued as a result of this movement. But the merit for the definite revival belongs chiefly to the many years of arduous archeological labor of Dom Joseph

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Abdy Williams, *Solesmes, Grove's Dict.* <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I.

Pothier, O. S. B., which resulted in the supremely important discovery of the traditional rhythm of Plainchant—free or prose rhythm—through a study of the first extant neum manuscripts of the IX and X centuries, mostly those of the ancient school of St. Gall, with their rhythmic markings.<sup>1</sup> He accompanied his research with a study of the important works of medieval theorists of the IX and X centuries, and in 1880 appeared his own work *Les Mélodies Grégoriennes*, from which we have already quoted in the Introduction. This book has ever since formed the basis of study for all scholars of Gregorian Chant.

The monks of Solesmes were at this time sent to the principal libraries of Europe to photograph codices, and in 1883 appeared the *Liber Gradualis*, prepared and published by Dom Pothier for the use of the Benedictine Congregation of France. Later followed the *Antiphonale*, *Responsoriale*, *Processionale monasticum*, and the *Variae preces*.

In 1889 Dom André Mocquereau, O. S. B. founded the monumental work *Paléographie musicale*, a quarterly publication containing photographic facsimiles of Ambrosian, Gregorian, Mozarabic and Gallican manuscripts, as well as a voluminous amount of subject matter treating of the history of notation, the Chant, the liturgy and broad scientific principles of execution. Using as a motto *Res non verba*, he had more than 200 reproductions made, starting at Rome, of the *Gradualresponsorium Justus ut palma*, as an example taken from Antiphonaries of different origin dating from the IX to the XVII century. This Gradual represents one of the most ancient in the Gregorian repertoire.<sup>2</sup> Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Spain and England all testified to a traditional Gregorian melody. Reverting to these sources, it was discovered that this melody was the same in all the manuscripts, and that Gregorian Chant had not undergone any grave harm up to the time of the first extant neum notation of the IX and X centuries.<sup>3</sup> The *quilisma*<sup>4</sup> was also taken as an example, to prove that the interpretation of this ornamental neum was the same in other schools as it was at St. Gall,

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 26. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vols. II and III. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. II. <sup>4</sup> Ref., p. 60.

even though the graphic forms might differ. The marking of a prolongation of the notes before the *quilisma* was common to manuscripts of various schools.<sup>1</sup>

The development of this archeological work by the monks of Solesmes has brought the assurance that in these first manuscripts, with and without lines, we possess really and integrally the authentic version of religious music. Since the Chant had survived the various assaults made upon it by the caprice of copyists, mensuralists and so-called reformers and correctors, how much more must it have lived through the two centuries of tradition (VII to the IX) before the first accessible manuscripts, because during that time one returned to the immediate disciples of St. Gregory.<sup>2</sup>

Through the process of an intensive study of each notation, and a comparison of neum notation in *campo aperto* (without lines) with neums in staff notation, it was found possible to distinguish with precision the corrections of those copyists who remedied real alterations of traditional melody, from those alterations which were but an expression of personal system in manifest disaccord with the traditional melody. Where a manuscript of one school or of one epoch had gone astray on a certain point, another manuscript had preserved it. On the one hand, there was sufficient uniformity for the preservation of a primitive unity, while on the other hand there were sufficient variances to show that certain melodies, by accidental details, were distinct from the common foundation. However, by adhering to the fundamental law proposed by Dom Guéranger, it was possible to arrive at a choice among the melodies, and to select with a degree of assurance those which identified themselves with their original source.<sup>3</sup>

When one considers that in the original manuscripts there were often graphic variants to express the same thing, and that neums were sometimes written above one another instead of in a line, arranged without order, with compositions placed even in the margins, one can picture to himself, to a certain extent, the difficulties which confronted the archeologists who labored so perseveringly to restore

<sup>1</sup> *Rassegna Gregoriana*, July 1906. *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X.   <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I.   <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. II.

the ancient Chant to its primitive integrity. The patience necessary to have achieved such a result was, however, ultimately rewarded by the certain infallible authority whereof Dom Mocquereau speaks, with which it was possible, after this tremendous labor, to distinguish in a manuscript all alterations that had crept into Liturgical Chant during the centuries of its existence.<sup>1</sup> The material from this research work was used for the 1895 revision of the already existent *Liber Gradualis* of 1883.

Leo XIII accorded official recognition to the labors of the Benedictines in his brief *Nos quidem* to Abbot Delatte, of Solesmes; but the new era of Plainchant was actually inaugurated by Pius X in his Encyclical *Motu Proprio*, of which we are already informed, promulgated on the Feast of St. Cecilia, November 22, 1903, in which he ordered a return to traditional melody. This is the most important decree that Rome has ever published on the question of Church music. It is what Pius X himself termed the "lawbook of Church music." It is called *Motu Proprio* because it was issued directly by the Pope himself, and not through any assembled authority such as the Sacred Congregation of Rites.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Wagner, as a most active collaborator in the editing of the reformed books of the Vatican Edition, tells us with personal knowledge that Pius X was especially qualified for drawing up laws pertaining to this art, because of his natural talent and experience in the field of Church music. As Bishop of Mantua, Giuseppe Sarto took personal charge of the singing lessons in his seminary. Music which he himself copied for his seminarians is reverently preserved. As Patriarch of Venice, he presented in 1894 to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, of which he was a member, a complete document on Church music. On May 1st of the following year he published a Pastoral letter on the same subject to his clergy. With great clarity and with extraordinary professional knowledge he gave detailed advice for bringing about a reform in liturgical music. This Pastoral letter, so states Dr. Wagner, is an introduction to the *Motu Proprio*

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. II. <sup>2</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. VII.

and should be included in the interpretation of the latter. Many sentences of his later Papal decree are taken literally from this document. It is apparent then that long before coming to the Pontifical throne the author of the *Motu Proprio* revealed his ability as a judge and critic of Church music. One must return to some of the Popes of the "golden age" of Plainchant to find a parallel instance of knowledge and personal activity in this musical tradition of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

The Decree *Urbis et Orbis* of the *Motu Proprio*, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on Jan. 8, 1904, pronounced the Papal document binding on the universal Church (*tanquam codici juridico musicae sacrae vim legis pro universa Ecclesia habere voluit*) and this ecclesiastical body added its own support with the following words: *ab omnibus accipiatur Ecclesiis sanctissimeque servetur.*<sup>2</sup>

In the same year Pius X established a Papal Commission to prepare a new Official Edition, and appointed the monks of Solesmes to be the editors. In 1907 was issued the *Graduale* of the Vatican Edition (*Editio Vaticana*), in the preparation of which the monks used the more abundant material made available through their years of research since the time of their last revision. The new *Graduale* was declared to be authentic and typical on August 7, 1907, by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and a decree of April 8, 1908, makes the *Editio Vaticana* obligatory upon the whole Church; its "free rhythm" is likewise binding on all.<sup>3</sup> The preface to the *Graduale* furnishes certain instructions for the proper interpretation of the rhythm. Succeeding years have witnessed the publication of the remaining liturgical chant books.

On December 20, 1928, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the promulgation of the *Motu Proprio*, and the ninth centenary of the call of Guido by Pope John XIX to Rome, Pius XI issued the Apostolic Constitution *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem*, dealing with the Liturgy as well as with Gregorian Chant and all other Sacred Music, and reenforcing the decrees of the *Motu Proprio*. In this Constitution he ordains that instruction in liturgical music shall commence

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Letter of Cardinal Martinelli, Ref., New School of Greg. Chant, Part II, Ch. I.*

with the earliest years of schooling and be continued in higher schools, seminaries and other houses of study.<sup>1</sup> Lessons and training are to be given daily if possible, and the Pontiff further asserts: "To accomplish all these things, for which We hope, there is great need of a large number of skilled masters. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

"Surely We are well aware of the zeal and labor demanded by all these matters which We have just ordained. Yet who does not know how many and what very artistically accomplished works our ancestors, undeterred by difficulties, have handed down to us, because they were imbued with the zeal of piety and the spirit of the liturgy? And it is not to be wondered at, for whatever proceeds from the interior life which the Church lives, transcends the most perfect things of this world. Let the difficulties of this most holy undertaking stir and rouse, and in no wise weaken, the spirits of the Bishops of the Church, all of whom by harmoniously and constantly obeying Our wish will accomplish a work for the Supreme Bishop, most worthy of their episcopal office."

Besides the Pontifical School in Rome, many localities of Europe have contributed in an excellent manner to the steady trend of the liturgy and chant of the Church back to their inspired source of tradition. To Solesmes, Beuron, Paris, Fribourg (Switzerland) and many other centers students have flocked from all over the world to profit from the instruction offered in these various places; for the Church, in its universality, cannot give exclusive recognition to a certain geographical location, to a particular nation or to an exclusive school in the propagation of her doctrines. The only essential is that all be founded on the same principles, which proceed from a common origin but are expressed by the Church universally.

Dr. Wagner reflects that the home of Gregorian Chant is "wherever there are Roman Catholics. It is the musical symbol of the unity of the Church in ancient and modern times."<sup>3</sup> He goes on to remark that when one attends a Christmas Mass in Germany, the same *Puer natus est nobis* he hears there, starts the High

<sup>1</sup> Pars. I and II. <sup>2</sup> Ibid., Par. XI. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X.

Mass in the churches of Italy, Austria, France, Africa, Asia, America and Australia. Only with Plainchant, not with polyphony or part music, is there unity for all. The interpretation of part music differs in each country, since no official interpretation exists for this type of Church music, nor ever will. Gregorian Chant symbolizes the catholic nature of the Church no less than the liturgical dress and the language. The same historian tells us of a Mass in Rome, April 11, 1904, which will never be forgotten by those who participated. At this Celebration of the Holy Sacrifice representatives of different nations in all parts of the world gathered together to pay homage to the Vicar of Christ, the legislator of Church song, thereby giving visible evidence of the universal character of Gregorian Chant.<sup>1</sup>

So, now that we have found that which was lost, let us proceed to study the factors which contribute to, as well as the elements comprised in, the composition of this treasure of the Church we call Gregorian Chant.

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X







## CHAPTER II

### NOTATION AND THE MODES

*Notation is the canal of tradition.*

Dom Mocquereau.

Even as the word preceded writing, so did the melody precede notation. Musical notation serves to represent graphically the language of sounds in the same way that writing represents the language of words. The identical origins of these two manifestations, the word and the melody, are evident in comparing the evolutions of both, and this identity extends even to the realm of the rhythm and form of each, as we shall later see.

Vincent d'Indy exposes in his *Cours*, M. Pierre Aubry's interesting comparisons of the evolutions of graphic forms in the domain of the word and melody. The most ancient documents of human writing tend to show that it consisted at first of systems of crude designs representing creatures and objects or symbolizing by these drawings the abstract ideas attached to them. This first or *ideographic* stage was succeeded gradually by a more precise system, in which the graphic signs represented the ideas or the symbols, or again the articulations themselves of the words by which the pictured creature or object was designated. In this new or *phonetic* phase, writing consisted of a sort of *rebus* in which the same scheme could have several acceptations, and wherein the idea was evoked only with the aid of a group of different articulations or syllables. Such forms of writing still exist today in the Orient, and are called *syllabic*.

By reason of the greater complexity either in the ideas to be represented or in the interpretation of the characters, the phonetic syllables underwent a veritable disaggregation, and each syllabic sign was reduced to its constituent elements. Thus came into being

the *alphabetic* system of letters, which, following the order in which they are grouped, serve to represent different articulations or syllables. This is our contemporary Occidental system, based on alphabetic characters of which the number tends to diminish and the form to become more and more unified.

Everything points to the fact that musical notation must have passed through identical phases. In its first or *ideographic* state, the melodic course must have been represented by a graphic line of which the sinuosity figured the inflections of the voice, or if not, the undulations of the musical gesture, for at the beginning simultaneous movements of the human body accompanied collective song. The first *neums* (Gr. *neuma*, nod, or sign) resulted most likely from the progressive breaking up of this ideographic line into veritable *musical syllables*, designed to be sung with a single emission of the voice. Little by little, the spirit of analysis, applied to this instinctive and traditional mode of notation, erected an actual system, based on the ascending and descending movements of the voice or of the gesture, that is, on the acute and grave accents. The last transformation was the division of these neums into distinct *notes*, in the same way that the letters of the alphabet had come about. This was effected by means of the diastematic system, in which the neums were localized on horizontal lines, determining their relative intonation through relation to a fixed tone.

Our musical notation is, then, like our writing, the logical result of natural and progressive evolutions common to all graphic representations of human thought. Our alphabetic system of notes proceeded from a syllabic system of neums, which themselves evolved out of a primitive ideographic system of which there remain but few documents.<sup>1</sup>

The human spirit seems to have an innate tendency to represent tones as contained in a straight line, and it is from this natural phenomenon that in ancient as well as in modern language one finds such expressions as "scale," "degree," "interval," from high to low

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III.

or vice versa, all of these existing through a relation not of quantity or quality, but of space, for which designation letters or gestures have been used from the beginning of the manifestation of music.<sup>1</sup>

The division of the monochord (Gr. *monos*, single + *chorde*, string), a single vibrating string, is traced back to Pythagoras (VI century B. C.). The "Perfect Unmodulating System," as well as that of Greek notation by letters of the alphabet, passed through Greco-Latin music into the music of the Middle Ages, and it was comparatively late before Latin letters were substituted for Greek ones. This unmodulating musical system, created through the conjunction of tetrachords (Gr. *tettares*, four, + *chorde*, string), consisted of a pair of octaves corresponding, so far as notes went, with the modern minor scale without accidentals, but with the possibility that the note above the middle note of the series, the *Mese* or "note of means" [what we now call *la*, without pretending that it was exactly our modern diapason], could be flatted by a semitone.<sup>2</sup> Some theorists used the letters from A to P inclusive, B $\flat$  having its own letter, with a note superior to P which was not lettered. Other theorists employed the letters from A to G inclusive. The "note of means," or medium note, was fixed arbitrarily as a point of departure accessible to all of the voices, consequently placed within the common vocal range. The letters of the alphabet served to represent the melodic intervals above and below this fixed point. When using but seven letters, the octave below the *Mese* was represented by capital letters from A to G inclusive, the octave above by the small letters from *a* to *g* inclusive, the double octave above, added later, by *aa-gg* inclusive. We shall explain the two different forms used for the letter B a little further on in this chapter. To this ensemble permitting three octaves one added posteriorly below the lowest note, A, an inferior note, to which Guido gave the name "modern," although it had already been in use for many centuries. This note, which was common to both forms of lettering, was designated by the Greek letter  $\Gamma$ , called *gamma*, from which the French word *gamme* (scale) and the English *gamut* are derived, just as

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I. <sup>2</sup> Rt. Rev. W. H. Frere, *Monochord*, *Grove's Dict.*

the ordinary series of letters was called *alphabet* from the first two Greek letters, *alpha* and *beta*.<sup>1</sup>

The Greeks had a system of perfect concordance in the extremes of their tetrachords, in the extremes of a fifth below, and in the extremes of an octave below and of one above; thirds and sixths were discords for the Greek ear.<sup>2</sup> The Church used for the construction of her modal scales the ancient Greek tetrachords, the intervals of whose intermediary notes comprised two whole steps and one-half step in diatonic order, but did not take the enharmonic or chromatic arrangement of the intermediary notes of the tetrachords, which the Greeks used for the sake of variety in default of a fixed tonality. Certain variants between the Greek and the Ecclesiastical Modes must, however, be mentioned, in that the former started on E, moving downwards, while those of the Church (ultimately established by medieval theorists) are thought upwards, starting on D.

Among the Greeks, groups of notes were distinguished from one another by pitch and grouping, and designated by tribal names, which names the Church adopted, as well, and applied in her own modal system, which is comparatively indifferent to pitch, but identified rather with a musical character called *tonality*.

Each of the Church Modes, eight in number, is composed of two adjoining tetrachords, and has a determined tonality by reason of the range of the notes in their sequence of steps and half-steps, as well as in their relation to two fixed points—the Dominant and the Final.<sup>3</sup>

A Gregorian melody moves in any one of these eight Modes, which are the Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian and Mixolydian, called the Authentic Modes, and the four Plagal Modes, which retain the name of the Authentic from which each is derived but prefix it with "Hypo." The fundamental tone of each Authentic Mode (the Tonic), is the same in its Plagal or Hypo Mode, but the Dominant of each in the same case is different. The ordinary Gregorian Chant melody, with few exceptions, ends, in its whole as in many of its

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Chap. III. <sup>2</sup> Ref., *Grove's Dict., Greek Music*. <sup>3</sup> Ref., *Ibid, Modes, Ecclesiastical*.

parts, on the fundamental tone of its Mode—called the Final. The Dominant of the Mode is of great importance in the course of the melody.

We are told by Dom Pothier that the number of Modes as scholasticism has classified them is not clearly defined in the old manuscripts. The laws of unity which obliged a composition to stay within the compass of a determined Mode were too broad at the origin, and were only imposed with classical rigor in the course of the centuries. The antiphons of the Ambrosian Psalter scarcely exceed the interval of a fifth; that is why the Authentic and the Plagal, in this case, constitute but one Mode; and it is probably this circumstance which is responsible for the impression that St. Ambrose invented the four Authentic Modes to which St. Gregory added the Plagal. The Orientals, who also have Authentic and Plagal Modes in their music, attribute the first group to David and the second to Solomon.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE OF GREGORIAN MODES<sup>2</sup>

No.	Name	Character	Final	Dominant
I.	Dorian	Authentic	D	A
II.	Hypodorian	Plagal		F
III.	Phrygian	Authentic	E	C
IV.	Hypophrygian	Plagal		A
V.	Lydian	Authentic	F	C
VI.	Hypolydian	Plagal		A
VII.	Mixolydian	Authentic	G	D
VIII.	Hypomixolydian	Plagal		C

Guido writes that a good song makes its cadenzas on the final tone, and that this tone, often repeated, impresses itself distinctly on the mind. He continues: "Therefore the other tones shall be placed in relation to the tonic, so that they seem to draw from it, in a wonderful way, a certain color, which is recognized only by educated singers."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Les. Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI. <sup>2</sup> *Gram. of Plsg.*, p. 41. <sup>3</sup> *Guidonis Micrologus*, Hermesdorff, Ch. XI.

Simple psalmody has its own particular melodic formulas, known as the Eight Psalm Tones. The melodic formula of each Tone consists of an Intonation, Dominant, Mediant cadence, return to the Dominant, and Final cadence. Each of these Tones corresponds to one of the Eight Modes. All of them have a fixed formula at the mediant,<sup>1</sup> but the I, III, IV, VII and VIII Tones have several final formulas, varying in number, selected to correspond to the Antiphon attached to the Psalm. The II, V and VI Tones have but one ending. The Peregrinus (L. *peregrinus* or strange) Tone is irregular. It is used for the fifth Psalm of the Sunday Vespers and for certain Antiphons which have had a special psalmody for about 800 years.<sup>2</sup>

What is left at the present time of alphabetic notation is found almost exclusively in didactic books.

The Greek system of notation by alphabetical letters seems to have gradually dropped out of use in the Occident between A.D. 200 and 500.<sup>3</sup> The notation of Boethius (475-524) was in reality a means of referring to his diagram of tetrachords by letters of the alphabet, these having no connection with the musical scale.<sup>4</sup>

Two musical treatises of the XI century, *Musica Enchiriadis*, which was for a long time attributed to Hucbald (d. 930), Flemish monk, and *Opuscula musica* by Hermann Contract (d. 1054), monk of Reichenau (who owes the name by which he is known to the fact that he was paralyzed—*contractus*), describe the notation called Dasia. This notation, ascribed to Hucbald, consisted of the use of four signs (not unlike letters) for determining each of the notes of a scale of eighteen notes, the first sixteen of which were divided into four tetrachords. For the sake of beginners, the system was used in combination with horizontal lines, with the letters T (*tonus*) and S (*semitonus*) at the left extremity of the lines. The words of the text were written between the lines.<sup>5</sup>

Hermann Contract also used letters, but with the thought of determining the melodic intervals rather than the degrees of the scale. His letters were the following: *e* (*equaliter*); *s* (*semitonus*);

<sup>1</sup> Tone VI has, since the XVI century, made general use of two mediant formulas.

<sup>2</sup> Ref., Johner, *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. III. <sup>3</sup> Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Notation, Grove's Dict.* <sup>4</sup> Ref., *Ibid.* <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

*t* (*tonus*); *ts* (*tonus et semitonus*); *tt* or  $\delta$  (*ditonus*); *d* (*diatessaron*, the fourth);  $\Delta$  (*diapente*, the fifth).<sup>1</sup>

The endeavors of these two men to arrive at a conventional diastematic notation undoubtedly paved the way for Guido, who perfected the system.

The *Antiphonale* of Blessed Hartker (X century), Codices 390 and 391 of St. Gall, employs letters placed in the margins of the manuscripts as a means of indicating modal differentiations.<sup>2</sup> St. Odo of Cluny (d. 942) seems to have applied the alphabetic system with success to an entire Antiphonary, but unfortunately nothing is left of his work.<sup>3</sup>

Outside of certain rare fragments of music and some special Offices, there is to be found in all of the public and private collections but one manuscript of Chant with alphabetic notation—the famous manuscript of Montpellier (XI century), Codex H. 159 of the Library of the Ecole de Médecine. This manuscript was discovered about 1847 by M. Danjou, director of the *Revue de la musique religieuse*, in the bookcases of this library. The same gentleman presumes that it was written at the commencement of the IX century, either by one of the envoys whom Charlemagne had sent to Rome to study, or by one of the chanters whom Pope Adrian had sent to France, who, in either case, had before his eyes a copy of St. Gregory's original Antiphonary. This was still to be seen at St. John of the Lateran even as late as the X century.<sup>4</sup>

The Montpellier document is written in *campo aperto*. Even in this manuscript a neum notation is placed above the letters, for which reason it is called the *codex bilinguis*. Moreover, the pieces of the Chant are not arranged in the order of the Offices, but according to the Modes, which places this collection under the heading of a *Tonale* or teaching book for musicians, not a choir or chapel book. Thus, the Montpellier manuscript differs from the St. Gall Antiphonary. In it all types of pieces are placed together—Introits, Communions, etc. The tonalities of these are precise, but many pieces are missing.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>3</sup> *Les. Mél. Grég.*, Ch. III.

<sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vols. VII and VIII. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

Among the letters used in this manuscript to help determine the intonation of the neums is found a supplementary sign (┆—), consisting of two lines, diversely placed against one another according to the note for which the sign substitutes at places where a half-tone exists. The quarter-tone, the *diesis*, for which this episema (Gr. *episema*, mark or sign) is sometimes deciphered, was, according to Dom Pothier, probably particular only to the discourse of the ancients; for, he asserts, their delicate appreciation of tones and sense of euphony might well have designated by a quarter-tone in music that which corresponded at its origin to the ordinary music of discourse. Even in the most precise melodies one can find passages which seem to approach vaguely the tone of simple speech, passages where one recognizes the quarter-tone of the spoken word without the song ceasing to belong to a really diatonic order.<sup>1</sup> Another authority maintains, however, that this episema does denote a quarter-tone.<sup>2</sup>

Gregorian Chant was at first entrusted to the memory of the singers and to tradition by oral training. Neums were used merely for recalling to the memory that which was already known, just as Hebrew mnemonic signs suffice for the cantor.<sup>3</sup> Neums were, however, insufficient at their origin for transmitting integrally an unknown melody.

It took years for the early medieval chanter, by work and perseverance, to know the Antiphonary. To assist his memory he used *timbres* (fixed melodies). Guido, in describing these, points out the fact that there are eight Modes as there are eight parts of speech and eight Beatitudes, and that each Mode has its special nuances. In order to distinguish the Modes, eight Tone phrases were composed, each one with special characteristics of a particular Mode. These familiar melodies were compared with the unknown melody to reveal the Mode of the latter. These model melodic types were fitted to words from Holy Scripture, and had long tonal formulas of Byzantine style. They were employed by the chanters merely as prototypes for practice work, and not for liturgical use, and are found in

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> J. Gmelchs, *Die Viertelstonstufen im Messtonale von Montpellier*, Ref., *New School of Greg. Chant*, Ch. II, Part 2. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. III.





the *Tonale* of St. Bernard.<sup>1</sup> In his naive style, Guido speaks of the "strongly different physiognomy" of each of the Modes, which makes it possible for the diligent and practiced musicians to recognize them immediately, just as an ethnologist who scrutinizes many persons who stand before him can say: "This one is a Greek, that one a Spaniard, this one a Latin, that one a Teuton, and that one a Gaul." It is because of the particular characteristics in each of the Modes, he says, that one derives such pleasure from choosing his favorites.<sup>2</sup>

The chanter knew his neum language, as well, through practice, just as a reader recognizes the meaning of a word through habit, says John Cotton.<sup>3</sup> In the ancient manuscripts it was not necessary to repeat the signs in similar circumstances: they entered into the "temperament" of the chanter. Dom Mocquereau makes the interesting reflection that *we* start with the neums to find the Chant, as a linguist starts from the *word* to arrive at the idea. But one who possesses a language starts with the *idea* to arrive at the word; each idea finds its special word without troubling the other words. It was the same with the neumists: they started with the melody preserved in their ear to interpret neums, and sang the proper intervals regardless of notation.<sup>4</sup>

Three different types of neums are found in the liturgical manuscripts anterior to Guido: 1) Those derived from diversely combined grammatical accents of the spoken word—*chironomic* notation. 2) Those composed of dots grouped by superposition or by conjunction—*dot* or Aquitanian notation. 3) Those formed by a combination of the two aforementioned types—*mixed* notation.<sup>5</sup>

1) The rhetorical accents, according to Gevaert, seem to have originated in Byzantium. He supposes that they were first used in connection with the melodies of the Church about the year 680.<sup>6</sup> Dom Pothier says that Romanus brought with him from Rome books with neum notation.<sup>7</sup> Dom Mocquereau thinks that St. Ambrose may have used neum notation, but that St. Gregory certainly did.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XLV. <sup>3</sup> Gerbert *Scriptores*, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>6</sup> Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Notation*, *Grove's Dict.* <sup>7</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VI. <sup>8</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I.

Among the neums of the epoch which produced the more analytic type of graphic neum were still found many complicated signs ( , , etc.) in which one could see a fragment of the long sinuous line already spoken of in this chapter.<sup>1</sup> The *rhetorical* neum finds its origin in the graphic tracing of the movement of the hand corresponding to the tonic accent of the word, i.e., the rise of the speaker's voice—the *ad cantum*—followed by the natural drop of the voice with its corresponding hand movement. “Accents are gestures,” says Quintilian. The fundamental and primitive signs of Latin rhetorical neum notation were, then, nothing other than the grammatical accents used from the time of Greco-Roman rhetoric to indicate the different inflections of the voice in discourse. The corresponding hand motion with the rise of the speaker's voice represented graphically from below to above produced a simple acute accent sign ( / ); for the drop of the voice with the corresponding descending movement of the hand, a reverse stroke, somewhat shorter ( \ ), was traced.<sup>2</sup> In musical notation the first sign was called a *virga*, the second a *punctum*. From the design of these two grammatical accents in multiple combinations of two and three, a veritable system of neum and rhythmic notation sprang up. Neums are voice undulations, and their notation is a practical system for conveying to the mind the multiplicity of modulations of the voice which sings.

The *Antiphonale Missarum Sancti Gregorii* (X century), Codex 339 of the Library of St. Gall, is probably the most ancient example of neum notation of combined accents. Its identity with manuscripts of Ambrosian Chant is not contested.<sup>3</sup> The manuscripts of the school of St. Gall, including those of Blessed Hartker and of Einsiedeln, are the most perfect and intelligible rhythmic documents.<sup>4</sup> The manuscripts of Metz, Como, Laon and Milan are next, but in these a decline is already apparent, the copyists having largely abandoned the rhythmic signs. Despite this, the rhythmic concordance between the schools of St. Gall and Metz is astonishing, “peremptory proof that one *single rhythm* determined down to its

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 40. <sup>2</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. IX.

finest details but imperfectly figured, was imposed on the entire Catholic world from its origin.<sup>1</sup>

The *Antiphonale Missarum Sancti Gregorii* (IX and X centuries), Codex 239 of the Library of Laon, shows an attempt at diastema. This manuscript is the most faithful of the Metz school.<sup>2</sup> The *Antiphonale Missarum Sancti Gregorii* (X century), Codex 47 of the Library of Chartres, shows a greater perfection in diastematic notation, the scribe having benefited from the progress made in this field.<sup>3</sup> The manuscripts of the three schools, St. Gall, Laon and Chartres form what Dom Mocquereau calls a "funiculus triplex."<sup>4</sup> Each notation has its "regional dress," but it is evident from their uniform rhythm that all have emanated from Rome.

2) In dot notation a combination of dots was used, the arrangement of which directed the movement of the voice from above to below or vice versa, and depicted approximately, as well, the intervals between the sounds ( ∴ ).<sup>5</sup>

The *Graduale* of St. Yriex (XI century), Codex 903 of the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, is an example of dot or Aquitanian notation, which was used exclusively in southern France and northern Spain, as well as in some isolated German churches. This manuscript contains an almost perfect punctuation of notes written in detached groups. It is not a rhythmic notation in the sense of that of the manuscripts of the St. Gall and Metz schools, but it manifests a "rhythmic intention." It has the advantage of a more developed diastema, achieved by means of a monoline of a particular scale degree, the distances of the dots from this line, i. e. their intervals, being governed by their pitch. This system was anterior to the Guidonian. Dot neum notation is a more constrained one than that composed of accents.<sup>6</sup>

3) Both accents and dots are found in all manuscripts, but each is preponderant in certain ones. There is no brusque transition from one type of notation to the other. The two systems of accents and dots arrived at the same end by different routes. Emanating from opposite principles but in reality tending toward the same

<sup>1</sup> Mocquereau, *Le Nombre Musical Grégorien*, 1908. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XI. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>5</sup> *Les Mél. Greg.*, Ch. II. <sup>6</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII.

goal, which is to indicate the groups of sounds, they finish by meeting, by penetrating one another, by identifying one another, at least partially. Certain signs, either by coincidence or through mutual borrowing, became common to both systems; at least this is the case in certain manuscripts, while others remain faithful to the tradition proper to each.<sup>1</sup> The Metz and Chartres manuscripts contain a mixture of chironomic and dot notation.<sup>2</sup>

Considering the lack of musical precision of early neum notation in the face of a melody of free rhythm, it was naturally imperative that Romanus at St. Gall, as well as other instructors, aid their pupils with intensive oral instruction. In order to assist them to retain this knowledge, Romanus had recourse to certain particular indications supplementing neums. The letters called "Romanian" were not necessarily an invention of Romanus, for their use was almost universal in the Middle Ages, although St. Gall used them in the greatest abundance.<sup>3</sup> They were called letters of signification by Blessed Notker Balbulus (the stammerer, d. 912), monk of St. Gall, who explained them in a letter written to a friend. This is accredited by a chronicler of St. Gall, as well as by a biographer of Notker. The latter received lessons either from Romanus himself or from his immediate pupils, and he must have sung from neum manuscripts richly annotated with supplementary signs.<sup>4</sup>

The reason for existence of the Romanian letters and signs lies in the imperfection of primordial chironomic notation, which does not indicate the intonation with precision or convey all the information regarding rhythm and expression which the musician of today finds in a notation arrived at full development. These letters and signs confirm the rules of execution taught by oral tradition.

The letters may be classified according to: 1) Intonation: *a*, *altius*—*l*, *levatur*—*s*, *sursum*, warned the voice to ascend; *d*, *deprimatur*—*i*, *iusum*, warned the voice to descend. 2) Intensity, or the nature of the tone: *f*, *frende*—*k*, *klinge*—*g*, a guttural sound

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. IV. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV.

—*h*, an aspiration—*r*, a crisp tone—*o*, a certain emphasis. 3) Rhythm (affecting a note or a formula): *c*, *celeriter*, *citius*—*t*, *tene*—*p*, *preme* (a holding of the voice)—*x*, *expecta* (*ritardando*, a certain pause). Any of the letters in these three groups could be modified by the addition of *b*, *bene*—*v*, *valde*—*m*, *mediocriter*.<sup>1</sup>

The manuscripts of St. Gall were considered as a notation without diastema, and for that reason the St. Gall copyists came to the aid of the singers with letters of signification to a greater extent than in other schools. Both the St. Gall and Metz schools made abundant use of rhythmic markings. The *Antiphonale Missarum* (X and XI centuries), Codex 121 of Einsiedeln, is the most perfect specimen for Romanian letters; it is also liturgically a very pure type.<sup>2</sup>

Besides letters the ancient manuscripts, especially those of St. Gall and Metz, made use of signs or episemas consisting of lines and dots. These signs were really the "inventors" of the letters,<sup>3</sup> and were, like them, used as interpretive markings to warn the singer against possible error and to help him arrive at an artistic execution. Sometimes they surmounted the neum; at other times they were incorporated into the neum itself by prolonging it, thereby modifying its shape. The episema might clearly double the note which it affected; it might lengthen without doubling, or it might signify a stress without a retard. These indications are, therefore, "supple, diversified, mobile."<sup>4</sup>

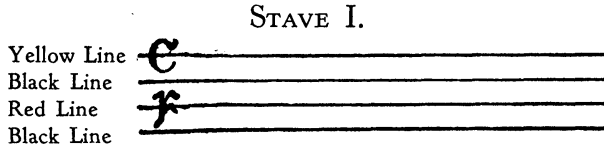
Dom Mocquereau says that if one searched for the origin of the episema, he might find it in the horizontal sign which the ancients used to mark the long syllables. Dom Schubiger believes that the episema is an abbreviation of the letter *t*; we are told that it is certain that one is very often used for the other.<sup>5</sup>

To the famous Benedictine monk Guido of Arezzo (d. circa 1050) is attributed the honor of having brought to perfection that which his predecessors had but imperfectly accomplished. He fixed the diastema, or proper interval of the neum, by means of four lines, which for many centuries constituted the musical stave. F, C, a, G and b had already been used as clefs for direction lines. Start-

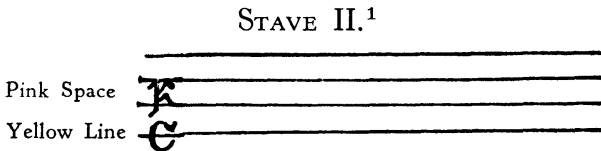
<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VI. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VI.

<sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV.

ing with the first direction line, that corresponding to the letter F, Guido drew this in red, that it might be readily distinguished; then yellow was used above it for the line of C. The remaining two lines were drawn in black above and below F:



If the melody was high, an inverse relation of C and F was sometimes used, in which F occupied a space of a lightly tinted pink shade:



Guido put his method into practice by noting an entire Antiphonary, which he offered to Pope John XIX by whom he was called to Rome.<sup>2</sup> The Pontiff was amazed and delighted at the facility with which he himself could read at sight the melodies transcribed on the stave.<sup>3</sup>

The use of the four lines arranged in this manner, which facilitated so singularly the reading of the neums, did not at first cause an alteration in the form of the latter. This system was quickly adopted in Italy, and the present Roman documents contain the Guidonian notation of the XI and XII centuries. France and Germany, but not St. Gall, likewise adopted this new, sure and convenient notation.<sup>4</sup> So clear was this method, that for many copyists the colored line alone sufficed, without the additional clef letter at the margin. The Oriental liturgical books have, nevertheless, retained the pre-Guidonian system of notation even to the present time.<sup>5</sup>

There are unfortunately no documents extant which have been

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 35. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. V. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IX. <sup>5</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. III.

noted by Guido himself, but some still exist which were redacted within the limits of his sphere of action, manuscripts from monasteries which had received the fruits of his teachings. These specimens present a tradition as pure as if he had accomplished the work himself.<sup>1</sup>

The Monastic *Antiphonale* (XII century) of the Chapter-house Library of Lucca, Codex 601, is a most perfect Guidonian type. It contains a clear and regular notation, including beautiful initial letters of simple type, with few Gothic ornaments.<sup>2</sup> The Monastic *Antiphonale* (XIII century) of the Library of the Cathedral of Worcester, Codex F-160, presents another example of beautiful Guidonian notation.<sup>3</sup>

According to the type of pen used by the copyists, as well as the manner in which it was held, the neums were accorded different shapes. In France, Italy and Germany the copyists used a broad-pointed pen, but in the latter country it was poised obliquely, while in the two former countries it was used in a vertical position. This difference of procedure accounts for the so-called Gothic notation, particular to Germany, while the neums of the Italian and French manuscripts of the same period (XI, XII and XIII centuries), portray a greater suppleness, with heavy horizontal lines, but finer vertical ones. The clefs, as well, had particular characteristic forms in Latin and Gothic notations.<sup>4</sup>

Little by little the neums transcribed on the stave adapted themselves and assumed precise forms. From the XII and XIII centuries on their extremities expanded; the body of the neums became thinner, and by an ingenious combination with dot notation their form developed into the beautiful square notation of the XV century,<sup>5</sup> that used in the present day books of Plainchant.

For another important musical innovation, as well, we are indebted to Guido's perspicacity. In his time the notes of the scale were designated by T A B C D E F G;<sup>6</sup> "for," said Guido, "just as after the course of seven days we start again from the same beginning, so that on the first and eighth days we always have the

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IX. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XII. <sup>4</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. V. <sup>5</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III.

<sup>6</sup> *Ref.*, p. 41.

same name, so do we name the first and eighth tones with the same letter, because we feel that in natural harmony they agree in one tone.<sup>1</sup>

In answer to a friend who asked him for a means of retaining the intonation represented by each of these letters, Guido observed that each melodic division of the first strophe of the Hymn *Ut queant laxis* of the Second Vespers of St. John the Baptist commences with one of the first six notes of a scale in their normal order. Adapting these syllables as names to the given notes, he obtained the denominations which have been used for them ever since. The syllable *Si*, borrowed from the first initials of *Sancte Ioannes*, was not given to the note B, the changeable note, until toward the XVI century:

UT que-ant la-xis RE-soná-re fibris Mlra gestó-rum FA-muli tu-ó-rum  
C D E F

2

SOLve pollú-ti LABi-i re-á-tum Sancte Io-ánnes.  
G A

The syllable *Do* was used in Italy and England in sol-faing instead of *Ut*.<sup>3</sup> It is mentioned in a treatise of 1673.<sup>4</sup>

Guido built his scale in Hexachords, or six-note sections. The intervals of each Hexachord were the same, but as they overlapped, *B $\flat$*  was necessary to the system, not as a chromatic but as an alternative note.

Thus, the third Hexachord introduced a *B $\flat$*  in no way contradictory to the *B $\natural$*  of the other Hexachords, but merely proper to its own. As already stated,<sup>5</sup> two different forms of the letter B were used to distinguish these notes in alphabetic notation: the round or Roman b (*mollis*) for the flat, the square or Gothic *h* (*quadratus*) for the natural. This differentiation has provided mod-

<sup>1</sup> *Michol.*, Ch. V. <sup>2</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>3</sup> *Grove's Dict.*, *Do*. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, *Ibid.* <sup>5</sup> *Ref.*, p. 41.



ern notation with the signs  $\flat$  and  $\natural$ . The Germans made of this  $\natural$  the H by which they have ever since designated the tonality of B natural. It must be borne in mind that in the Guidonian system these signs had a sense of interchanging only as the alteration of a note, not a chromatic signification. They opened the way, however, for the later chromatic system of alteration of pitch used in modern music; they gave birth to our system of accidentals—what Vincent d'Indy calls "the veritable plague of our contemporary notation."<sup>1</sup>

The rudimentary method in Plainchant of merely repeating the same note in order to lengthen it was insufficient to express the relative duration of sound which had made itself felt with the advent of *Ars mensurabilis* in the XII century. The development of Organum demanded for the perfect ensemble of the voices that a relative duration be determined for each note, and as the voice parts multiplied, a proportional notation was invented by the theorists.

The three oldest mensural divisions were the Moods, Time and Prolation.<sup>2</sup> Ternary measure (*tempus perfectum*), image of the Holy Trinity, was represented by a circle (O), which, according to the philosophers, was a symbol of perfection. The semi-circle (C) was used for binary measure (*tempus imperfectum*). This latter sign has subsisted in modern music with an equivalent signification (C, 4 beat measure).<sup>3</sup>

The coexistence of neum and proportional notation persisted during many centuries, and became one of the chief causes of the faulty interpretations of the musical documents in our own epoch. Father Decheverens, S.J. (d. 1912), after assiduous study of manuscripts, founded, about 1861, a mensuralistic System of Chant, assigning different time values to the signs of the neums and publishing a great number of chant melodies in definite measured rhythm.<sup>4</sup>

We have seen that color was used in the development of the stave. The same significant use of color was essayed in defining the value of notes after the advent of proportional notation. At

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, *Grove's Dict.*, *Notation*. <sup>3</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>4</sup> *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. I.

first all notes were filled with ink, normally black or red, to show the difference in value when binary and ternary measure were mixed in the same piece. When the copyists did not have red ink on hand, they merely drew the note without filling it; out of this practice evolved the use of the black and white notes of modern notation, their form being the result of the final division of neum syllables into the present musical alphabet. This final evolution came about toward the XVII century, and, with the addition of the measure bar, relegated neum notation farther and farther into the background.

Many contradictory rules and exceptions are found in the theories of the authors of *Musica mensurata*, where, according to Dom Pothier, they themselves became confused and sometimes forgot their own principles. Especially is this evident in places where they passed, without their perceiving it, from the abstract to the concrete or from the concrete to the abstract. "Therein lies a stumbling block, moreover," he reflects, "which theologians themselves have not always known how to avoid in scientific and philosophical theories; we should not be astonished if the musicians more than once struck a snag at that place."<sup>1</sup>

The present revised editions of Plainchant in square note and stave notation use signs not found in the older manuscripts, since the rhythm of the ancient melody must be presented today according to certain developments of notation which have a signification for the present epoch, while, at the same time, translating the spirit of the ancient Chant. In the old manuscripts the same nuances or durations still employed, were indicated by different signs according to the form of the neum.<sup>2</sup> Neither typography nor practicality would warrant the ancient neum manuscripts being reproduced in their original forms in our present day Chant books, whose uniformity of notation is one of our greatest assets for arriving at a universal understanding of Gregorian Chant. At the same time, the melody as well as its rhythm have been preserved in their original integrity in these editions by a retention of the "sense itself" of the ancient

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 51.

signs.<sup>1</sup> It is a matter of making the past compatible with the needs of the present.

The bar sign in music is comparatively modern, like the accent mark of words. The bars of different length in the present Chant editions mark the rhythmic divisions in the flow of the melody. The Solesmes editions use episematic supplements as well, but unlike those in the St. Gall notation, where the line is incorporated into the neum or used as an adjunction, the lines here are detached. The dot which is used in certain neum notations to double a note is used for the same purpose in the Solesmes editions; the dots indicate the white spaces of the Vatican Edition sufficiently to correspond to them; at the same time, one is advised to give only a minimum value to these spaces.<sup>2</sup> The Solesmes editions employ, as well, a vertical episema to mark binary and ternary rhythmic divisions of a secondary nature. This vertical episema is "a part of innovation" according to Dom Mocquereau, but it obeys the law of general rhythm, which neither language nor music can escape; and although not indicated in the ancient notations, ictic subdivisions, "contained objectively in the melodies, were realized formerly through practical use."<sup>3</sup>

It is not necessary to reproduce ancient notation *materially* in our modern books. The object of these various signs in present editions is to supplement our modern deficiency, and enable us to arrive at the understanding of an art which was virtually lost for several centuries—"for new needs, new signs; for new errors, new remedies."<sup>4</sup>

However, it is most important to bear in mind that all of these signs have diverse values in the present as well as in the ancient notations. The signs are subject to the position of the note. To interpret an episematic group with exactitude, it does not suffice to regard the group in itself, its normal form and its adjunctions. One must also, as with every group of notes, consider its place in both the literary and musical phrase. An ordinary *clivis*, for instance, surmounted by an episema ( | ⤴ ) in the St. Gall manuscripts can be interpreted in many ways, depending on whether it be a *clivis* of

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

tonic accent, of the word, of a phrase, of a section of a phrase, before a *quilisma*, before a *pressus*, on a short penultimate, etc., each situation modifying either the duration or the dynamic quality of the neum.<sup>1</sup>

The episematic indications of St. Gall signify a more or less pronounced retard; there are no supplementary signs for acceleration, for which indication the letter *c* is used.<sup>2</sup> Either the note or the group can be affected by these letters and signs which, in turn, are submissive to rules of position. They cannot, therefore, be used without principle. What they precisely signify is that which is essential to all rhythm. But we are advised as follows: "One cannot be too much on guard against a too material interpretation of these precious indications.<sup>3</sup> . . . Do not try to fix mathematically nuances which belong to good taste; and leave to the art of the singer, to his faith, to his heart, the liberty of interpreting them in his manner."<sup>4</sup> With a melodic example given in Vol. X of the *Paléographie musicale*, the following comment is included: "There is in the passage *ad libitum* a freedom (*une aisance*), an amplitude, a suppleness which all notation is incapable of expressing." All these supplementary markings are, then, merely "in the nature of things."<sup>5</sup>

Dom Pothier likewise warns the musician against a too literal interpretation of the signs of writing used in various notations. For he says: "Signs of writing, however perfect one may suppose them, are always powerless to express the multiple nuances of the rhythm of the word, which is also that of Plainchant. Many of these nuances should be left, in music just as in discourse, not to arbitrariness but to good sense and to nature. The material sign serves to guide the intelligence, but it cannot give it. The intelligence, in taking possession of the words to render the thought, communicates to them through the inspiration of the thought itself the desired inflections. This inspiration is the veritable accent of language; this it is which coordinates and supple the material elements of the phrase, that is to say the syllables and words, and prompts, in song as in discourse, diverse articulations, the play of which is as necessary to the life of one as to that of the other. He who does not un-

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. X. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*




cedes the *pressus* is marked *c* (*celeriter*); if there are two *clives* the first is marked *c*.<sup>1</sup>

The *strophicus* (derived from the *apostropha*, or turned sign :') denotes a light repercussion of the same note, or at the interval of a half-tone.<sup>2</sup> We see herein the later *gruppo* or trill. In the present interpretation one remains on the same note. If the tone is repeated but once, the group is a *distropha*: ■ ■; if twice, a *tristropha*: ■ ■ ■. The *bivirga* ( ▮ ▮ ) denotes not only acuteness of tone, but an amplitude of force not called for in the *strophicus*. The *bivirga* is sometimes surmounted by an episema, or a *t* (*tenete*) in the ancient manuscripts. The *strophicus* never has this letter, although the last note is elongated. The *strophicus* is often found on C or F.

The neums in *campo aperto* of the manuscripts of all of the schools have special signs for figuring the *strophicus*, because this group demands a special execution. In Germany, alone, these graphic distinctions persevered even to the time of printed music.<sup>3</sup>

The *oriscus* (Gr. *horos*, boundary, our "horizon") is a "gracious" note sung without force.<sup>4</sup> It is found at the end of a group on the same degree: ■ ■ ■<sup>~</sup> ■, frequently between two *torculi*.

Although the *pressus*, *oriscus* and *strophicus* are all called *pressus* by certain authors, especially Jean de Muris, the ancient notations give evidence of the fact that these signs were clearly distinct one from another, and these notations indicated a special manner of singing for each one.<sup>5</sup>

The *quilisma* (Gr. *chulio*, L. *volvo*, roll, or turn), used only in ascending gradation, is a "quivering" tone: *Tremula est neuuma quam gradatum vel quilisma dicimus* (Aribo Scholasticus, *Musica*, Gerbert). The *quilisma* served ordinarily to unite two notes the distance of a minor third apart: . The manner of uniting A and C (*la* and *ut*) in the example does not seem to have consisted originally in singing this intermediary note B (*si*), but in giving the voice a movement of circumvolution around *la* before rising to *ut* as: *la si la sol la ut* or simply *la sol la ut*.<sup>6</sup> In the first instance we see, in

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>5</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*



the four intermediary notes, the Turn of the later classic period; in the second instance, the three first notes create the simple Mordent (here the principal note a whole step from its auxiliary note). The *quilisma* should be sung with lightness of tone.<sup>1</sup> The *quilisma* furthermore has a retroactive effect on the note or group which precedes it: all the notes, or the group, before a *quilisma* are slightly lengthened.<sup>2</sup>


Because of the difficulty of singing both the *strophicus* and the *quilisma*, as recounted in the history of the Roman Chant in Gaul and Germany, in many of even the ancient manuscripts the *quilisma* was either suppressed altogether or replaced by an ordinary note. Dom Pothier advises that one forego singing the *strophicus* with its vibratory quality, the *oriscus* with its undulation of the voice, and the *quilisma* with its turn, rather than give a poor interpretation to that which demands delicacy of nuance.<sup>3</sup> The present mode of rendering the *quilisma* in the restored version of the Chant, is to prolong the note which immediately precedes it, making it the most emphasized of the group, and sing the *quilisma* itself lightly, but not rapidly, in order to arrive at the following note with smoothness.<sup>4</sup> In the ancient manuscripts the *t* (*tenete*), or the *episema* (actually more employed), which surmounted the *clivis* preceding the *quilisma*, was placed back as far as the first note of the *clivis*, and the slight retard which preceded the *quilisma* was prepared even as far back as four or five notes.<sup>5</sup>

The *salicus* (L. *salio*, leap, spring), a group of generally three ascending notes, the first two of which are often a half-tone apart, looks like the *scandicus*, but unlike the latter, which is a simple neum, the *salicus* has its accent on the second note, to which one "springs." In the old manuscripts the first two notes are sometimes on the same degree,<sup>6</sup> but this is now generally interpreted as a *presus*.<sup>7</sup> In books of square notation the *salicus* was replaced by the *scandicus*, just as the *quilisma* by an ordinary note, before their restoration in the present revised editions.<sup>8</sup>

When two vowels unite and form a diphthong (*laus*), or two consonants follow in the same word (*dicentes*) or in separate words

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>4</sup> *Liber usualis*, p. XXV. <sup>5</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vols. IV and X. <sup>6</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. IV. <sup>7</sup> *Liber usualis*, p. XXIV. <sup>8</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X.

where the sense demands union (*ad te*), the transition from one syllable to the other presents in the final sound of the first syllable what Guido calls a "liquescent tone," whose special signs and names are: , a *cephalicus* (little head), and , an *epiphonus* (added note). The vowel or consonant on the first note changes so insensibly that the transition in carrying the voice without separation to the succeeding vowel or consonant is almost indiscernible. Guido says that the singer should glide so imperceptibly from one letter to the other, in such cases, that it becomes impossible for the hearer to distinguish where the first letter ends. Also, if one wishes to replace the liquescent tone with a full tone, one may do so (*si autem eam vis plenius proferre non liquefaciens, nihil nocet, etc.*).<sup>1</sup> However, even then lightness of tone must be retained.<sup>2</sup> When the syllables are well pronounced and united where they should be, the letter of transition at such a place of union becomes "liquid" through proper delivery.

The *custos* (L., watchman, guide) is a small note placed at the end of each line to indicate the first note of the next line: . This sign is also used in the course of a line when the clef is changed, in order to signal the relative pitch of the first note after the change.

It is very probable that the signs used so profusely in the XVII and XVIII centuries for the ornamental notes found their origin, in that which has to do with their graphic figuration, in certain neums of traditional notation not used in those later centuries. As for our conventional notation, it is evident from a study of the successive transformation of traditional notation that this terminated in our actual musical signs.<sup>3</sup>

In asserting that the question of the rhythm of Gregorian Chant is the order of the day, the eminent author of the *Paléographie musicale* asks, "Whence shall one take this rhythm?" He then gives the answer: "Obviously, where it is found in the ancient manuscripts which present it to us conjointly with the melody, its inseparable companion."<sup>4</sup> As long as the manuscripts retained their rhythmic markings, the Chant must have kept its traditional manner of inter-

<sup>1</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. IX. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 68. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X.



NEUMS SHOWING TRANSITION INTO MODERN NOTATION<sup>1</sup>

	NEUM NOTATION.			PROPORTIONAL NOTATION.		MODERN NOTATION.
	VIII cent.	XIII cent.	XV cent.	XVII cent.	XIX cent.	
PUNCTUM ..... ( <i>L. punctum</i> , prick)	·	◐	■	■	◊	○ Whole Note.
VIRGA ..... ( <i>L. virga</i> , rod)	/	↗	└	└	◊ └	ρ Half Note.
PODÁTUS ..... ( <i>L. pes</i> , foot)	✓	↘	■	...	└	♩ Quarter Note.
CLIVIS ..... ( <i>L. declivis</i> , inclined)	↘	↘	■	..	↘	♩ Quarter Rest.
TÓRCULUS ..... ( <i>L. torquere</i> , to turn)	↗	↗	■	..	◊ └	♩ Eighth Rest.
PORRÉCTUS ..... ( <i>L. porrigere</i> , to extend)	↘	↘	■	-	◊ └	♩ Ligature of Eighth Notes
SCÁNDICUS ..... ( <i>L. scándere</i> , to ascend)	↗	↗	■	..	..	..
CLIMACUS ..... ( <i>L. climax</i> , ladder)	↗	↗	■	◊	◊	♩ Eighth Note.

pretation. The first documents of the school of St. Gall, those of the IX and X centuries, contain “a fine notation—delicate, almost perfect: letters and rhythmic signs abound, sometimes superabound, guiding the singer to nuances even the most exquisite. Then from the end of the XI century appear some symptoms of decline. In the XII and XIII centuries they multiply; letters and signs gradually disappear, and soon the neumatic signs, coarsely written and despoiled of their rhythmic ornamentation, indicate nothing more than the dry melodic line of sounds; it is the decadence, the ruin of rhythm, and, by way of consequence, that of melody.”<sup>2</sup> That there exists every-

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XI.

where at the origin a perfect state of rhythmic notation, followed by decline, is apparent in studying the progressive march of this decadence in the photographic copies of the St. Gall notation, Vol. III, of the *Paléographie musicale*.

Dom Guéranger has said: "The original documents contain the fundamental facts of the different sciences without alloy as without method, but in all their first energy," and Dom Mocquereau adds: "Right thought, which applies to our old manuscripts. In fact, the instruction which one can draw from them in sureness, in clarity, in quality, in variety, in scope, is well superior to that which is furnished by authors. What would we know of Gregorian melody, of its theory, of its different notations, of its rhythm, of its history, of its diffusion into the world, without the manuscripts? Nothing, or nearly nothing."<sup>1</sup>

The same author makes the reflection that a Roman archeologist whose object of study is the catacombs cherishes personal research in these subterranean passages themselves, as the first matter of research, before the written documents of the Acts of the Martyrs, the Calendars, the Sacramentaries, guide books, etc., however valuable the latter sources of information may be as a key to his subject. For it is through the findings which the archeologist himself makes by his own investigations, digging with his hands in the long galleries, going from discovery to discovery, that he reconstructs, so to speak, the history of the Church.

Dom Mocquereau then continues: "Likewise it is again in our Gregorian catacombs—in the manuscripts of St. Gall, Metz, Chartres, and others, understand—and not in the authors, that we have had occasion to find this mysterious marvel for which the notes, the groups of neums, the words, the texts and all the rhythmic and dynamic signs are but the means; I wish to say the true, real meaning of the musical composition, that which has been called in our time 'the inspiration (*le génie*) of the work' is what I shall call, for our art, the creating Christian soul of our holy melodies, which alone can reveal to us the sweet and tender piety that formerly stirred them.

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XI.

“For indeed, what the modern editors do for our great classics, Bach, Palestrina, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, etc., we should, as far as possible, do for our old ecclesiastical composers. Today editors and interpreters neglect nothing to penetrate the thoughts of the old masters; they seek out their original manuscripts, their letters, the least particles issued from their pens; they buy them for their weight in gold in the hope of finding some indications therein, because they are determined to know the circumstances which gave birth to the chef-d’oeuvre studied: Mass, motet, symphony, quartet or opera. They want to penetrate the spirit of it, the intentions, the inspirations, down to the most minute details, in order to reproduce and to interpret it such as it was conceived, then realized by the master. Now no one can describe the care, the respect, the religiosity displayed in the execution; the interpreter effaces himself to put on the first plane the composer and his work.” Quoting from Felix Weingartner the words “an adequate execution,” Dom Mocquereau comments: “‘An adequate execution’ of Gregorian works—see, what we wish, we too. It is for that reason that we seek avidly in the manuscripts signs, notations of every kind which can be useful for arriving at this end. The Gregorian composers have composed their works in a musical language from which we wish to tear out all the secrets, of which we should like to penetrate all the resources, know all the nuances; they have poured out their souls; it is that (their souls) that we strive to attain by our search, not alone, like the secular, for a sterile motive of artistic satisfaction, but in order ourselves to assimilate, with their means and their procedures, the true character, spiritual and holy, of the melodic praises which they address to the Sovereign Majesty. Does it not seem that such an ideal should be that of all those who are called to sing the sacred cantilenas, as well as of those who teach the singing of them! Alas, it is not thus. Many are satisfied with less: by system, voluntarily, they stay on the surface, the melodic line at random according to the color of their spirit, their sufficiency. Of the thought of the master, of an ‘adequate execution,’ they have no care. . . . We shall

continue to seek among the authors of the Middle Ages, and particularly in the rhythmically noted manuscripts, the interior source whence the holy melodies sprang, in order to understand them better and to interpret them more perfectly at the Divine Office.”<sup>1</sup>

The tragedy (and the term may be literally applied) in the life of traditional Gregorian Chant rhythm was caused by the fact that, after the XIII century, musicians attempted to bring to the rhythmic interpretation of this inspired musical expression a development which was justifiable and acceptable only in that which had to do with the signs depicting the melody itself—in other words with the *form* of the notation. While the development of the primitive neums in *campo aperto* into the square note and diastematic notation of the Guidonian stave was of inestimable benefit as a clear method of recording musical sounds, what proved fatal to the life of Plainchant was the subsequent long series of accompanying alterations in the melodic line itself through additions and suppressions of every kind. This meant the breaking up of neum groups, and shattered all trace of the original rhythm. Then, added to this, came the eventual adaptation, by certain theorists, of the mensural system of notation to a song so entirely particular in the nature of its modal melodic line and free oratorical rhythm. Now these general mutations of melody and rhythm were pointed out by certain men of science, in discussions which preceded the present official Editions of Plainchant, as a “historical development” of the rhythmic interpretation of the neums, inasmuch as men argued that these signs of notation, during the course of the centuries and in their migrations through different countries, had not become modified in their exterior form alone, but also in their *rhythmic content*.<sup>2</sup>

One might just as plausibly argue that since succeeding generations have accepted different forms of typography in the editing of the Gospels, each an improvement from the standpoint of readability over that which preceded it, dating back to the time of the earliest extant manuscripts, one should expect that the interpretation of the

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XI. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

content itself of the Gospels should have “developed historically” in keeping with its typography!

Both the first written stories of Christ and the first Church melody were respectively perfected at a very early age. Many thousands of books have been written which, together, embrace a thorough analysis and synthesis of every thought and character of the Gospels; but no one has ever dared to change or “improve” the Gospels themselves by altering that which is comprised in the content of the subject itself under the pretext of working therein a “historical development.” The Church has safeguarded these inspired writings of the Evangelists, down through many centuries, from any touch of alteration in their content matter, and this since the time of the earliest versions.

We believe, then, with unshakable faith, that the first melodies of the Church, which, we repeat, “the ancients did not fear to call inspired by God,”<sup>1</sup> these melodies which have been restored to us through the untiring efforts of so many illustrious men, will likewise be guarded over by the Church henceforth, and preserved from any future tragedy, until the time when “the first heaven and the first earth” are gone, “and the sea is now no more.” Then shall the “New Jerusalem” come “down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Then shall be fulfilled the revelation of the Voice from the Throne, saying: “Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people: and God Himself with them shall be their God.”

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 9.





## CHAPTER III

### THE WORD AND MELODY

#### (Accent and the Cursus)



*Who sings well prays in a twofold manner.*

St. Augustine.

Vincent d'Indy defines Melody as "a succession of sounds differing one from another by their duration, their intensity and their acuteness." And he further adds: "The point of departure of melody is the [verbal] accent."<sup>1</sup>

In speaking, one raises his voice naturally on certain syllables and lowers it on others. Guido says that giving a certain force, or a sharp accent, to particular syllables, with less to others, makes a repeated tone, even though remaining at the same pitch, appear to be raised and lowered.<sup>2</sup>

The three arts of movement among the ancient Greeks were poetry, music and the dance. The *local* movements of the body in the rise and fall of the foot or hand were called *arsis* and *thesis*. They consequently applied the term *thesis* to the *sound* or *word syllable* which accompanied the bodily movement itself when the dancer *ouched* the ground, be it for the final place of rest, or for a simple pause, to rise anew at the *arsis* with its accompanying *syllable* likewise termed *arsis*, and so continue until arriving at a definite repose or ultimate *thesis*. When poetry and music were produced without the dance, the terms were retained, and the *arsis* and *thesis* which originated in the corporal movement now passed into the *undulations of the voice*, producing *rhythm*.<sup>3</sup>

The *arsis* and *thesis* are inseparable as terms—one implies the other: the light *arsis* rounds itself off like an arch (  ) to anticipate the *thesis*, while the *thesis*, during the course of the movement, acts as both the point of arrival for that which has gone before and the point of departure for that which follows (  ). With

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. II. <sup>2</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

the Latins, the *light* or *arsic* part of movement was the *elevatio*, and the *thetic* or *heavy* part the *depositio*.<sup>1</sup>

Dom Pothier distinguishes three ages in the Latin language: before Cicero, from Cicero to Augustus, and the time after Augustus. Before Cicero, a certain number of words which had come directly from Greece or had their source in both languages, were incorporated into the Latin tongue. These words became the Latin of the people, who, however, applied to them their own Latin manner of declension and accentuation. From Cicero to Augustus the Latin language developed with the arts and sciences, in all of which Greek influence was tremendous. All liberal education obliged the study of Greek, and during this period many words and purely literary expressions were borrowed from that language to ornament Latin discourse, more because of the "love of Greek" than by necessity, since Latin sometimes possessed the equivalent of what it borrowed. However, the words taken from the Greek language, although declined, at this period, according to their nature, were not given their proper Greek accent until after the time of Augustus. All of these things came about progressively.<sup>2</sup>

The quality of the Greek word accent was a *musical* one, the *ad cantum* (from which the word *accent*) of the Romans.<sup>3</sup> This accent combined with the quantitative accent of classic Latin, and a mutual assimilation took place. Cicero describes the accent of discourse as "a less brilliant singing, a smothered tone."<sup>4</sup> Quintilian speaks of a certain *energy* unknown to the Greeks in the *ordinary* accent of the Roman people.<sup>5</sup> The final evolution of the Latin word occurred about the third century, when, despite the efforts of the learned, the delicate quality of the classic Greco-Latin accent became more energetic and ended by dominating. "In becoming strong, the accent became at the same time an element of *rhythm* in the word as in the phrase, because *rhythm* is constituted by the alternance of strong beats and weak beats."<sup>6</sup> St. Augustine writes to St. Ambrose of "the accents which vivify your words sung by a voice of sweetness and wisdom."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VIII. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 48. <sup>4</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. II. <sup>5</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. III. <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>7</sup> *Confessions*, Book X, Ch. 33. French Translation by Moreau, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V.



So, it was not by length, but by *intensity*, that accent became the element of rhythm in the Latin word. But all in becoming strong, the Latin accent for a long time lost nothing of its *musical* character, as is proven by the Gregorian melodies themselves. The notation of the manuscripts of all epochs of Roman Chant reveals that the accent was a musical one. If the acute accent of the word had been only strong, and without a musical character, says Dom Mocquereau, never would the idea have presented itself of having it serve for a musical notation. If this accent had been high, strong, and long all at the same time, the neums would have conserved this signification.<sup>1</sup>

Theodore Reinach (*Grammaire Latine*) says that the Latin of the "golden age" was admirable but factitious, the work of grammarians and lettered Greeks, but never the language of the people.<sup>2</sup> The Latin which the Church took "without troubling itself about Cicero or Quintilian, or especially about Horace or Virgil,"<sup>3</sup> was perhaps that of the *usual* Latin prose, which did not regard *quantity*, and in which one must, from all time, have *counted* the syllables without taking heed of imperceptible nuances of duration which exist between them by the fact of their composition, their material weight or their place in the word. If this is disconcerting because of the classical age, it is not so for the Gregorian epoch, wherein the principle of *accent* had triumphed over that of *quantity*. At this period one *counted* rather than *weighed* syllables in prose and verse. Our ancient composers were guided by proportion.<sup>4</sup>

"This assimilation of syllables one to another," Dom Mocquereau writes, quoting from M. Guyau, "resembles a little that which one calls *temperament* in music, with this difference, that it is the duration and not the height of tone which is thus tempered." Dom Mocquereau summarizes these statements in the following reflections: "As a general rule, one can say that by virtue of this practical temperament *all Latin syllables have a duration almost equal*. However, in French as in Latin, one cannot deny that among these syllables certain varieties are not felt. There are tendencies to

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VIII. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

length, to brevity, however slight they may be, which serve to determine the rises and drops (*élans et repos*) of rhythm."<sup>1</sup>

In the isolated word *Dé-us*, for example, *brevity* belongs to the first syllable, *length*, not *force*, to the second. This does not imply that one should pass over the syllable *De* more rapidly. The verbal accent often coincides with the dynamic melodic and rhythmic summit of the musical phrase. "What we wish to affirm," says the author of the *Paléographie musicale*, in such a case, "is that one should neither hit nor crush the accent, but, on the contrary, lift it with grace and lightness. This procedure does not hinder giving it a certain fullness (*ampleur*) demanded by the place which it occupies at the summit of the melody and rhythm. . . . One would have to possess little taste and musical sense to sing the accent . . . with precipitation and stiffness. . . . On the contrary, this accent should round itself off lightly to permit the voice to fall softly and without concussion on the syllable of repose which immediately follows."<sup>2</sup> Dom Pothier, as well, teaches that "one must leave it [the accented syllable] and pass to the following syllable before the impulse given to the voice on the accent is exhausted. To accent well, one must know how to impress the note with this slightly fast movement which tends to lift it rather than prolong it. All in avoiding sliding on the tone, one gives, even from the beginning of the accented note, the presentiment of the fall of the voice on the final note."<sup>3</sup> The *arsic* element is one of *vitality*, the *thetic* one of *repose*. This gives to the syllables of the Latin word, as well as to the notes of the melody, an element of tonal *quality* rather than one of tonal *quantity*. The *arsic* and *thetic* quality of the *light* and *heavy* beat of free rhythm is quite distinct from the element of *weak* and *strong* as it is used in the modern conception of the quality of rhythmic beats.

As we have already seen,<sup>4</sup> the Latin accent created *neums*, which are nothing other than *musical* words. Guido uses the term *musical syllable* in Chant as analogous to *word* in discourse: that is, a succession of intimately united sounds.<sup>5</sup> As each group of two or three intimately united *syllables* uttered with one emission of the

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. IX. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 48. <sup>5</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV.

voice in speech constitutes a *verbal rhythmic cell* or *unit*, so each group of two or three intimately united *notes* uttered with a single emission of the voice in melody constitutes a *musical rhythmic cell* or *unit*. Each of these smallest groups in both the word and the melody is endowed with a double element—*movement* and *repose*: *arsis* and *thesis*, or *elevátio* and *deposítio*. However, the verbal accent serves not only to give to a recitation more life and movement by varying the tone and the force of the syllables, but it has, quoting Dom Pothier, “a reason for being, bound more intimately and more essentially to the natural laws of speech: its object is to blend the elements of the word into one living whole, aiding the ear, at the same time, to distinguish the words, one from another, of which discourse is composed. It unites all the syllables of the same word around one of them as around a central point; and it is by virtue of this subordination that, despite the plurality of the syllables, the unity of the idea portrays itself perceptibly in the sound of the word. Without accent, the elements of the word are simply juxtaposed; they are united and subordinated only by accent. . . . The syllables which belong to the same word have not all, then, the same importance in pronunciation: there is one in each word which should dominate all the others, in attracting them to itself as around a common center.”<sup>1</sup> However, the accented syllable must not claim a preponderance which submerges the other syllables. Proportion in the word is indispensable, and this is attained by permitting each syllable to enjoy its natural life.

The accompanying note of transition from one syllable to another in the body of a word has the character of a note relatively short, because of the lightness necessary for a smooth linking of the syllables. One should not ponder, however, on making the notes either long or short, but only try to combine the tones of each formula and unite the syllables of each word. “When this double result is obtained,” says Dom Pothier, “the notes have, by the very movement of the melody, their proper values.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Greg.*, Ch. VIII.    <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. VIII.

The custom of placing several notes not only on the unaccented syllable of the word but even on the short penultimate syllable (the "barbarism" already referred to),<sup>1</sup> was, as we have seen, not only tolerated but sanctioned by the ancients, where the demands of the melody justified such a note grouping. Even before St. Gregory this custom was practiced, as is evinced in both traditional Greek and Latin liturgical chant. To say that such a custom emanated from ignorance is unreasonable, since the Greeks composed their chants, even at this later epoch, in pure classic Greek; and as for the Latin language, even though it had lost with time, more than Greek, something of its antique form, Dom Pothier exclaims: "Nevertheless, if one wishes to find a beautiful Latin, it is still in the Prefaces, Orations and other liturgical compositions of Ambrose, of Leo, of Gelasius, of Gregory, that one must go in search of it; and one should like to say that the manner of pronouncing and of singing adopted by these masters of the word as of the doctrine is neither good nor acceptable! We would be offended by short penultimates charged with notes, when the ear of the ancients, assuredly more delicate than ours, not only was not offended by this, but, let us be truthful, was delighted by it!"<sup>2</sup>

First of all, one must bear in mind, what has already been said,<sup>3</sup> that *quantity* plays no role in the Latin accent of the Roman Liturgy—it is perhaps by nature rather *short* than *long*; but the principal reason for not burdening the accented syllable with many notes was, as already stated,<sup>4</sup> to preserve the *unity of the syllables in the word*. While in *syllabic* Chant<sup>5</sup> the verbal accent, just as it does in the spoken word, equally rounds off the sung word and "molds" it, so to speak, into one single whole, in *neumatic*, or *melismatic* Chant (one or more groups of notes on the same syllable) it is the *melodic formula* which unites the elements of the word. In this case, many notes on the accent might break the cadence of the word. This explains why the penultimate of the word *Dóminus*, for example, may carry many notes, while at the same time a few notes, or even a single note, may be used on the accented syllable.

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 27. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XII. <sup>3</sup> Ref., p. 71. <sup>4</sup> Ref., p. 27. <sup>5</sup> Ref., p. 22.

The unity of the word is likewise preserved in the long melodic *jubila* of the Alleluias, these prolonged vocalizations being placed at the *end* of the word (a development after the final syllable has been deposed) rather than upon the accented syllable in the course of the word, which would put this syllable in a state of isolation. "The accented syllable," says Dom Pothier, "is, to be sure, the principal syllable of the word: it is to the word what the head is to the body, that is, the center of movement; but, except in the case of hydrocephalus, the head is not the entire body. Let us leave to the accent, then, its force and its preponderance, but not emaciate the words to the point of depriving them of all body and of all consistence."<sup>1</sup> As Dr. Wagner states, the accent is not burdened with many notes because it is the *spiritual* and not the material element of the word: "*Accentus anima vocis*," said the ancients. The allure of the melody and the necessities of rhythm, and not that which is improperly called *quantity*, have determined how the notes should be placed with the syllables of the texts.<sup>2</sup>

Just as for the proper expression of words it suffices to pronounce them well and to distribute them well according to the natural divisions of the sentence, so it is in the execution of the liturgical melodies. "The notes here," Dom Pothier further states, "have values that are real and in no way arbitrary, but natural, resulting as though spontaneously from a well divided and well phrased recitation, without its being necessary that these values be written. That is why the traditional notation of Gregorian music offers no sign to express directly the relative brevity or length of sounds. It suffices that one know how to group well, be it syllables or notes, and by that itself, without one's thinking of it, the longs and the shorts, the strongs and the weaks, will take their places and produce the desired rhythm."<sup>3</sup>

That the ancients were cognizant of the natural value of the accent is manifest in the Psalms, Litanies, Epistles and Gospels, where the accent is set in relief by placing it on the musical elevation of the chant, without prolonging it. The composer had re-

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél Grég.*, Ch. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél Grég.*, Ch. XII.

course, if necessary, to melodic anticipations and modifications in the psalmodic formula, in order to reserve for the verbal accent the privileged place in the melody.<sup>1</sup>

The ancients used the psalm texts as models for their first melodies. Such a procedure was not without difficulty, since the prose cadences of the psalm verses are most varied. They triumphed over this difficulty by using a very simple syllabic type of melody which could adapt itself to each psalm verse. As a rule, they left the reciting tone only to raise the accented syllable of the last word and drop the final syllable. These were the most elementary terminations, of one simultaneously melodic and verbal accent. If they wished to accord more variety to the melody, they ascended at the next to the last accent, with two simultaneously melodic and verbal accents at the Mediant and Final. These two formulas are the most natural and closely related to familiar language.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to gain an exact idea of the part originally played by the alliance of the word and music in Liturgical Chant, because of the notable redacting already undergone in the simple psalmody of the IX and X centuries.<sup>3</sup>

The Intonation of Gregorian psalmody produces an artistic union of the Antiphon with the Dominant of the psalm. The absence of the Intonation and Mediant in Ambrosian simple psalmody implies that it did not use them. The respect of melody and rhythm for the text was not strictly observed until the time of St. Gregory's revision of the Old Roman melodies.<sup>4</sup> The essence of Roman psalmody is the constant repetition of the same melody for all verses, and a sure and uniform method for the adaptation of different words to the same melodic pattern. The Roman composers left initiative *last*. The liberties taken in the pre-revised Plainchant editions by varying the melodic ending in the same psalm (to give pleasure, get rid of notes on the short penultimate syllable, etc.) are one of the sources of reproach made use of by the adherents of traditional psalmody. And since "caprice becomes monotonous," these

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. III. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III.

editions sometimes unnecessarily repeat the same melody, as in the Gloria of the Mass, "for the sake of variety."<sup>1</sup>

The melodic formulas used in Roman psalmody at the Mediant and the Final are to punctuate the text and the melody, just as vocal inflections punctuate one's conversation or actual modulations punctuate oratorical discourse. If the play of all the harmonious elements which concur in the life of grace and beauty in a musical work should make itself felt in the entire tissue of the composition, says Quintilian, it is principally at the *end* of the members and periods that a melody should be more flowing, the rhythm more deeply sensed, more agreeable, and an accordance between the words and the music more perfect.<sup>2</sup>

We have seen how the tonic accent of the words influenced the melody, and with it the rhythm of melodic cadences.<sup>3</sup> But the generating element of Gregorian Chant was not uniquely the accent of the word. While this influence of the verbal accent is felt not only in the simple type of psalmody but in the ornate and neumatic styles as well, it was not the only factor which brought about the production of liturgical melody. The generative elements of Gregorian Chant are both the *accent* and the *cursus*.<sup>4</sup> While the *origin* of liturgical melody is found in the *musical verbal accent*, the *adaptation* of this melody is found in the *literary cursus*, upon which the *melodic cursus* (or *cadence*) was modeled. The first Church song, Ambrosian and Mozarabic as well as Roman, was governed by the *accent* and the *cursus*.<sup>5</sup>

By *cursus* is meant a cadenced combination of syllables and accents more studied and agreeable to the ear. This arrangement was recommended by the ancient Greco-Roman grammarians and rhetoricians. To Gregory VIII in the XII century is attributed the invention of the rules for the *cursus*, at which time the term came into use, but this oratorical combination had already flourished during the V, VI and at least the early part of the VII centuries, at the epoch of the formation of psalmody in its various melodic expressions. St. Leo had used it in the Orations of his Sacra-

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. III. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 69. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. III. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. IV.

mentary. The *cursus* was likewise employed in Papal Bulls from the IV to the VII centuries. The use of the *cursus* was quite neglected between the VII and the XI centuries, which points to the fact that its manifest influence on Plainchant must have made itself felt in Gregory's time.<sup>1</sup>

If the terminating syllables of the word phrase are based on *quantity*, the *cursus* is *metric*. If they are based on *accent* and *number*, the *cursus* is *rhythmic* or *tonic*. The second type evolved out of the first, and in so doing gave birth to a sort of "*cursus* of transition," which holds to neither one nor the other.<sup>2</sup>

*Metrum* was used in the first centuries of the Christian era by prose writers and poets, as well as by the liturgists who compiled the Roman Sacramentary. Quantity and accent in Latin were the subject of a long dispute. The ancient classic prosody gradually disappeared and gave way to the *principle of accentuation*. Henceforth, the Latin accent was energetic but not longer; it accompanied the important note of the melody, and this, as we shall later see, was significant for the life of melodic rhythm.<sup>3</sup> But if the accent vanquished quantity, it did not entirely banish it, for in the melodic settings of certain phrase terminations in the Preface<sup>4</sup> and in many Antiphonal chants of the Mass,<sup>5</sup> for instance, one discerns cadences which seem to be precisely calculated upon the metric *cursus*. Among metric feet, the ancient *choreus* (- ∪), *dichoreus* (- ∪ - ∪), and *molossus* (- - -) in particular were affected by the Latin orators as artistic procedures for harmoniously terminating a period.<sup>6</sup> Cicero and Quintilian said that two or three feet were necessary to form a *cursus*—one was not sufficient.<sup>7</sup>

By the time of St. Gregory there were no long and short syllables,<sup>8</sup> so it was the *rhythmic cursus* which influenced the composition of numerous of the terminations of Gregorian melody in the ornate and neumatic psalmody of the songs of the Mass and the Office, while the Intonation, Dominant, and Mediant cadences in the same song, were regulated by the law of simple psalmody—that of the accent.

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XV. <sup>5</sup> *Ref.*, *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. V. <sup>6</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XV. <sup>7</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV. <sup>8</sup> *Ref.*, p. 71.



After the XI century, but three forms of the *cursus* were conserved: the oratorical *cursus planus, tardus and velox*, which affect the last five, six and seven syllables before the close, respectively.<sup>1</sup> The melodic *cursus planus* is the one of which most general use is made in Plainchant cadences. We are informed by the author of the *Paléographie musicale* that not only in the songs of the choir, but in those of the celebrant as well, in both Ambrosian and Gregorian Chant, the unity of style, regulated by the influence of both accent and *cursus* in the same composition is clearly manifest.<sup>2</sup>

The *melodic cursus* was composed according to rule. When the *arsis* and *thesis* of the words and the melody coincide, the rhythm is identical; but this concurrence does not always exist. The musical cadence cannot be altered. The melodic *cursus planus* follows the rule, observed by the ancients, that the last five syllables of the text be placed under the last five notes or group of notes. What the words lose in cases where the verbal accent does not occur at the place of melodic importance, the music gains. The *neumatic* melodic cadences are modeled on the oratorical *cursus planus*, just as are the melodic *syllabic* cadences found in the Collects, Epistles, Gospels, Preface, Pater Noster, Chapters, Lessons and Versicles. In these latter cases, as well as in the instances where the melody is only slightly ornate, the musical matter is, however, not sufficiently abundant to escape or resist the influence of the text.<sup>3</sup> An example of this type may be found in the Introit of Ash Wednesday, at the words *ánima mea* of the psalm verse. Nor does the neum on the syllable *a* seem to retard the accent and break the continuity of the word, the last two notes of the *torculus* serving as light melodic after-beats which connect smoothly with the *punctum* that follows.

However, beneath this perfection of absolute relationship between the word and the melody there exists another state, in which the *neumatic* melody, all in faithfully reproducing the vocal undulations of the particular oratorical *cursus* on which it is modeled, nevertheless develops and dilates itself, and, in a measure, frees

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*   <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

itself from the text, takes possession of its own resources—of its own natural power. In this case, the rhythm of the melody results not only from its union with the words, but also from the multiplicity of sounds, from their varied settings, from established binary and ternary proportions. “Here the music becomes mistress, and the fragile syllabic support which sustains it passes into second place.”<sup>1</sup> Thus does one understand why the unaccented syllables in the cadence of the Verse of the Respond *Emendémus* (of Ash Wednesday), for example, are accompanied by many notes, while the accented syllables have but one.

St. Augustine (d. 430) said: “Music must not be offended”; and even ancient Roman grammarians conceded the rights of the melody. Priscianus expressed himself in this manner: “Music is not subject to the rules of Donatus, any more than is Divine Scripture (*Musica non subjacet regulis Donati, sicut nec divina Scriptura.*)” Gerbert, in quoting this in *Scriptores*, having himself recommended the accentuation and good harmony of words, adds this reservation: “So far as this is possible (*in quantum suppetit facultas*).”<sup>2</sup>

We must not infer from these directions, however, that one is permitted to deform the word. Before the music takes its flight, in such cases, it leaves the syllables with their rightful proportions, for never can this liberty of the music degenerate into caprice. Gregorian Chant is always the “sung prayer,” and there is no song whose words are treated with greater deference. At times the melody “yields docilely to the varieties of the text; it stretches, contracts, divides, with a marvelous suppleness;” but when the principles of true art demand it, the melody “stays and should stay inflexible before all the solicitations of the words.”<sup>3</sup> At other times, when the melodic continuity would otherwise be distorted, it forces the text to comply with its own structure, and the “subjugated syllables” become absorbed in the power of an irresistible rhythmic movement. The melody is not composed at random in such instances, but following a particular principle of art which, in certain cases, is superior to that of the absolute concordance of word

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*   <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV.

and melody. And when the music does liberate itself from the text, it seems never to do so but with regret. As Dom Mocquereau describes, "it uses then the delicate consideration of ingenious transactions of clever accommodation, to preserve for its companion something of its influence." If the melody feels itself too constrained within the limits of the text to render the sentiment of the words with proper expression, then it does not hesitate to make its rights preferred; "but even in these most rigorous exigencies, it takes a thousand precautions to retain the connection of the syllables and thus maintain the unity of the words, whose elements it tenderly distends without ever separating or breaking them." As we continue from the same source, we see that the Roman masters "had a thousand procedures for varying cadences, especially where somewhat longer pieces gave them a certain liberty to follow the sentiment."<sup>1</sup> Although the Latin accent does not always coincide with a melodic arsis, it does so often enough for one to grasp the *musical* character of the Latin accent, we are told. The author of the *Paléographie musicale* deems that this discreet liberty left to music to liberate itself from the verbal accent proves an asset to Gregorian Chant.<sup>2</sup>

Discourse contains another accent besides the grammatical accent (that which modulates the syllables of the simple spoken word). There exists, as well, the *oratorical* accent, which affects rather the *phrase* or the *sentence*, and varies the modulations thereof according to the diverse thoughts or sentiments expressed. With reference to its *thought*, a sentence may be affirmative, negative, dubitative, or interrogative, and these different circumstances, belonging to the order of *logic*, bring about diverse inflections of the voice. For that which concerns *sentiment*, a sentence may express joy or sorrow, hope or fear, desire or repulsion, love or hate, and these various feelings, agitating the human heart in different ways, communicate to the voice an accent which varies with the nature of the sentiment itself. The *oratorical* accent, be it *logical* or *expressive*, takes precedence over the *tonic* or *grammatical* accents of the *words*, which submit to a modification of their inflections in

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV.   <sup>2</sup> Vol. VII.

the presence of the more important *oratorical* accent.<sup>1</sup> In like manner, the *expressive* accent of the *melodic phrase* modifies not only the *tonic* accents of the individual *melodic groups*—it may even dominate and envelop the *words themselves* of the various divisions of the text, and modify them like “individuals who lose something of their particular physiognomy in entering into a social organization.”<sup>2</sup>

Guido says that the effect of the song should be an attempt at imitating the events recounted by the words; the grave neums should be reserved for sad circumstances, the gracious neums for tranquil things, and exultant neums for ideas of prosperity, etc.<sup>3</sup> The *expressive* or *pathetic* accent, be it of the word or of the melody, must never [in Plainchant] degenerate into the sentimental, which is altogether abhorrent to the virile character of Plainsong.<sup>4</sup> Here the accent of both word and music emanates from the devotional sentiment which allies itself with the Church’s liturgy.

Art manifests itself by different procedures. As evidence of this truth, we find in the *Paléographie musicale* the Introit *Reminiscere* used as an example in which to portray the artistry employed by the Plainchant composer in order to preserve the sentiment of his work. “Three times in succession the composer uses the same formula, whose plaintive and dolorous rhythm expresses with so much truth the profundity of human misery, as well as, at the same time, the most humble confidence in the Lord of Mercy. Then, when with the words the prayer becomes still more supplicating, the melody rises, the cadences change, they enlarge with the whole melodic phrase until the last one, *angustiis nostris*, which is the most developed. What musician would be reproached at the first of these cadences, *Dómine*, for the use of four notes on the short penultimate? Should music not remain mistress here, since it expresses more profoundly than the word itself the sentiment of the most touching prayer? What difference does the accent make! Is it not sufficiently taken care of by the epenthetic note which is as-

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mel. Grég.*, Ch. IV.   <sup>2</sup> Dom Pothier, *Pal mus.*, Vol. IV.   <sup>3</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV.  
<sup>4</sup> *Gram. of Plsg.*, p. 19.

signed to it? No, in productions where Christian genius or the sanctity of the inspiration manifests itself with such radiance (*éclat*), there is nothing to change: one does not touch the masterpieces of Demosthenes, Cicero, Bossuet, Palestrina, Bach, Beethoven."<sup>1</sup>

The song books of the Church, the Sacramentary, Antiphony, Responsorial and Gradual, show an identity which proves that the first compositions in the Roman repertory were composed not only of simple, but also of ornate and neumatic melodies, such as are found in the verses of the Gradual and Alleluia and in certain passages of the Offertory.<sup>2</sup> In the Respons of Matins the musical phrase is also developed, if somewhat less than in the Mass.<sup>3</sup> These collections show further that the final psalmodic cadences of the Introits, Communions and Responsorial Chant, modeled on the literary *cursus planus* of the Latin language, are modulated in the Eight Modes (the Fifth excepted for the Introit). This proves, according to Dom Mocquereau's research, that the Modes were known and used at the epoch when the literary *cursus* was employed.<sup>4</sup>

It is true that after the Gregorian epoch, especially from the VIII and IX centuries, a great deal of "pure music" (without words) was written. This is the type which we now call instrumental music, but the difference between ancient music of long modulations and that of the present time lies in the instrument for executing each: that of ancient music was uniquely the human voice. So fecund were the composers of the post-Gregorian epoch in writing in this instrumental style, that they sometimes filled whole volumes with this music without words. This melodic type was used for the last Respond of Matins, which was repeated at Vespers in monastery churches, for solemn feasts. It was the custom in many churches, as well, to add a "vocalization of convention," for the sake of solemnity, to the last Antiphon of Vespers or of Lauds, before the Capitulum, varying according to the Psalm Tone, but each Tone possessing only one melody, patterned after one

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV. <sup>2</sup> Ibid. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XI. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. IV.

of the eight modal prototypes spoken of in Chapter II.<sup>1</sup> It is very easy to distinguish the melodic pattern used in these prolonged passages, still retained at the end of certain versicles and answers, from that which has come down to us from Gregory's time.<sup>2</sup>

However, respect for pure liturgical chant was in no way diminished by these florid accessories, which were at first sparingly used in the Divine cult. It was not until the production of the Trope eventually became too prolific for the Church song, that, as we shall later see, a real danger to the integrity of the Chant presented itself.

Even before St. Gregory's time, the existence of the long *melisma* (Gr., a "song") is attested to by St. Augustine, who, in his writings, speaks many times of these vocalizations, which he calls *jubila*. He furthermore gives intimate reasons for their existence, based upon the very necessities of religious sentiment, in that the sole aim of song is not to express merely the thought; it should serve even more to express the sentiment. Although thought requires for its communication the articulated word, it is not the same with sentiment. When the sentiment is alive, the words by which it commenced to express itself soon become an obstacle rather than a help. The heart no longer finds words to respond to that which it feels, and the voice modulates, without continuing to articulate words. Joy especially loves to pour out in musical modulations free from all shackles.

"Thus it is," says St. Augustine, "that those who work in the fields, or in the vineyards, or are engaged in any arduous toil, begin to sing joyous airs; but soon the gaiety which animates them makes them forget the texts of their songs, and they continue, without articulating a syllable, in pure refrains of jubilation. For a much better reason," continues this great Doctor of the Church, "should it be likewise in the radiation of religious joy; for in the presence of a God Whose majesty is unutterable, what is there better than to give one's self up to jubilation? God is ineffable; but if no word is worthy of Him, on the other hand one is not

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 46. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XI.

permitted to remain silent concerning His greatness and His mysteries. Not being able to speak, not allowed to keep silence, the only resource left to us is to jubilate—to rejoice without words. It is when joy has no limits, that one surmounts those of the words."<sup>1</sup> The reason why we prolong the *neuma* (Gr. *pneuma*, a breathing, hence a long vocal passage) on the same syllable, we are told by another pious author, is in order that the soul, filled with the charms of the melody, may be transported beyond this world toward the regions of glory where the Saints triumph in gladness. In these songs there are many notes and few words; and it is no wonder that the human voice no longer suffices to express what the mind is powerless to conceive.<sup>2</sup>

But when the melodies develop themselves in this way apart from the word text, it is by no means without the restraint of conformity to the fixed principles which govern the melodic and rhythmic march of all well formulated art of movement: they contain both symmetry and clarity of form. Their analysis reveals a well planned and concrete melodic line, in which musicians of today may easily find a workable structure. Vincent d'Indy considers the *jubila* of the Alleluias as the principle of the ornate variation which is frequently encountered at the end of both vocal and instrumental phrases until toward the XVIII century, notably with J. S. Bach (Examples: *Da gedachte Petrus*, from the *Johannis Passion*, and *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*, from the *Organ Chorals*). He states that this Gregorian vocalization can thus be regarded as the primitive state of the great amplified variation found later, especially with Beethoven.<sup>3</sup>

In Chapter VI of this book we shall develop Plainchant melody in its three manners of delivery, found in the Respond, the Antiphon and the Tract.

Gregorian melodies may also be classified under the headings: *Syllabic*: those which have but one note for each syllable, and wherein, consequently, the text is preeminent; *Ornate*: those which have no more than one group of notes to a syllable, and in which

<sup>1</sup> *Enarr. in Psal.*, XXXII, *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XI. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. IV.

the greater influence on rhythm is left largely to the verbal accent, the melody modifying itself accordingly; *Neumatic* or *Melismatic*: those which develop into melodic currents of various lengths on the same syllable, and wherein the melody affirms itself despite its union at times with its most diverse text. But even in these cases, the rhythm of the word often maintains its ascendancy over the music.<sup>1</sup>

The melodies of Plainchant may be divided also into the two following categories: 1) Those constructed upon the form of *Simple Psalmody*. Each melodic type of psalmody may be: a) *Simple* in character, as the psalms of the Office; b) *Ornate*, as the Introit and Communion of the Mass; c) *Neumatic* (or *Melismatic*), as the Gradual, Alleluia and Offertory of the Mass. The difference in the style or character of these three groups is purely accidental. All are built upon the structure of simple psalmody; furthermore, the development in the ornate and neumatic styles is not a *thematic* one: it is merely variety in the same type of expression. Simple psalmody remained *Syllabic*. The neumatic style evolved at a later epoch, but its melodic structure still reposes on the formula of simple psalmody, which all three of these types have in common. 2) Those constructed under the influence of *freedom of form*, as the free melody found in the Responds and Antiphons. The Intonation, Tenor or Dominant, and *cursus* or Cadence, are still present in these particular chants, but not so clearly defined as in those constructed upon the formula of simple psalmody. The *tonic* and *oratorical accents* are both in evidence, but the *oratorical* often predominates. There is variety in the intervals, and nuance in the expression.

Sometimes these two categories of chant are mixed: the melodic formula of the psalm is found in the course of an Antiphon or Respond; or, vice versa, *free melody* is found in the midst of a melodic construction built upon the psalm formula. In such a case, it becomes difficult to analyze the melody in question to the point of being able to place it definitely in either one of the two categories.<sup>2</sup>

It would be to lessen the importance of sacred music, Dom Pothier tells us, to consider it only as a beautiful accessory to the

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI and *Pal mus.*, Vol. III.   <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. III.



Divine cult: it has that effect without a doubt, but its principal role, one which makes it penetrate the "very intimacy of the liturgy," is to unite with the holy words in order to complete their expression.<sup>1</sup> "One cannot too much admire," reflects this scholarly musician, "the manner in which the different parts of each piece in the Gregorian repertory combine and link themselves together, giving to each kind of song its proper physiognomy, without harming the expression particular to each melody." Thus, one can distinguish the melody of an Introit or a Communion from that of an Offertory, and this melody from that of a Gradual or a Respond of Matins. "Despite the hindrances which must have seemed to impose themselves through such complex conditions, the melody always blends with the text, forms but a single body with it, lends itself to all of its movements, and gives force to the text without losing any of its own. And all of this without affectation, without pretention, without using extraordinary means, but merely the simple resources of the diatonic scale and of a rhythm ever simple and little apparent, although in reality quite rich and varied."<sup>2</sup>

Guido shows how the ancients used a simple formula of four notes in sixteen different manners through the double movement of *arsis* and *thesis*. His commentator, Michael Hermesdorff, exclaims admiringly: "One sees, after all, with what minute perfection the ancients sought to penetrate into the being of the Mode!"<sup>3</sup>

Abbé Bains (d. 1844), at one time master of the Papal Choir, in his biography of Palestrina writes as follows concerning our sacred musical art: "The ancient and genuine melodies of Gregorian Chant (regardless of what may be said and written against my assertion by all of those who work in music) are absolutely inimitable. One can copy them, one can adapt them—heaven knows how—to other words; but create new ones as rich as the old—that cannot be done; it never has been done." He speaks not only of the music handed down from Saints Damasus, Gelasius

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XVI. <sup>3</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XVI.

and principally from St. Gregory, but in discussing the ecclesiastical chant written even after their time, brings out the fact that the monks, before setting out to compose, fortified their inspiration with prayer and fast. He depicts the infinite care with which they studied the nature, character and meaning of the words, as well as the circumstances under which they were to be sung; how they then determined the Mode which would best correspond, from the standpoint of melodic height or depth, rhythmic movement, disposition of half-tones, particular allure of modulations, or the march of the melody. They distinguished the character proper to the chants of the Office from that proper to those of the Mass; the style of an Introit was other than that of a Gradual or a Tract; they differentiated the Offertory from the Communion, the Antiphons from the Responds. The psalmody after the Antiphon of the Introit differed from that in the Canonical Hours. Chant to be sung by a single voice was distinct from that to be executed by the choir.

And all this was circumscribed within the limits of four, five, or at most six different tones—quite exceptionally of seven or eight. The author completes his eulogy with these words: "I affirm that the ancient song is admirable and inimitable by a finesse of indescribable expression, by a moving pathos, by a wholly natural simplicity; that it is always fresh, always new, always vigorous, always beautiful; that it does not wither, that it never ages." He follows up these comments with a vehement protest against the "stupid, insignificant, fastidious, uneven and incoherent" modern melodies which have entered into Church music even from the middle of the thirteenth century to his own day. These he brands as "arranged or extrinsic."<sup>1</sup>

Dom Pothier concedes that modern art, "as unfortunately the illustrious Roman *maestro* says only too truly," no longer possesses the secret of the music of former times, but he does not conclude from this that the secret is absolutely lost and beyond recovery. However, if one wishes to return to the source, recapture the

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI.

spirit of this art, and learn to compose new melodies which are not too unworthy of the ancient ones, it will be necessary, he maintains, to know, and consequently to study, the latter. Not to faulty reproductions, but to original versions must we have recourse, this eminent author reasons, if we would learn to know this art as it is in itself, free from error. The knowledge of how to restore the Gregorian phrase and regain the manner of executing it is, he continues, not only possible but easy to acquire, because of the valuable documents still extant upon which to draw in order to reconstruct the Gregorian repertory in all of its primitive purity.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately for our present generation, a great part of the work of reconstruction has already been accomplished by the indefatigable labors of this great master and his successors.

While the question of composing new melodies in the realm of Plainchant presented itself as a reasonable one to such an outstanding authority as Dom Pothier, the actual circumstances of today would seem to demand primarily, so at least for the present, greater stimulus in the search for knowledge and understanding of the old traditional melodies themselves. We have scarcely scratched the surface in the practical realization of a universal return to the use of Gregorian Chant in the Church, even granted that we may now be striving more earnestly than ever before to attain that ideal. For so many centuries the secret of this art was lost, and even now that it has been recovered, the difficulty of arriving at a thorough familiarity with Gregorian Chant is still very real. This can only be attributed to the fact that the overcoming of all that is strange in any traditional subject, which we have never had occasion to know through association, requires genuine sacrifice, labor and study. Its true fundamentals cannot be arrived at by a merely superficial acquaintance with the subject, any more than can the other sciences of the Church be acquired in this manner.

Gregorian Chant suffers from being looked upon as "simply

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI.

another type of music" by many eminent Catholic minds, the reasoners who automatically relegate "music" into the realm of the relatively unimportant. And still, think of the mysterious import of an art which, exclusively, is proclaimed to be the one in which the praises of God are, always have been and always shall be expressed in the Kingdom of Heaven. St. Thomas of Aquinas refers to celestial praise as a true song (*in sanctis vocalis laus Dei*).<sup>1</sup> "Music," "melody," "song," seem to be the sole expressions our poor inadequate language can muster up to portray the picture of Eternal Paradise. And why? Because even in this present valley of misery, our very outcries of pain and sorrow, even as those of joy and happiness, become ennobled in song. Far from being the aesthetic embodiment of an idle dream of fantasy, genuine music, as is the case in every liberal art, is a production based on the fruits of a contemplation of all things perceived through knowledge and experience. When the dross and the sordidness have at last been purged out, there remains art, man's last practical gift to humanity, having given all else of the substance of his being. What reverential awe we should feel for the production of the little flock who, with hearts transpierced and souls benumbed by the ignobility to which they may be destined, turn the expression of all that they have managed to save from the wreckage—their spirits—into one of noble beauty instead of into one of bitterness or of black despair. These are the souls who fill the gap of that which is *not*, with that which is. The genuine artist *creates* the perfect world—the creation of man comprised within the creation of God!

Vincent d'Indy, in treating of "the work of art and the artist," tells us that "to create, in the artistic sense of the word, it is necessary to have been *moved* and to have the *will* to translate one's emotion. One must have felt and suffered his work, before realizing it. At this price alone, the work will be really sincere, expressive, durable."<sup>2</sup>

True musicians, knowing at what price they possess their

<sup>1</sup> II, II, Quest. 18, Art. 4. <sup>2</sup> *Cours.*, Introduction.

art, experience a sentiment of deep reverence for all other sciences besides their particular form of expression; for the artist and scholar should really embody the philosopher and scientist. The art of music is a science profound in nature, and it must, in justice and truth, be recognized as such. When music goes further, and carries with it the stamp of the supernatural, as does Gregorian Chant, neither disparagement nor undervaluation of it as "merely music" can be of any avail in the sphere of essential truth, where all things are what they are by the Power of God, and where neither man nor angel can alter eternal values.

We conclude this chapter with another reflection of Dom Pothier: "Gregorian Chant," he ponders, "is, in itself and when well executed, truly the song of the soul, the ever simple and natural but potent means of expression of true prayer; not of that cold prayer which isolates itself as though it were afraid of its own being, but of the social and liturgical prayer which throws open the heart and sustains in the soul holy enthusiasm, buoyancy and joy: joy of hope, which should prepare that of possession in the bosom of God."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél Greg.*, Ch. XVI.





## CHAPTER IV

### RHYTHM

*In the beginning was Rhythm.*  
Hans von Bülow.

Two things give to a succession of sounds the form which is necessary to produce a melody. One of these we have just studied: it consists in the modulations which result from the order in which different intervals of the voice, or of an instrument, move successively in the scale of sounds. The other element necessary to melody is rhythm: order and proportion in time. Rhythm is independent of melody in its being, but melody demands rhythm for its existence.

One must consider rhythm as anterior to all the other elements of music; primitive people knew, so to speak, no other musical manifestation. "Rhythm," says d'Indy, "is universal: it appears in the movement of the heavenly bodies, in the periodicity of the seasons, in the regular alternation of day and night. One recognizes it in the lives of plants, in the cries of animals, and even in the posture and utterance of man."<sup>1</sup> It is found in the *line* of the liberal *plastic* arts—those of space—sculpture, painting, architecture; and in the *movement* of the liberal arts of succession—those of time—literature and music. When hearing consecutive sounds of equal force, pitch and duration, the very "necessity of our spirit" compels us to conceive rhythm. Accordingly, between each pair of these sounds, without our being able to prevent it, we conceive abstractly a relationship based on proportion of length (an *agogic* element), or of intensity (a *dynamic* element), or of pitch or intonation (a *melodic* element). These relationships of duration, intensity, or pitch, considered in themselves, are but a purely mental abstraction (under the condition just specified), independent of the sounds perceived.<sup>2</sup> Sounds may also possess in themselves a *phonetic* relationship, depending upon the instrument which produces them.

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Introduction. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Chs. I and II.

The ancient Greeks divided Art into nine different kinds, personified by the nine Muses, and grouped them into three triads. The first contained the arts of *reasoning*: history, rhetoric and astronomy. The second was composed of the arts of *spoken rhythm*: comedy, epic and lyric poetry. The third comprised the art of *rhythm* properly speaking, in the tragedy, dance and music.<sup>1</sup> The original Greek chorus (Gr. *choros*, dance) was a dance, or measured movement. These movements formed the first *meters* of true poetry. As the old dances consisted of *steps*, the ancient meters consisted of *feet*. In summing up their division of Art, one realizes the important place given to *rhythm* by the Greeks in their antique civilization.

From the time of Charlemagne, rhythm, notably in its application to the movements of the body in the dance, was considered as of an inferior order. By a natural law of reaction, the arts of reasoning became more and more evident, and rhythm was relegated exclusively to music, which was taught not as an art, but as a science—the fourth in the Quadrivium.<sup>2</sup>

Musical rhythm, in its broadest sense, is a certain movement by which the proportion existing between the diverse parts of a melody is rendered perceptible. "A melody," says Dom Pothier, "should form a living and animated whole. Sounds . . . can only be considered as the material elements of the song; modulation regulates these elements and thus produces an organized body. But organization alone does not suffice; a breath of life is necessary to this body in order to animate it; this breath is rhythm: rhythm is, then, the *soul* of the song. For of what service would both the perfection of its organs and the beautiful disposition of its members be to a body, if its soul were absent, if it were without life? It is the same with song: however well arranged may be the parts which compose it, it is nothing if rhythm does not give it life. Therefore, to know how to execute a melody well, it is necessary to combine with the practical science of the intervals which separate the tones in the scale, the equally practical knowledge of the laws which govern rhythm."<sup>3</sup>

The conception of duration, intensity and pitch which one ac-

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Introduction. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. II.



cords to uniform consecutive sounds, emanating from a vague mental impression, does not manifest itself, is not effective, until these sounds are presented to the listener with a *voluntary* relationship, under determined forms. These rhythmic forms—again because of man's nature—resolve themselves into units of *two* and *three*: man walks in a rhythm of two, while the pulsations of the human heart (by which J. S. Bach was accustomed to regulate himself to determine the movement of his works) are, in themselves, of the ternary order.<sup>1</sup> The *binary* rhythmic unit is produced by a *light* or *arsic* beat followed by a *heavy* or *thetic* beat. "For there is no melody [as a consequence of no movement] which commences with a heavy beat," says Hugo Riemann; and d'Indy supplements this with: "All melody commences with an *anacrusis* [up-beat] *expressed* or *as a thing understood*."<sup>2</sup> The ternary rhythmic unit is produced by a light beat followed by two heavy beats, expressed either in one prolongation or as one beat followed by a beat of silence. These smallest rhythmic units of sounds in groups of two or three are indivisible. They form the *neums* of Plainchant, just as *syllables* of the language, grouped in units of two and three, form *words*.<sup>3</sup>

Sound is further susceptible to a termination which is designated as either *masculine* or *feminine*. One terms *masculine* the rhythm in which the heavy beat contains but *one sound*, regardless of the number on the light beat, and *feminine* that in which the heavy beat is formed of one principal accented sound followed by one or more other sounds of decreasing intensity.<sup>4</sup> The place of the tonic accent varies, following the form, masculine or feminine, of the group of sounds.<sup>5</sup>

Neums are "undulations of the voice."<sup>6</sup> The distinct nature of the neum, just as that of the word, makes it requisite that the final note or syllable be possessed of a certain quality not of intensity but of *duration*, an element not of accentuation but of *pause*, in order that the ear may grasp the divisions of both the melody and the text. This is the "hidden beat" (*tempus latens*) Quintilian describes, wherein the relationship between the final syllable of a

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. II. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, pp. 72, 73. <sup>4</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. I. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. II. <sup>6</sup> *Les. Mél. Grég.*, Ch. IX.

word and the syllable which commences the following word is less marked than that between the syllables of the same word—a procedure which is perfectly natural to discourse. This does not imply a separation of the words, or a prolongation of the final syllable or note during the uninterrupted course of the movement, or where no distinct division occurs, but only that each final should be rendered softly, so that the diminished sound at this place may serve to distinguish the words without disconnecting them. It is neither a separation nor an arrest of the movement. Neither short nor mute, these finals are, nevertheless, vested with a softness that bespeaks an element of termination.<sup>1</sup> Certain intimately united words or melodic formulas demand a slight suspension of the voice (*mora vocis*) to punctuate the literary or musical text. This pause is not a silence; it is filled by the light resonance of the final syllable or note.

There is another pause besides the one of suspension we have just considered. This second kind is the pause which marks a *real repose*. It may affect only the last syllable or note, or include the closing syllables or notes in a progressive retard from the last verbal or musical accent. Quintilian, in citing a text of Virgil, describes this pause in speaking of the manner in which the phrase or period in discourse must be sustained or terminated; there is here a certain time of *silence*. The pause may demand, as well, that one stop and take a breath before continuing.<sup>2</sup> Greek music, as well as mensural and modern, have all used signs of pause and of silence. "Ideas require breath to charm the ear."<sup>3</sup> The length of the time of arrest in these circumstances is governed by the relative importance of the separated divisions, each of which is ended with a retard of the voice. Now it is the relative length of these various retards (*tempus alias brevius, alias longius*) which produces the difference in pauses. Their length is also in proportion to the rate of speed of the movement. The respiration in discourse and song is, in a way, nothing but an accidental factor. The existence of a pause is not only exempt from the necessity of a respiration, but Quintilian says that there is sometimes a respiration without a pause: *sed e contrario*

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> *Inst. Orat.*, XI-3, *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. X. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

*spiritum interim recipere sine intellectu morae necesse est.*<sup>1</sup> This may occur in a long melodic passage, as well as in discourse, because one should never permit the breath to be exhausted before resorting to a new respiration. If a respiration is necessary under these conditions, it should be inaudible, otherwise it will produce confusion.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the respiration must not be taken in the body of a melodic formula.<sup>3</sup>

And as to the word, the "golden rule" (so called by the author himself) of Elias Salomon (XIII century) states that a pause is never permitted immediately before the expression of a syllable in a word already started. His two motives for this assertion are based upon the principle of safeguarding both the text and the melody. First, he says, to breathe at such a place breaks the word, and secondly, it changes the nature of the chant and alters the melody.

In poetry and measured music the divisions are determined by precise and unchangeable rules. In free discourse and natural song, the divisions are more varied. However, all in refusing to submit to a fixed and rigorous form, free rhythm is none the less subservient to the laws of proportion, and it is in the proportion among the divisions of verbal or melodic movement that this rhythm actually resides. If proportion is established on a fixed and immutable basis, as in metric verse, the rhythm is *measured*. If proportion is determined by the natural instinct of the ear, the rhythm is *free*. The ancient orators called free rhythm *numerus*. The relation between the various elements which create rhythm, either free or measured, is multiple."<sup>4</sup>

Dom Pothier presents the example which follows, wherein the thought itself, or the figures which are the most intimate form of the thought, reveal rhythm by proportion or relativity. The parallelism of the verses, that is, the relation of analogy or of opposition between their respective thoughts or images, producing symmetry, constitutes already, says this scholar, "a sort of rhythm which charms the mind and the imagination; a rhythm more perfect than

<sup>1</sup> *Inst. Orat.*, XI-3, *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> *Inst. Orat.*, XI-18. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. X.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XIII.

that which flatters the ear alone, because it is of a more spiritual nature:"

*Audite vocem meam, uxores Lamech,  
Auscultate sermonem meum.  
Quoniam occidi virum in vulnus meum,  
et adolescentulum in livorem meum.*

In these words of Lamech (Chapter IV of Genesis) a powerful rhythm is produced not by the classic long and short syllables, nor by the resonance of rime, but by that which is more natural and more intimate—the encounter of one thought with another and the echo of the sentiments.<sup>1</sup> We find a further example of parallelism of thought in the relation of opposition found in the following verses of the *Magnificat*:

*Deposuit potentes de sede; et exaltavit humiles.  
Esuriētes implēvit bonis; et divites dimisit inānes.*

Melody, according to Guido, is composed first of *musical syllables* (neums). These melodic units, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> are analogous to *words* in discourse. The second division he calls a *neuma* (a combination of several neums). This *pars cantilenae* of the musical period is like the *section* or *phrase* in discourse. Guido's third division of melody is the *distinction*, like the *period* or complete thought of discourse.<sup>3</sup> Among these divisions, especially between the parts and the distinctions, a variety should exist, but this variety should be governed by a certain regularity. To satisfy both reason and good taste, there should be a relationship of similarity among these different parts. This similarity resides in the number of sounds with the proportion of the pauses, as well as in the relationship established by the diversity of the intervals, be it between successive neums, successive melodic parts, or successive distinctions with their diverse cadences.<sup>4</sup> This creates the *melodic design*.

When the divisions are similar under these different relationships, but especially in the relationship of the length of the parts to the pauses which serve to distinguish them, one obtains a song whose

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 95. <sup>3</sup> The author has employed the words *phrase* and *period* as signifying *brevity* and *conclusion* respectively. <sup>4</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV.

rhythm Guido says is *analogous* to meter. The parts and the distinctions are not verse, but they *imitate verse* (*quasi versus*). They are not scanned, they only *seem to be scanned* (*scandere videamur*).<sup>1</sup> The melodies of many Antiphons display this rhythm, which is similar to meter. Ex.:

ANTIPHON—BENEDICTA<sup>2</sup>

4<sup>o</sup> Mode.

Benedicta tu in muli-é-ribus, et be ne dic tus fructus

ventris tu-i.

One observes here the regular division of this Antiphon into four almost equal parts, which gives it the appearance of a strophe of four verses; and when one adds to this the suspension of the voice or place of repose at the end of each division, he obtains the two points of resemblance signaled by Guido between the songs of free rhythm and those of meter: *aut in numero vocum aut in ratione tenorum neumae alterutrum conferantur*. This procedure, writes Aribo, Guido's noted commentator, is what rhetoricians called *compar*.<sup>3</sup> This is not a recommendation on their part to *count* the syllables; that can be left to good taste and use. Nevertheless, Aribo advises, with Guido, that the musician select in advance, among the various divisions, the types which he will adopt to produce a certain song. For, says Aribo, just as different meters, Asclepiadic, Sapphic or Alcaic, present different kinds of divisions, so do the different parts of a melody produce divisions which are diversely proportioned in relation to one another. Aribo divides the following Respond to show the relation, quasi-metric, between the different divisions in their proper proportion (the lines mark the divisions, not the lengths of the pauses): *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, | ecce nunc dies salutis, | commendemus nosmetipsos, | in multa patientia, | in jejuniis multis; | per arma justitiae, | virtutis Dei.* ||<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Microl.*, Ch. XV. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>3</sup> *Gerbert, Scriptores, Musica Aribonis Scholastici, Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

When Guido says that the musician should decide in advance with what rhythmical factors he will build his song, just as the poet, before composing, decides in what meter he will write his verse, he adds that there is, however, a difference between these two workmen, in that the musician is not constrained to the severity of the law, as is the poet. But, at the same time, the musician should arrange his tones following the dictates of reason, the great medieval master adds, and reflects that if the composer does not recognize this temperance of reason, it is well for him to obey that which delights the spirit, in which the reason resides.<sup>1</sup>

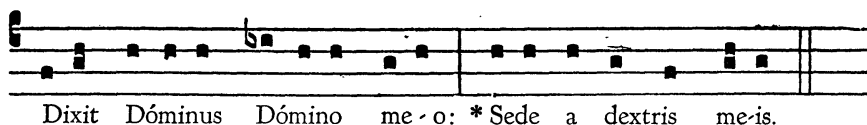
Guido does not ask, then, for a calculated rhythm, while at the same time he demands one in which proportion is evident. This is felt mostly at the beginning and end of both the sections and divisions in the course of the movement, but it is especially at the *end* that the hearing demands a greater satisfaction. The analogy which Guido discerns between the *neums*, the *parts* of the melody, and the *distinctions* of Gregorian music and the *feet*, the *meters* and the *verses* of poetry, although real, *non parva similitudo*, is not to be construed as a desire on his part to *identify* free rhythm with metric rhythm. The first rhythm belongs to oratorical language and to Gregorian Chant; the second to the language of verse and to measured music. Just as Cicero, who charmed the ears of the Romans, was accused by the rhetoricians of wanting to introduce the meter of poetry into discourse because he recommended *number*, so were Guido's theories erroneously interpreted by late musicologists, who accused him of being a partisan of *measure* in Plainchant because of his recommendations just cited.<sup>2</sup> Neither discourse nor free rhythm Plainchant are constrained to the laws of *meter*. Both are fashioned by the *oratorical number* and *proportion* which reside in the various divisions of free movement.

Besides the quasi-metrical relationship between the various parts and their pauses, a corresponding relationship, as already stated,<sup>3</sup> based upon the melodic design traced by the course of the interval progressions, is found in Gregorian Chant. The similar or

<sup>1</sup> *Microlog.*, Ch. XV. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 98.

opposing manner in which the intervals are connected, through the manner in which the sounds are grouped, or in which the melodic cadences are produced, permits the ear to distinguish an affinity, and consequently a rhythm, between the different parts:

PSALM TONE I<sup>1</sup>



In Psalm Tone I, with the mediant cadence on A (the dominant) and the particular final cadence on G (the sub-dominant), one finds a melodic relationship between the mediant and the termination of the Psalm Tone which establishes order in the succession of the notes, and consequently rhythm.

The quantitative accent of classic verse is not observed in the Hymnody of liturgical chant. The metric accent is interpreted more like that of prose than that of ancient poetry, by giving it a slight stress or fullness of the voice<sup>2</sup> without prolonging it.

In the domain of liturgical Hymnody, four particular kinds of verse may be signaled: Iambic, Trochaic, Asclepiadic and Sapphic.

The ordinary Iambic strophe comprises four verses of eight syllables each—four iamбусes. (An iambus=,./). When hymns in this meter are syllabic, they should be rendered naturally.<sup>3</sup> The principal metric accent is on the sixth syllable, the last metric accent being the weakest; the longer pause during the course of the strophe is after the second verse, with a *mora vocis* after the first and third verses. When the slight insistence of the voice on the metric accent coincides with the tonic accent of the word, there is a complete assimilation with the arsic quality of the verbal accent. Ex.: Nunc sáncte nóbis Spírítús, etc. When there is "conflict," one should observe perfectly the metric accent with its slight stress without being "too troubled" about the tonic accents, but at the same time not neglect these.<sup>4</sup> Ex.: Rèrúm Dèús tènax vígór, etc. In trimeter iambic verse of twelve syllables (six iamбусes), the principal metric

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>2</sup> Dom Lucien David, O. S. B., *Méthode pratique de Chant Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

accent is on the tenth syllable, the secondary one on the fourth. The slight division or pause (*caesura*) after the fifth syllable is not observed (save in exceptional cases) in recitation, only in singing. Ex.: *Sit Trínitáti | sémpitérna glóriá*, etc.<sup>1</sup>

The inverse of Iambic is Trochaic meter, in which the strophe ordinarily comprises six verses in groups of two. The first verse of each group contains eight syllables or four trochees (a trochee = /.); the second but seven syllables (three and one-half trochees). In the first verse, the principal metric accent is on the seventh syllable, the secondary one on the third; in the second verse, the principal metric accent is on the fifth syllable, and the next in importance is on the first. Ex.:

*Pánge língua glóriói  
Córporís mysteríum.*

The main pause is after each pair of verses, with a *mora vocis* after the first verse of each pair. The same principle of interpretation applied in Iambic verse in case of "conflict" between the metric and tonic accents holds equally good in Trochaic verse. The Hymn *Ave Máris Stélla* is written in Trochaic meter. Its verses are grouped in pairs, with the principal metric accent on the fifth syllable of each verse. The principal pause during the course of the strophe occurs, as usual, after the second verse. The Sequences of the Missal (except *Victimae paschali*, which is particularly irregular) belong to Trochaic prosody.<sup>2</sup>

In *ornamental* Iambic and Trochaic Hymnody, the tonic, as well as the melodic accent, may sometimes stand more in relief than the metric accent.<sup>3</sup>

The Asclepiadic strophe contains ordinarily four verses; three asclepiads of twelve syllables, in which the principal metric accents are found on the tenth and fourth syllables, followed by an eight-syllable Glyconic verse in which the principal metric accent is given to the sixth syllable. In recitation, a *caesura* separates each of the first three verses into two parts; the fourth is undivided. Ex.:

*Sácris solémniis | júnta sint gáudia, etc. . . .  
Córda vóces et ópera.*

<sup>1</sup> *Mét. prat. de Chant Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



The first three syllables of each verse should be no faster than the remaining syllables of the same verses. The main pause is after the second verse. After the first and third verses there is a *mora vocis*.<sup>1</sup>

The Sapphic strophe also comprises four verses: three Sapphic verses of eleven syllables, in which the principal metric accents are found on the tenth and fourth syllables, followed by a five-syllable Adonic verse in which the principal metric accent is on the fourth syllable. In recitation, a *caesura* separates the Sapphic verses into two parts of five and six syllables respectively, but the Adonic verse is recited without a pause. Ex.:

Iste Conféssor | Dómini coléntes, etc. . . .  
Scándere sédes.

The main pause is after the second verse, with a *mora vocis* after the first and third verses, the first *mora* being the lighter.

The tonic accent, which occupies second place in syllabic Iambic and Trochaic liturgical verse, plays an important role in Asclepiadic and a predominant one in Sapphic verse.<sup>2</sup>

In liturgical chant are found, as well, cases of variety of form in both the verse and the strophe. A certain number of Antiphons, the *Alma Redemptoris*, for example, or the Refrain *Gloria laus*, although retaining the free oratorical rhythm of prose, have, in the division of their parts, borrowed from the regularity of verse. This produces a more symmetrical allure in their interpretation, while properly speaking they belong in the category of free rhythm pieces.<sup>3</sup>

From the XI century on, an attempt was made to subject certain songs to a more pronounced measure. We shall observe this in a later chapter in the melodic development of the Sequence.

The first Sequences and Tropes are real prose of simple recitation, in which the rhythm of the melody remains free. The Sequence *Victimae paschali*, already mentioned,<sup>4</sup> is one of these primitive examples. But soon the phrasing of the Sequence text became more symmetrical, the syllables were counted, and the accents occupied a determined place. The Sequence *Veni Sancte Spíritus*

<sup>1</sup> *Mét. pratique de Chant Grég.* and *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV and *Mét. prat. de Chant Grég.*, Ch. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 102.

shows a very marked form of measure. However, this symmetrical development in the Sequence is natural, and stays within the domain of art.<sup>1</sup>

The gradual transformation of free rhythm into measure was more intensely felt in Organum and Diaphony, which contain simultaneous voice parts; but even through the epoch of Discant rhythm was not generally considered as measured. These musical types will also be described in a following chapter. Suffice for our present purpose to say that in order for the two voice parts to keep together rhythmically, the melodic movement became much slower, and the singers were advised by the singing masters to beat the rhythm by clapping with the hands or tapping with the foot.<sup>2</sup> The expressions *percutere, cadere, plaudere, ictus, loco percussiones*, and particularly *est arsis sublatio pedis sine sono, thesis positio pedis cum sono*, were used by the Latins.<sup>3</sup> Because at the place of the *thesis* the foot, in striking the ground, and the hands, in clapping, made a natural noise, later musical theorists concluded that every *thesis* was *strong* and every *arsis* *weak*, and that the corresponding syllables should be interpreted in the same manner. This, as Dom Mocquereau points out, was a false conclusion. He reasons that the *cum sono* had to do with the *gesture* itself, which indicated the *place* of the *thesis*, not a *dynamic* quality. For if one interprets *cum sono* as implying *with sound* at the *thesis*, one must likewise interpret *sine sono* as implying *without sound* at the *arsis*, which would mean that the up-beat could have neither syllable, note nor sound. This proves, says the same authority, that the two expressions could have referred only to the *places*, where the foot or hand, in indicating the rhythm, made either a natural sound or no sound at all. The Gregorian Chant *cum sono* is the "step of a fairy."<sup>4</sup>

Dom David, on the other hand, assures us with the aid of third and fourth century writers, that the "vocal ictus (metric and tonic) of *intensity*, of which the existence with the Greeks as with the Latins is not to be doubted, at least from the third century, brought about, especially with the Latins, a reversing in the sense given to

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

the words *arsis* and *thesis*. . . But it is *always the element of intensity which continues to characterize them* in their new acceptance. . . . With the evolution of the tonic accent into an accent of intensity, in the third century, the *rhythm* of intensity arrives at affirming itself more and more clearly. The words *arsis* and *thesis*, by which one continues to define rhythm, agree to apply themselves to the *accent*, precisely because it is *intense*, and because intensity is *the normal factor of rhythm*, especially since the disappearance of quantitative rhythm. We observe that the same expressions, which characterize the vocal metric *ictus* and which correspond to *intensity*, are then used to define the *accent* and at the same time the *arsis* . . . ‘*Accentus in ea syllaba est quae plus sonat*’, says Servius at the end of the fourth century. . . . Thus one sees, as well, that in the measure that the intensity and rhythmic domination of the accent affirm themselves, the final syllables, long by nature, become short.”<sup>1</sup>

“*Accentuation*,” says d’Indy, “holds to the very essence of melody; it gives melody its meaning by determining in it the *rhythmic melodic*. In pure music, as well as in song, a simple change of accentuation modifies at the same time the rhythmic sense and the musical signification.”<sup>2</sup>

As already stated,<sup>3</sup> the terms *weak* and *strong* beats, applied to measured music, are in no way equivalent to the terms *light* and *heavy* used in free rhythm. Furthermore, the word *measure* is not to be confused with the word *rhythm*. “*Measure*,” d’Indy asserts, “is a very imperfect figuration of rhythm. It helps to render certain narrow and servile rhythms more comprehensible, but it obliges free rhythms, on the contrary, to be represented in a complicated fashion, which makes them less apparent and frequently paralyzes their execution.”

The same master continues: “*To beat measure* and *to rhythm* a musical phrase are two completely different, frequently opposed, operations. The necessities of ensemble execution require that the measure beats be made evident by gesture; but the first beat, which one terms *struck*, is completely independent of the *rhythmic accen-*

<sup>1</sup> *Le rythme verbal et musical dans le chant romain, première partie.* <sup>2</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 72.

tuation. . . . The coincidence of rhythm and measure is an entirely particular case, which one has confusingly wished to generalize in propagating the error that 'the first beat of the measure is always strong,' . . . One could even assert that *most often* the first beat of the measure is *rhythmically a weak beat*; the adoption of this principle would avert many errors and many faults of interpretation."<sup>1</sup>

Defined, *measure* is the space comprised between ictuses placed at *rigorous* or *equal intervals*, while *free rhythm* is the space between ictuses placed at *flexible* or *unequal intervals* even as in natural speech. Measure is, therefore, but a *part* of rhythm. Rhythm, in the highest conception, is freed of measure, in the sense that, far from submitting to it, rhythm is the sole *creator* of measure. By itself, measure is nothing; it exists only because of rhythm, and has no distinction apart from rhythm. "Measure is the trace of steps in the sand. . . . Rhythm is omnipotent in the musical phrase; measure is its very humble servant."<sup>2</sup> Even *meter* uses the two beats, long and short, as *fixed* beats, while *rhythm* gives to beats the extension which it pleases.

In Gregorian Chant measure is composed only of binary and ternary *rhythms*. One might more truly say that in "Gregorian Chant there is only rhythm, no measure."<sup>3</sup>

When the melody and the text proceed in parallel motion, as in syllabic chant (that of the usual psalm Antiphon, for instance), the words, phrases and periods of the text indicate the divisions in the melody. When the melody develops apart from the text (as in the *Gradualresponsorium*, etc.), the rhythmic divisions are melodic, without, however, ever functioning contrary to the text. In the latter case, the melodic formulas replace the words, and it is the manner in which these formulas are grouped that serves as a means of partitioning the song into its different divisions, just as in discourse the meaning of the words serves an analogous purpose. From this comes the "homogeneity" of the rhythm of Gregorian Chant.<sup>4</sup> It often happens that in the same piece a purely syllabic phrase follows a purely melodic one, and vice versa; the composition as

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XI.

a whole would not be homogeneous if the rhythm of both types of melody were not always identical to that of the freedom of prose. "The rhythm is free," Dom Pothier tells us, "but it is not for that reason indeterminate; there is nothing arbitrary about it." The divisions—*musical syllables* (melodic units or neums), *neumae* (melodic phrases or sections of temporary repose), and *distinctions* (periods or principles of permanent repose with final cadences)—are, like the sequence of *words*, *phrases* and *periods* in discourse, the elements upon which rhythm reposes. They are, in fact, always determined for the singer, who cannot partition the Chant according to his caprice, but should follow "either the sense of the text or traditional formulas." Dom Pothier further asserts that if the chanters had always been careful to phrase the melodies following the grouping of their notes, one should never have thought of suppressing the slightest note of those melismatic passages which are so delicate and gracious when one knows how to express them. It was both confusion in notation and heaviness of execution which brought an eventual suppression of these beautiful neumatic phrases, to the great detriment of both art and piety. The same author concludes that "it is, in fact, especially upon the proper distribution of note groups . . . that the future of Gregorian Chant depends. However perfect in other respects a Chant edition may be, if the manner in which the notes have been grouped in the manuscripts has not been respected, we can have St. Gregory's note, but we will not have his rhythm, we will not have his Chant."<sup>1</sup>

Four elements are signaled by Dom Mocquereau as producing the ideal unity in the simultaneous movement of word and melody: the *quantity* of the logical ascending and descending sounds, some short, some long, all harmoniously disposed and proportioned in a manner to express a thought of musical sense, in creating a sentiment of order, unity and beauty; the *dynamic quality* of light and shade which projects itself throughout the length of the phrase by delicate modulations of crescendo and decrescendo; *real rhythm*, which absorbs the elementary rhythms by the amplitude of its movement in its

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XI.

soarings and cadences; and lastly, the *linking of the words*, whose individual rhythms one should carefully preserve, together with the other elements, just as the classical orators of antiquity paid more attention to the union of the words within the divisions than to their distinction one from another; because if they are not linked together, no rhythm is possible in either poetry, prose or the songs of Gregorian Chant.

The real rhythms are the large ones, in which the smaller ones are engulfed. There is no necessity for the ear to distinguish each of the smaller units in the general movement, where they should "efface themselves in the ensemble like shadows and half-tones."<sup>1</sup>

Having quoted from Nietzsche, "The Beautiful is light; all divine things walk on dainty feet," Dom Mocquereau continues: "Gregorian Chant also walks on dainty feet; it takes as little as possible from matter. It is purely *vocal*. The human voice does not move in a mechanical fashion; its rises and falls are of a nature more spiritual than material, moved as it is by a vital and spontaneous power, free and intelligent, which transmits to it something of its immateriality.

"The artist, in singing, exteriorizes his sentiments, his thoughts, his whole soul, and his voice can express their most delicate nuances. Master of his voice and of his word, he directs all their qualities of duration, of force, of melody, of expression, with the utmost liberty. He enlarges as he wishes the duration of soarings and of drops; like the painter on the lines of his drawing, he sets forth, in his guise, colors—the infinite nuances of the intensity of sounds; he unfolds in a thousand meanders the contour of his melody, all that conforms to the exigencies of order, of just proportion, which constitute one of his most delicate faculties, taste, the esthetic sense. How far we are from the fatal movement which precipitates the hammer on the anvil!

"Full liberty is therefore left to the artist to conduct his Chant, and especially to regulate and terminate his cadences with strength or with softness, as he sees fit. With softness, and that is the most

<sup>1</sup> *Pat. mus.*, Vol. VII.

ordinary case with the musical *phrase*, which terminates at the place where the last note, the last syllable, fades out and dies. Now, that which is found in the larger rhythm of the phrase may be found again even in the smallest elementary rhythms. The dynamic current conducts and carries the voice toward the cadence and the repose with equal sureness, be it in *crescendo* or *diminuendo*. It is upon this liberty that the double rhythm *strong thesis* and *weak thesis* is based. . . . There is but *one* rhythm, with different intensities."<sup>1</sup> A strong *thesis* does not, however, permit *accentuation*; merely the natural weight proper to certain masculine endings.

In presenting more vividly to the imagination the actual thetic quality of free rhythm, the author of the *Paléographie musicale* offers the following pictures and comments: "the flight of a bird which at every flapping of its wings rests on the air, that it may resume its soaring, the posture of this bird; the light snow flake which slowly falls, touches the ground and expires, approaches much more closely the delicacy of musical rhythm. But here again there remains something of material, of fatal, which departs from reality: the voice is lighter, more supple, than the snow flake."<sup>2</sup>

In order to portray to the mind the element of *movement* comprised in rhythm, the following authors are quoted: Gevaert (*Histoire et Théorie de la musique*) states that "there is no part of art where the relation between the object to be expressed and the means of expression are more manifest than in the rhythm which realizes *movement* under a form comprehensible to all." The same thought is expressed by M. Chaignet in *Le principe de la science du Beau*: "Man has a voice, and this voice is the most energetic and purest form of the life which is in him; it is the resonance the most profound, the most intimate, of his being. The human voice blends with the principle of life to such a degree that all languages profoundly identify themselves or mark intimate analogy with it. The word is but a breath, but this breath is the spirit, the soul and the immaterial principle of life. Form stretched out, palpable and visible, is in fact a condition of humanity; but *movement* is its essence,

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.   <sup>2</sup> Vol. VII.

and the voice is a *movement*; movement is immaterial, and the sound of the voice is impalpable and immaterial."

"This movement," Dom Mocquereau explains, "is in truth no longer local, it is *vocal*, but it is real; it fulfils all the conditions of a *true* movement, which is nothing other, in the last analysis, than the passage from one state to another, from one group to another, from one intensity to another, from an accented syllable to an atonic syllable, etc. A long time ago Aristoxenes said: 'The voice *moves* when it sings, as the body when it walks or dances.'

"Entirely real, vocal movement is of a nature very superior to that of mechanical or animal movement. . . . This it is which explains the subtlety, the liberty, the power and the infinite nuances in vocal rhythm; which explains especially how the rhythmic movements and the ictus-touchings which limit them are often of the same nature as the voice itself, that is, delicate, impalpable, immaterial.

"It is not, then, pure metaphor to speak of the *movement* of the phrase, be it musical or spoken. This is not a *movement* in the figurative sense, which would be symbolized simply by local movement; the movement, although immaterial, is nevertheless real.

"Since *local movement*, by the fact that it is material and addresses itself to the sight, is more easily comprehended and therefore easier to describe, it is natural to take it as an example if one wishes to explain vocal movement."<sup>1</sup> This we have seen through the application of the terms *arsis* and *thesis* to the spoken and sung word, as well as to the movement of the body.<sup>2</sup>

Rhythm has further power, in that it is capable of expressing all the sentiments of the human heart, from the tranquillity of the Plainchant *Inviolata* of the Mother of God, to the agitation of the final movement of the *Appassionata Sonata*, the almost breathless power of the *Ride of the Walküre*, and even to the tempest and chaos of the most violent passions. The reality of all these various sentiments is expressed by "the order of movement," Plato's definition of rhythm.

If the *kinetic* (Gr. *kinesis*, movement) order be defined as

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 69.



“pure movement,” we must consider this definition in its abstract sense as applied to rhythm, since rhythm is *order* in movement. “For without the real foundation of the elements of analysis, synthesis is impossible, movement cannot exist and is unintelligible,” writes Dom David. He continues, “In order that there be creation of rhythm in a musical work, it is absolutely necessary that there should be in the world of sonorous realities projection of an ideal form which is found in the intelligence; the aesthetic impression of the auditor will be, for its part, ‘a fulguration of the intelligence on a matter intelligently disposed’” (J. Maritain, *Art et Scholastique*). Continuity is but a *condition* of rhythm and not its *form*. “Movement and ordered movement are two things.”<sup>1</sup>

We recall that in a certain class at a course in Aesthetics, in discussing rhythm which expresses ideas, the Professor sang the *Dies Irae* for us, in order to portray what he termed “intellectual rhythm in a perfect cause. It corresponds to the words, one cannot portion them otherwise,” he said, but added: “One must have it in his blood by the grace of God. For the beautiful is not only intellectual, it is *internal*—it has *noble* tendencies.”

Since proportion in the divisions of movement constitutes rhythm, and since the various divisions themselves are distinguished by the pause, short or long, which marks the termination of the movement of each, it is very necessary for all who would properly express rhythmic movement in Plainchant, to regulate with precision the delay of the voice (*mora vocis*) at each of these resting places, as well as the retards which often precede these temporary or permanent places of rest. For a perfect ensemble in choir work, this rhythmic understanding is obligatory upon all.

The lengths of the silences must be fixed as well, for, as Gevaert teaches (*Musique de l'antiquité*), in all music the system of pauses and of silences should correspond exactly to that of the notes or syllables expressed. The silences are the elements of rhythmic composition, in the same manner as the sounds which they represent. The same author (in *La Mélopée antique*) points out, as an example

<sup>1</sup> *Le ryth. verb. et mus. dans le chant romain, première partie.*

of this principle, the Psalms, wherein the unique element of rhythm is the periodicity of the repose of the voice, which creates an approximate symmetry in the lengths of the different sections of the melody.

The author of the *Paléographie musicale* recalls, that just as we have seen a sort of *quantitative temperament* establish itself between different syllables (despite their sometimes quite perceptible nuances of duration), which creates a general equality of length, so it is with the *morae* and the *silences*. It is certain, he says, that if one were to measure with an instrument of precision the lengths of the pauses which exist between the different parts of a Gregorian melody, he would find, as for the syllables, that the nuances of duration blend in the ensemble and establish among themselves a perfect uniformity.<sup>1</sup>

We know of no more poetic description of the movement of a Plainchant song as it runs its course than that of the same author, who states that "the Gregorian cantilena is a *continuous* melody, not in the sense that it lacks divisions in its course—without these it would have no rhythm—but in the sense that these distinctions do not suffer among themselves either interruption or break, and that rather they themselves serve to the *continuity* of the melodic line: such are garlands of sinuous contour; such, and even better because they are living, are the long waves of a sea lifted lightly by the winds or the tide: they roll, rise, lengthen, descend, rise anew, without solution of continuity, until they reach the shore, upon which the last one finally stretches itself out and expires. This constant state in undulating movements is a striking image of the imposing and supple march of our melodies. Everything in the execution should contribute to produce and maintain it. It is at the end of the smallest divisions (*incises*), especially of the parts of the phrase, that the *continuity* is endangered: long or panting respirations, risk suspending it or breaking its course. All these, on the contrary—pauses, retards, respirations—should aid in delineating, so to speak, the prolongation of the inferior curves which bind the drop and the soaring of the melodic waves.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. VII.

"This intimate sentiment is felt by those who have seriously studied and practiced the Gregorian *cantilena*, and impels us to constantly reduce the pauses of the voice and to diminish the duration of the notes which support the *moras vocis*. . . . Rhythm is not constituted by these wholly exterior divisions; it is constituted solely by the *interior unity* of each smallest division (*incise*), of each part, and of the entire phrase."<sup>1</sup>

Dom Mocquereau points out, as well, that certain variants may rightfully occur in the melodic and rhythmic interpretation of Gregorian Chant. In referring to an analytic interpretation in Credo I, wherein he has been guided by the ternary rhythm of the movement of the words rather than that of the binary rhythm of the melody, we read the following: "We are accused sometimes of 'subjectivity,' and perhaps the phrase which we have just analyzed will be the occasion for this reproach.

"Two roads presenting themselves to me to arrive at the goal of my voyage, it is necessary that I make a choice. My choice, as regards choice, is indeed subjective, because it is I who choose; but this choice, in that it carries with it one of two real and objective roads, has nothing in it of subjectivity.

"Thus it is in the choice between *melodic* or *rhythmic* variants in Gregorian Chant. A prudent choice, motivated and enlightened, carries no subjectivity but in the choice, properly speaking, between these two variants.

"What would be entirely subjective and consequently condemnable, would be the pure and simple invention of rhythms which had no basis either in the melodies or in the words."<sup>2</sup>

The beating of rhythm for singers or dancers is known as the art of *chironomy* (Gr. *cheir*, hand + *nomos*, law), and, during many centuries, was practiced by the cantor for directing liturgical choirs. It has been revived with the restoration of Plainchant, since the use of these descriptive hand movements to portray the rhythmic and melodic course of the song is indispensable to the conductor of a Gregorian Chant choir. Even more than in the Mid-

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

dle Ages is it necessary, in our modern epoch of measured music, established on a rigorous and immutable basis, for ears and minds many of which have known intimately no other kind of rhythm, that the singers be aided by visual images of the inflections which the voice makes as it modulates in soarings and drops in a free, unfettered rhythm which is, nevertheless, founded upon clear and basic principles.

Aristoxenes says that the curve is not harmonious to our eyes unless we sense that its termination is already given in its origin, unless we vaguely divine the unity of its equation. The "melodic arcades" depicted by Plainchant chironomy are not a "theory of arabesques."<sup>1</sup>

The learned compiler of the *Paléographie musicale* reflects that pleasure does not reside in the curved lines, any more than it does in any signs, such as notes for instance, which trace the sounds of the voice. The curved lines of chironomy are likewise nothing other than material translations of a certain system of relationship which the understanding perceives through the medium of the senses. It is in its law of construction, not in the line, that the curve, like the musical phrase, has its logic, and it is this *interior* logic which determines positions, directions, distances. It is this logic, recognized by an initial act of the mind, which gives genuine artistic pleasure.<sup>2</sup> The same author further asserts that there are many ways of figuring chironomy, and the choir master selects the one which will bring about the greatest progress in his singers.<sup>3</sup>

In Vol. VII of the monumental work from which we have drawn so freely, we are further told, as regards choice in the art of conducting that "in sum, the aesthetic value of each of these chironomies, *taken apart*, is worth exactly the value of the model, i. e. the analysis, of which it [the chironomy] is the plastic representation. . . . It is to the conductor that it belongs to choose that one, in the ensemble of varied forms and nuances, which best adapts itself to the goal which he is actually pursuing. He will use these different chironomies in turn, passing from one to an-

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. X.

other with freedom and ease, according to the necessities and the solidity of his choir, but guided especially by the *sentiments which the meaning of the words, the melody and the rhythm inspire in him*, in order that by his regard, his gesture, he may communicate them to the singers, who, forming but one heart and one soul with him, should punctually obey him and render with fidelity, art and love all the delicacies of his thought. Such directing is the summit of art. It supposes a very enlightened conductor, penetrated with the science of Gregorian Chant, as well as a supple choir, docile to the slightest directions, long trained in the execution of liturgical melody—all choirs are not that."

That the attainment of such a stable perfection in this art demands precisely what this distinguished master claims, is incontestable, especially when it has to do with an interpretation which rests always on the same plane of superiority for the entire Gregorian repertoire. A body of persons formed from long date under an enlightened conductor in the execution of a given type of music, is the logical prerequisite of all ensemble work which would be raised to a high degree of perfection, whether it be that of a symphony orchestra or of a Gregorian Chant choir.

There is, however, a degree of excellency to which a choir can arrive in a relatively short period of time, provided the conductor, who must be qualified for his work, confine his singers to a limited amount of finished interpretive matter. What the achievement of this result presumes mostly is that every member of such a chorus should have started with the groundwork, i. e. the basic principles which govern both the rhythm and the melody of Plainchant, and that every one should know sufficient of the history and tradition of this liturgical art to understand the meaning of these compositions with relation to the particular sources from which they have drawn their origin. Lastly, and most essentially, as is affirmed by the authority whom we have just quoted, the choir must form "one heart and one soul" in the light which guides the spiritual interpretation of its singing. All must have a

common goal in their very reason for desiring to render liturgical chant with perfection. When these conditions are fulfilled, there remains no demand other than that of persevering labor, for a constant and ever more established possession, through increasing knowledge and love, of an art which has come *through* man, but *from* God.

Before his exposition of the theory of rhythm in his classic opus "*Les Mélodies Grégoriennes*," Dom Pothier wrote these words at the end of his analysis of Plainchant melodies: "Possessing thus all that is necessary to give practically to Gregorian Chant its proper rhythm, we could dispense ourselves from defining it. If rhythm is the soul of the Chant, it is devotion that is the soul of rhythm. Now it is better to feel devotion than to define it: so it is with rhythm; above all, one must feel it and express it, and to that end draw inspiration from the divisions of the text and from the Chant formulas, as we have taught."<sup>1</sup>

We are now acquainted with the factors which contribute to the composition and notation of Gregorian Chant, consequently of all Occidental music. Thus far we have tried to follow its organic growth. In the second part of this book, we shall try to picture the development of Gregorian Chant not in itself alone, but essentially in its identification with the transformation of the Old Law into the New—the Temple of God into the Church of Christ. We shall from now on, for this reason, follow its course in the Catholic Liturgy, without association with which, Gregorian Chant would have no claim to existence as a musical expression in a sphere by itself.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. XII.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHURCH AND ITS LITURGY

*Our liturgy is the very center of Christianity.*

Dom Guéranger.

The first Celebration of the Holy Eucharist was at the Last Supper, when "Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke: and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat: This is My body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks: and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."<sup>1</sup> This event took place at the time of the Jewish Passover, and the rites of the Last Supper were brought into close relation with the rites of the Paschal Feast instituted by Moses. However, a fundamental distinction exists between the old and the new Passover: the old ritual was a mere prefiguration of the new—that of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

At the traditional Jewish Passover, a lamb which had been sacrificed in the Temple was eaten in a solemn banquet by each family, in memory of the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. In the Holy Eucharist Jesus Christ, of whom John proclaimed when seeing Him approach, "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world,"<sup>2</sup> gave His own flesh and blood to His disciples in anticipation of His immolation on the Cross for the redemption of the whole world, and He commanded them at this first Eucharistic Celebration to "Do this for a commemoration of Me."<sup>3</sup>

The Mass as we have it today is, in all essentials, identical with the sacred Rite instituted by Our Lord. In it we find the very words and actions of which He made use at the Last Supper. It would not be a Holy Sacrifice at all if this nucleus had not been kept in all Catholic liturgies—that which it has been in those of the Orient as well as in those of the Occident.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. XXVI, 26, etc. <sup>2</sup> John I, 29. <sup>3</sup> Luke XXII, 19.

The name "Eucharist" (Gr. *eucharistia*—thanksgiving) commemorates the act of Our Lord who "gave thanks"<sup>1</sup> at the time when He instituted this Sacrament. Christ also "broke"<sup>2</sup> the bread, and this action, repeated in every Mass, was the origin of the name "Fraction" (L. *Fractio Panis*)—the name also used for the whole Rite during the first centuries of Christianity.

The word "liturgy" (Gr. *leitōs*, public, + *ergon*, work) means the official public service of the Church which corresponds to the service of the Temple of the Old Law—a Christianized Jewish service. In the Western Church the term comprises all that is official or canonical—the Office as well as the Mass; here the designation "liturgical" is often applied to the whole complex of rites, ceremonies, prayers and sacraments, as opposed to private devotions. "Liturgy" in the Eastern Church signifies specifically the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

We read in the Acts that while the Apostles were still in Jerusalem, before being scattered abroad on their various missions, the people were "persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers."<sup>3</sup> Again in the Acts we read of Paul at Troas "breaking bread and tasting," and of his talking "a long time to them," which latter act implies an instruction.<sup>4</sup> Thus, already in the infant Church we see the essential elements of the Holy Sacrifice, found later in the organized liturgies.

The word *Missa* (Mass) is of folk, not of classical origin. It was used originally in the sense of "*missio*" or "*dimissio*," signifying the dismissal of the faithful at the end of any celebration of the cult. St. Ambrose used it as a liturgical term in a letter written in the year 385, applying its meaning to the Eucharistic Sacrifice; as used by another writer at that time, it would also seem, from evidence, to have included within its scope the canonical Office as well as the Eucharistic Sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> The meaning of the word, therefore, originally applied to a detail, gradually embraced all of the preceding service with its rites and prayers. From the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. XXVI, 27, Luke XXII, 17. <sup>2</sup> Matt. XXVI, 26, Mark XIV, 22, Luke XXII, 19. <sup>3</sup> Acts II, 42. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, XX, II. <sup>5</sup> P. Wagner, *Geschichte der Messe, Einleitung.*



VI century on, the canonical Hours were often excluded from the signification of the word *Missa*, at which time writers use it preferably with reference to the more important service alone. In the course of the Middle Ages the broader designation of the word disappeared, and from the X century on *Missa* was used exclusively in the sense of the liturgical Sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> It is improper to call each of the "mosaics" of a Sacramentary a "Mass"; this collection—the Sacramentary, although assembled with order and etiquette, requires a frame which excludes all pretext for changing the particular order of these parts, for removing them, or for inserting other parts:<sup>2</sup> this is called the *Ordo Missae*. The first *Ordo Romanus*, of 770, was founded upon the *Ordo* of Gregory I, to supplement the choir books, with directions for the ritual.<sup>3</sup>

Three Popes contributed to the definite formation of the Mass: St. Leo the Great, St. Gelasius I and St. Gregory the Great. The Leonine Sacramentary is, therefore, the oldest; only one known manuscript, written in the VII century, is attributed to St. Leo; it is purely Roman, with no Gallican touches. The Gelasian Sacramentary, in several manuscripts of the VII and VIII centuries, is extant. The Gregorian Sacramentary contains a few rubrical directions (L. *rubrica*, red earth: red was the distinguishing color used in liturgical collections for writing instructions and indications; "rubrics" is the consecrated term for the rules pertaining to the Divine Service and the administration of the Sacraments).<sup>4</sup>

Compared with that which it now includes, the Mass in the early Roman liturgy did not have the initial prayers at the foot of the altar, nor the prayers before the Communion, nor the last Gospel: it commenced with the Introit and ended with the *Ite Missa est*. The Pater Noster was placed between the Canon and the *Fractio Panis* by Gregory I.

At the Mass of the Catechumens, which ended after the Gospel, the unbaptized were permitted to attend; this rite was really the introductory service of the Mass of the Faithful—the sacrifice

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>3</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia, Lit. Books.* <sup>4</sup> Dom Fernand Cabrol, O.S.B., *Cath. Ency.*

proper. This first part of the Mass, probably a separate service, was evidently derived by the Apostles, or by their immediate successors, from the service celebrated on the Sabbath day in the Jewish Synagogue. In the infant Christian Church lessons from Holy Scripture were read, psalms were sung, and extemporaneous prayers were said by the Bishop in the name of all present, to which the people answered "Amen" in Hebrew, as had their Jewish forefathers. A homily, or explanation of the readings, was the replica of that which had been given in the Synagogue by the learned men and elders.<sup>1</sup>

After the Mass of the Catechumens came the Eucharistic Sacrifice, attended only by the baptized. The nucleus of this second part—the Mass of the Faithful—consisted of the Eucharistic prayer, or prayer of thanksgiving (our modern Preface), with the recital of the Words of Institution pronounced by Our Saviour (the Consecration) and the repetition of the actions performed by Him. In the earliest times we find, then, the principal elements of our Mass of today: the consecration of the bread and wine, the breaking of bread (the Fraction), and the distribution of the consecrated elements to the faithful in the Communion.

The primitive Eucharistic prayer (which included the Consecration and Communion), one of thanksgiving to God for certain favors and graces, which was called in the Eastern Church the *Anaphora* (Gr. *anapherein*, to offer), in the Western Church the Canon (rule), continued to grow and to develop throughout the early centuries. The Canon of our Roman Rite, which in its main lines was drawn up in the IV century, is the oldest and most venerable example of this long course of development.

The Offertory and Preface, now usually distinguished from the Canon, in reality form part of it, and in the Canon, besides the words of Consecration and the Communion, are prayers for the living and the dead, the Pater Noster and the prayers before and after Communion. All this—from the beginning of the Offer-

<sup>1</sup> Cabrol, *Rom. Missal, Introd. and Cath. Ency., Mass.*

tory to the end of the Communion—forms the Sacrifice of the Mass properly speaking.<sup>1</sup>

With Alexandria and Antioch (in which latter place the disciples of Christ were first called Christians) as starting points, the liturgies, more or less fluid during the first two centuries, although fundamentally homogeneous, divided themselves gradually into two classifications—those of the Orient and those of the Occident. The Occidental liturgies—Roman, Gallican, Mozarabic and Celtic—seem to be but so many diverse chronological or ethnographical manifestations of one same Latin liturgy, respectively immobilized in a state of isolation, where we find them, little by little, in diverse stages of the progressive movement of the Roman liturgy.<sup>2</sup> In all of these liturgies there is a common convergence toward a central formula. The liturgical unity from the I to the III centuries is spoken of by Innocent I (d. 417), in a letter to one of his Bishops, as belonging to Rome. In this epistle the Pontiff states that only that which had been given by tradition to the Roman Church by Peter, Prince of Apostles, and which had still been retained in the Pontiff's own time, should be observed everywhere, without additions or innovations. In the Roman traditions to which the Gregorian, Gelasian and even the Leonine documents belong, there is evidence of a later profound upheaval.<sup>3</sup>

The most ancient documents of Latin euchology are those of a Missal of Bobbio, Italy, written before the end of the VII century.<sup>4</sup> This collection is considered as representing so many souvenirs, more or less complete, of a common prototype of Gallican form and of Roman origin anterior to all known Sacramentaries. Sometimes it is Gregorian, other times Gelasian or Gallican, or even Leonine; sometimes it is many at once, without one's being able to assign a document more to one than to another of these liturgies. This Missal went to Ireland with St. Columban (d. 597, first Abbot of Bobbio, the Episcopal See of Lombardy), and returned with Celtic modifications; the old foundation remained, but

<sup>1</sup> *Rom. Missal, Introd.* <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

it had gathered new material. It is the only compilation with Mozarabic concordances. The more evident variants of this liturgy from the Roman were by reason of the retouchings and literary remnants introduced into it by the Bishops of Spain. The collection of Bobbio contains no Ambrosian contributions. These documents of Bobbio give evidence of a primordial universality.<sup>1</sup>

The establishment of the Seat of the Papacy at Rome by the Vicar of Christ gave that city an argument a priori for the choice of its liturgy as a model for those of the Occident.

The Celtic liturgy, used in Great Britain and Ireland and perhaps in Brittany, was supplanted in the VII century by the Roman, which had been introduced by St. Columban. In about the year 760 the Roman liturgy and chant made their entrance into the Franconian countries, which resulted in the Roman reform of the Gallican liturgy and chant. Spain, particularly in the XI century, abandoned the Mozarabic, and that country, as well, adopted the Roman liturgy and chant.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, the Mozarabic rites have been observed traditionally in certain chapels of Spain where the Mass is sacrificed on its own altar and with its own particular ritual.<sup>3</sup> The liturgy and chant of St. Ambrose are still in use in the province of Milan, but they are now largely assimilated with the Roman.

The Ambrosian liturgy bears evidences of Oriental influence. However, despite certain particular similarities, the Ambrosian Antiphonary gives sufficient proof that it is not in the Orient that one must seek for the constitutive elements of its origin.<sup>4</sup>

In the comparison of a Mozarabic Missal with examples of Gallican, Celtic and Ambrosian Liturgies, the close relationship and fraternity of all of these liturgies on the essential and really decisive points is made evident. While secondary differences exist among the Occidental liturgies, and particularly between the Roman and the others, even as dialects in a language differ from the mother tongue, there is, in these various liturgies, no evidence

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. XIII. <sup>3</sup> With reservation for recent changes. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V.

of an opposition of *kind* to *kind*, that which becomes obvious in a comparison of the Eastern liturgies with those of the West.

In the euchological system of the Greek liturgy in the Oriental patriarchies, those of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria, a very striking characteristic in contrast to the Occidental liturgy is manifest; namely, the immobility and invariability of the Eastern liturgy, in that it does not include a special (or proper) euchological formula for particular feasts and particular mysteries of the Church—no Proper of the Time and of the Saints; there are therefore for the whole year in the patriarchy of Constantinople but two liturgical formulas for all circumstances, whatever they may be, and one is simply an abbreviation of the other: always the same two Masses. Dom Mocquereau speaks of the Greek anaphora as a “block of one growth;” once the contents of this block are used, the euchological resources of this liturgy seem exhausted.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental system of the Latin liturgy is entirely different. It is supple and open to variations, following the exigencies of the Church cycle; it is an assemblage of parts, large and small, distinct one from another, perpetually mobile and separable, daily renewed, which variety is indefinitely susceptible to new growth. While the euchology of the Greek Celebration of the Eucharist can be put into comparatively few pages, whole books are necessary for the Latin Sacrifice of the Mass. The Latin frame is open to embolisms; the Greek frame is *in se* the whole Celebration, a complete system in itself which is exhausted daily; the Roman Missal exhausts itself only day by day. The Psalter is exhausted within seven days at Rome, within fifteen days at Milan, and each day in Greece.<sup>2</sup>

Immobile in euchology, the Greek liturgy developed without limit in Hymnology, in which the Latin liturgy stopped at an early age, augmenting instead the Antiphonary and Sacramentary.<sup>3</sup> A further distinction may be signaled between the Oriental and Occidental liturgies in that the first, more dramatic, appeals to

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*   <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

the eyes of the faithful as a means of recalling to the mind, in a symbolic action, the history of the Redemption; the second gives a preponderant place to the instruction of the faithful through dogmatic teaching. The symbolic signification of the word "Sacrifice" in its actual identification with the Mass is exclusive to the Latin liturgies, notably to the Roman and Mozarabic. The Secrets of the Roman Mass are a valuable means of proving that this meaning existed from the earliest times.<sup>1</sup> We find this sentiment even in the preparatory service of the Mass, the *Asperges*. The celebrant, while sprinkling the clergy and laity with holy water, recites in a low voice the penitential psalm *Miserere* (Ps. 50), and at Paschal Time, after the *Vidi aquam*, the psalm *Confitemini* (Ps. 117), which exalts the sacrifice of man's redemption. The rubric of the Missal seems to imply that he says the whole psalm ("*dicens submissa voce cum ministris psalmum Miserere mei Deus;*" loc. cit.).<sup>2</sup>

The fact that certain details, such as the recitation of names and the place given to the "kiss of peace," are common to both the Eastern and Western liturgical rites, has nothing in it that is of fundamental significance for the categorical classification of these two liturgies. On the other hand, the variance of language and of rite is not in itself a sufficiently determinative factor to justify the separate canalization of the Oriental and Occidental liturgies, wherein there is not only essential unity because of the common nucleus from which each developed,<sup>3</sup> but in which, originally, there was absolute uniformity. It was during the development of each, in its organism and not in its accidentals, that the constitutive systems of two different liturgies evolved. A liturgy cannot, in its categorical classification, depend on anything so contingent or transitory as ritual institutions, which may arise from the jurisdiction of the hierarchy in a particular territory, and from which place the rite sometimes derives its name. Because of these circumstances, modifications of detail may introduce themselves freely or even abusively. If the classification of liturgies depended uniquely

<sup>1</sup> *Rom. Missal, Introd.*    <sup>2</sup> Adrian Fortescue, *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described.*    <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 117.

on these factors, one could arrive at determining their genesis by considering them solely according to their geographical locations, in which jurisdiction, or authority for a particular discipline, would play the decisive role. All the liturgies belonging to one categorical classification must, on the contrary, be closely correlated by fundamental constituents displayed in the organism itself.

With respect to the Greek and Latin, Dom Mocquereau concludes that they are two different euchological systems, clearly separated, to support which conclusion, he claims, documentary monuments of these liturgies furnish fundamental evidence.<sup>1</sup>

The Divine Office in the Church presents itself as an ancient tradition of the Old Law. Thus, in the Acts of the Apostles, we read that "Peter and John went up into the Temple, at the ninth hour of prayer."<sup>2</sup> From the manner in which St. Luke recounts this act, as though it were a custom, one infers that this must have been a liturgical prayer. Moreover, the psalms and the canticles, which passed as though as a heritage from the Synagogue to the Church, constitute a form of divine praise which descended as a tradition from Judaism to Catholicism. The psalms became, and have continued to be, the principal text of the liturgical service of the Church.<sup>3</sup>

St. Ambrose calmed the people from the menace of the Arians by the verses of his Hymns at night devotions, which were popular in the IV century. St. Augustine said that "the people stayed in the basilicas all night." Silver crosses and candles preceded the processions, and when some were killed, side by side, the others continued to chant. At Alexandria, during the persecution, the people, according to the instructions of St. Athanasius, answered each verse of Psalm 135 (*Confitémini*), chanted by the deacon, with the refrain: "For His mercy endureth forever (*Quoniam in aeternum misericórdia ejus*)." And in the translation of the relics of St. Babylas from Daphne to Antioch, those who knew the psalms the better sang the verses, and the people responded in concert with the refrain: "Let them all be confounded that adore graven things:

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>2</sup> Ch. III, 1. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI.

and that glory in their idols. (*Confundantur omnes, qui adorant sculptilia: et qui gloriantur in simulacris suis.*" Ps. 96, v. 7). The people were well trained in their singing by Flavian and Diodorus while the latter were still laics; these two fervent souls stimulated the same popular devotion to night as to day prayer, and they, as well, composed new chants for these occasions. The Doxology was sung, but the "et Filio" was pronounced softly, so that the Arians could not hear it.<sup>1</sup>

Hymnology, cultivated in the East by St. Ephrem (IV century), poet and orator, was equally cultivated in the West by St. Ambrose. The East used rather a canticle type of hymn, while the Occident cultivated a more constrained hymnody. The strophes were sung alternately with the Doxology, which was anti-Arian. The Vigils were new; they had come from the Orient with pomp, processions, hymns, and psalms with antiphons and the Doxology. The Office of what was later to be Matins was formed. However, there was, in this initial formation, no Hymn except at Vespers and Lauds.<sup>2</sup>

Because the texts of the Hymns were not of liturgical origin, and owing to the fact that Hymnody was used by the heretics to propagate their doctrines, the Hymns of the Church suffered great opposition. The Roman liturgy did not permit their general use until the XII century.<sup>3</sup>

St. Ignatius, third Bishop of Antioch, who had conversed freely with the Apostles, one day had a vision of the heavenly choirs singing in honor of the Blessed Trinity, at which time (II century), it has been said, he inaugurated antiphonal singing at Antioch.<sup>4</sup> Some historians believe, however, that this Hellenistic practice, antiphonal singing, did not start in Antioch until the IV century, at which time St. Ambrose also introduced it into Milan.<sup>5</sup> At first, choirs of men and women or men and boys stood opposite each other, so that the response to the first choir was upon the octave, as is shown by the use of the word antiphon borrowed from Greek music (Gr. *anti*, against + *phone*, voice), and by the expression

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. III. <sup>4</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>5</sup> *Ref.*, *Grove's Dict.*, *Antiphon.*



“to sing on the octave.”<sup>1</sup> Thus antiphonal psalmody came to denote the singing of psalms by two alternate choirs.

The Antiphon in its present signification in the Office is a development either of the instrumental prelude which in the Synagogue preceded the singing of the psalm, and led directly into its melody, or of the sung solo which served the same purpose. By degrees it grew more elaborate and was inserted between the verses of the psalm as well,<sup>2</sup> just as now, at Compline on the Feast of the Purification, the Antiphon *Lumen* is interwoven with the Canticle *Nunc dimittis*. The use of the term Antiphon in the Mass will be treated in the following chapter.

That St. Benedict (d. 543) depended on the Roman rite in his composition of the Office is incontestable.<sup>3</sup> The particular contribution of this holy patriarch is the compilation of an entirely special organization of the Office; the distribution of the psalms and of the other pieces in the different parts of the Office as it should be recited during the course of a week, is his personal work. However, he took the texts of these pieces, and in particular of the Antiphons and Responds and perhaps also of the Lessons (since the presence of the Respond presupposes Holy Scriptural passages drawn from the Lessons), that were in conformity with the practice of the Roman Church. Since St. Benedict asked in his Rule (Ch. XIII) that the daily canticle be chanted as the Roman Church does it, one would infer that he had taken more than this one custom, merely as an exception, from a Roman source. While in the Orient and at Milan many canticles were assigned to a single day, and notably to the Saturdays and Sundays, the Roman liturgy used but one canticle each day of the week, which usage St. Benedict adopted. He arranged the psalms according to his own order. When he speaks of the recitation of two psalms at Lauds *secundum Consuetudinem*, one does not know whether this was according to the custom of Rome, of Milan, or of a regional church. A certain distinguishing feature in the formation of the Benedictine Rule was the adoption of the Hymn called Ambrosian, meaning that it was borrowed from the

<sup>1</sup> *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII.

usage of the Church of Milan. It is generally believed that the *Magnificat* was introduced at Vespers, as the *Benedictus* at Lauds, by St. Benedict, and that then, borrowed from the Benedictine rite, these canticles passed into the Roman Office. The text of the canticles is not indicated in the Rule of St. Benedict, which employs only the words "*Canticum de Evangelico.*"

St. Benedict gives a new interpretation to the psalmist's words: "*Septies in die laudem dixi tibi: et media nocte surgebam ad confitendum tibi,*" in that he assigns the Vigils or Nocturns (the present day Matins, of which the arrangement is simpler than that of the rite of Milan, but more detailed than that of the monks of the Orient), for the fulfillment of "*media nocte,* etc."; he adds Prime and Compline to Lauds, Terce, Sext, None and Vespers, and thus obtains the septenary for the day.<sup>1</sup>

The word Matins (L. *tempus matutinum*, morning) was first applied to the Office of Lauds, which was said at dawn. The night Office at first retained its name of Vigils. Then Vigils and Matins (Lauds) were combined, the latter serving to a certain extent as the closing part of Vigils. Then the name Matins was extended to the Office of the Vigils, and the former Matins took the name of Lauds, a term which, strictly speaking, designates only the last three psalms of the Office—the "*Laudáte*" psalms. At the time when this change of names took place, the custom of saying the Office of the Vigils at night was observed scarcely anywhere but in monasteries. Elsewhere it was said in the morning, so that finally it did not seem a misappellation to give to a night office a name which, properly speaking, applies only to daybreak. The change came about gradually. St. Benedict always refers to the night Office as the Vigils or Nocturns, while that of daybreak he calls Matins, Lauds being the last three psalms of that Office.<sup>2</sup>

The Office of Prime, of which Monk Cassianus (d. 435) recounts the origin, was instituted as a Canonical Hour toward the years 382-390 or later, in a monastery at Bethlehem other than that of St. Jerome. The paternity of the Hour of Compline has often been attributed to St. Benedict, but its existence, at least inasmuch

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Cath. Ency.*, *Matins*.

as considered as Office, is attested to in the Orient by the discovery, in the middle of the V century, of a Life of St. Hypatia written before the V century, as well as in two citations taken from the writings of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom. Perhaps the appellation is from St. Benedict. In any case, the diffusion of this Office is without a doubt ascribable to its admission into the Benedictine organization.<sup>1</sup>

The preponderant influence which the monks of St. Benedict acquired in the Church played a decisive part in the unification of the Occidental liturgies. At the epoch when the Rule of St. Benedict was written, there was no *organized* liturgical unity, properly speaking. The suffragan churches followed the practice of the great metropolitan cathedrals; these latter had taken the usages that their founders had imposed. The monasteries of some importance followed the course prescribed by their Rule; others adopted the diocesan or regional practice. It was not until the diffusion of the Benedictine Rule, in which the organization was fixed even to the smallest detail, that liturgical unity made itself felt,<sup>2</sup> although, as we know from Pope Innocent I's statement,<sup>3</sup> a traditional Roman liturgical unity already existed.

After the destruction of their monastery by the Lombards in 580, the monks of Monte Cassino took refuge at Rome. Pope Pelagius II gave them a habitation near his palace of the Lateran. His successor, St. Gregory I, had the monks called to a great number of churches. It is the same Pontiff, from whom the Church chant takes its name, who speaks of the monks singing the "*Opus Dei*" in the Church of St. Pancras. Monasteries were inaugurated as regular chapter houses at first, and they afterwards became secular. It is these early foundations which represent the "*principium et fons*" of all the development of the Divine Office of the Church, as well as of the Monastery.

It is evident that the divergence between the Roman and the Benedictine Office rites was not very great at the origin of the latter. We have seen that the Benedictine monks had no Responds and Antiphons other than those of the Roman Church.<sup>4</sup> A comparison

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 121. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 127.

of the Bangor (Celtic) and Mozarabic breviaries with the Roman shows a direction in the two former entirely different from that of the latter. The manuscripts of the Roman and Benedictine Offices, on the contrary, show a direction which is absolutely the same.<sup>1</sup> This conformity had already been pointed out by an Irishman of the late VII or early VIII century. This author cites as his understanding of the common "*cursus*" of both rites not only the division of the psalms, but also "*reciproca, anathephonas, et responsus seu sonus, et alelyas.*"<sup>2</sup>

With St. Gregory's disciple St. Augustine and his accompanying monks, the Office, with its Roman chant, penetrated into England, where it spread generally. A century and a half later, the Council of Cloveshoe (747) decreed the following: "May the same monastic psalmody be observed everywhere; nothing shall be sung or read except that which is not only consecrated by general usage, but supported by the authority of the Holy Scriptures and permitted by the custom of the Roman Church as well."<sup>3</sup> This Council formally forbade the "*tragicus sonus*" custom of singing which had been introduced in certain places, and prescribed that a chant "simple and holy, that which the usage of the Church requires," be substituted for it. The Council, furthermore, gave permission to the Priest to replace the singing of Gregorian melody in the liturgical Office with the recitation of the same, wherever the difficulties of a sung execution justified this change.<sup>4</sup>

From the XIII century on it became customary to recite the Little Hours of the Office instead of singing them. This was brought about especially through the influence of the Franciscan Order.<sup>5</sup>

The Benedictine Office has been a great factor in liturgical unity. All in preserving intact its external structure, the Office of the Canonical Hours, established by St. Benedict, which has subsisted throughout the course of the centuries, has, nevertheless, been subject to numerous modifications, brought about by the fact that in the Middle Ages, and even until the XVI century, each country and almost every monastery had its own special *Ordo*.<sup>6</sup> Further-

<sup>1</sup> S. Bäumer, *Geschichte des Breviers*, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Haddan and Stubbs, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>3</sup> *Ecclesiastical Documents of Gr. Britain and Ireland*, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>4</sup> Canon XII, *Eccl. Doc. of Gr. Brit. and Ireland*, *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII. <sup>5</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. III. <sup>6</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XII.

more, at the time of the Norman Conquest, the foreign element introduced numerous innovations into the composition of the Office of the English monasteries. At this time, the Norman dignitaries did not arrive at a truce with their conquered brothers (in religion) until the victors had established in their new churches the rite which they had brought with them from abroad; and all of this despite the hearty resistance they often encountered on the part of the English monks. St. Osmund (d. 1099, Bishop of Salisbury) introduced the Sarum Rite (taken from foreign sources) into his see. This rite was adopted in many places; in others, notably at York and Hereford, an entirely local rite was followed. Thus came about the establishment of the various English rites.<sup>1</sup>

The editing of the Office started with the *Liber Nocturnales* or *Matutinales*, a book which contained all the Lessons and Responds for Matins; to these were later added the Antiphons and Psalms, then the Collects and everything that is used in the other Canonical Hours.

The Office was meant to be sung in choir, but isolated priests in small country churches without a choir could not afford the library of books required for singing it. Those on journeys or in similar circumstances were also constrained to the *recitation* of the Office. For the convenience of such pastors and other members of the clergy, compendiums were compiled. From these epitomes the psalms were omitted: the clergy were supposed to know them by heart; the Antiphons, Versicles, Responds and even the Lessons were indicated by only the first words.<sup>2</sup>

Gregory VII (d. 1085) issued an abridgement of the liturgy as it was performed at the Roman Court. This abridgement received the name of Breviary (L. *breviarium*, abridgement), which was suitable to the etymology of the word. The Anglo-Saxon monk Alcuin (VII-VIII centuries) had, however, long before used the word *Breviarium* to designate an abridged or simplified Office for the use of the laity. This eventually became the name for the volume which contains the entire Office, or the Canonical Hours, in one

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V. <sup>2</sup> *Cath. Ency.*, *Lit. Books.*

work. Dom Cabrol points out that this should really be called a *Plenarium*, since, liturgically speaking, the word *Plenarium* designates exactly such books as contain several different compilations under one cover.<sup>1</sup>

In liturgical language the word Breviary has a special meaning, denoting a book which furnishes the regulations for the celebration of Mass or the Canonical Office, and is found under the titles *Breviarium Ecclesiastici Ordinis* or *Breviarium Ecclesiae Rominae* (*Romanae*).<sup>2</sup>

It was Nicholas III (1277-1280) who introduced the Franciscan Breviary (compiled a short time before) into the Roman Churches.

The Missal (L. *Missale*, from *Missa*, Mass) had somewhat the same development as the Breviary. At first it contained simply the Mass and a few morning services connected with the Mass. From this *Sacramentarium* (so called because all of its contents centered around the great Act of Consecration, and also because, in the course of time, it came to include the ritual for the celebration and administration of all the other Sacraments) the songs of the Deacon as well as the texts which the choir sang were omitted. The songs of the choir, such as the Introit, Offertory and Communion, were contained in the *Antiphonarium Missae* or *Graduale*. The parts chanted by the Deacon and Subdeacon, the Gospels and the Epistles, with lessons from the Old Testament for particular occasions, were collected in the *Evangelarium* and the *Epistolarium* or *Apostolus*. Besides this, an *Ordo* or *Directorium* was required to determine the proper service. The contents of the Sacramentary, the Gradual, the various lectionaries and *Ordo* were amalgamated, but the development was slow, and it was several centuries before all were brought together under one cover.<sup>3</sup>

The first printed edition of the *Missale Romanum* was introduced in Milan in 1474. Nothing officially authoritative appeared until the Council of Trent (1545-63) considered the question of uniformity in the liturgical books and appointed a commission to examine the matter.

<sup>1</sup> *Cath. Ency.*, *Breviary*. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Missal*.

The responsibility of revising the Catechism, Breviary and Missal was left in the hands of Pope Pius V. In 1568 appeared the revised Breviary prefaced with the Bull *Quod a Nobis*. The commission did not invent a new Breviary or a new Liturgy; they retained everything of tradition that was valuable; the Psalter, the foundation of the Breviary, was respected. But they corrected many errors in the Lessons and revised the Calendar. They retained the Collects, but introduced needful changes in certain details. Dom Cabrol speaks of the work as one of "critical revision and discriminating conservatism."<sup>1</sup> The Bull withdrew Papal approbation from all Breviaries which could not show a prescriptive right of at least two centuries of existence. Any church not possessing a Breviary in this classification was bound to adopt that of Rome. A great number of the churches of Italy, France, Germany, Spain, England and of most of the Catholic States in general received the revised edition with great approval. In certain districts, such as Milan and Toledo, their ancient rites were retained.

The revised Missal appeared in 1570, and was prefixed with a Bull enjoining the use of the revised version and none other upon all dioceses and religious Orders under the Latin liturgy, except, as in the case of the Breviary, such communities as could prove a prescription of two hundred years. In this way the older Orders, as the Carthusians and the Dominicans, were enabled to retain their ancient liturgical usages, but the revised Missal was accepted throughout the greater part of Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Subsequent revisions have taken place under various Popes. A commission was named by Pius X on July 2, 1911, to prepare a typical edition of the Breviary according to the directions of the Bull *Divino Afflatu* of the *Motu Proprio*. The commission then busied itself with a typical edition of the Missal. The Bull took its place at the head of the Missal after those of Pius V, Clement VIII and Urban VIII in the revision, which appeared under Pius XI with a decree of the S. C. R. dated July 25th, 1920 (during the reign of his predecessor). The veritable innovation of this new edition affected largely the rubrics, those placed at the top of the Missal as

<sup>1</sup> *Cath. Ency., Breviary.* <sup>2</sup> *Ibid., Missal.*

well as those of the Time and of the Saints, and even to the *Ordo Missae* and the Canon. It affected, as well, some additions, suppressions and mutations of minor importance, such as substitution of certain orations for others to avoid coincidence. The decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites exposes the object of this reform of the rubrics. This edition is not definitive but awaits a more thorough revision of the text.<sup>1</sup>

As Dr. Wagner points out, the close alliance between Gregorian Chant and the Church liturgy is not the product of arbitrariness on the part of the authority of the Church. Very much more penetrating is the fact that Gregorian Chant and the liturgy both take one another into consideration and that each instructs the other. The order of the Mass and that of the Office presuppose song in all of their parts; almost all of the forms of these parts are so arranged that they can be sung, and originally they were sung. Therefore, one will but incompletely comprehend the structure of the liturgy if one does not observe that the forms of expression of most of the pieces are, in the idea of the creator of the liturgical services, sung pieces which correspond to the form in which they are expressed. These musical characteristics, organically combined with the text in its origin, help greatly toward an understanding of the liturgical meaning, as well as of that of the ceremonies. The liturgy at times calls for difficult solo pieces, at other times for simple choir pieces, and the songs correspond to these demands. In this way the liturgy sometimes yields in recognition of the song, and the latter oftentimes foregoes its development in favor of a greater recognition of the liturgy. The liturgy developed itself in song and the Church song developed itself in the liturgy—a mutual assimilation which terminates in the expression of one organic whole.<sup>2</sup>

“The Catholic liturgy,” says Dom Johner, “is a symbolical representation and communication of the supernatural effects of grace, of the fruits of Christ’s Priesthood, and it aids us in obtaining these graces by prayer and the power of the Sacraments.

<sup>1</sup> Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d’archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, Missel. <sup>2</sup> *Elemente des Gregorianischen Gesanges zur Einführung in die Vatikanische Choralausgabe*.



“Our liturgy is an inseparable, uninterrupted communing of Christ with His bride, His visit by grace and His tarrying with us—a blessed union, like the familiar intercourse of the Master with His disciples in the days of His sojourn on earth, and in many respects closer, firmer and more effective.”<sup>1</sup>

We have sometimes known of choirs which are seeking what they imagine must be a “passionless,” an “objective” interpretation of Gregorian Chant which would stamp their singing with a certain “mystic” quality. May we suggest that instead of endeavoring to produce a *particular* impression, and run the risk of acquiring an affectation, it would be more in conformity with the liturgy of Mother Church to strive rather for an artistic and supernatural interpretation, dependent not alone on one’s knowledge of the science of the art itself, but primarily on the inspiration which proceeds from the continued life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in His Church? Are we not following a more genuinely liturgical course when we obey the doctrine of the Apostle and “seek to abound unto the edifying of the Church? And therefore he that speaketh by a tongue, let him pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is without fruit. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, I will pray also with the understanding: I will sing with the spirit, I will sing also with the understanding. Else if thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that holdeth the place of the unlearned say Amen, to thy blessing? Because he knoweth not what thou sayest. For thou indeed givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”<sup>2</sup>

So, whereas the sentiment of carnal emotion is completely foreign to the proper expression of liturgical chant, that of spiritual intensity, supported by understanding, is not only admissible, but an interpretation so characterized is in reality the highest form of liturgical expression that the human soul is capable of giving.

<sup>1</sup> *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part II, Ch. IV. <sup>2</sup> Cor. I, XIV, 12, etc.



## CHAPTER VI

### MELODY AND THE MASS

*Do this for a commemoration of Me.*  
Luke, XXII-19.

The affinity which exists between the diverse modulations of the liturgical recitative of the Church and those of the music of Jewish tradition, which we shall follow in this chapter, as well as the influence (whose history we discussed in Chapter III) of the Greco-Roman classical age on the constitutive elements of the text by means of the word accent and the literary *cursus*, give evidence of the fact that Roman Catholic liturgical chant is indebted to both Palestine and Greece for the initial formation of its song.

It was in the Synagogue that cantillation was first employed. Mr. Arthur Friedlander supposes this musical evolution—cantillation—may have evolved from an expression given to word meaning, conveying to the listener the feeling for discerning long and short phrases and cadences of line or verse, before the invention of graphic signs; vocal and verbal utterance being simultaneous.<sup>1</sup> The same author shows the striking similarity between the Ashkenazic (pertaining to Jews of Germany, especially of the south and west) cantillation of *Zechariah Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion* and the canticle *Te Deum Laudamus* of the Roman Catholic Church. He also speaks of having discovered a similarity between the ancient Ashkenazic cantillation for the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* and the musical rendering of the same in the Church,<sup>2</sup> where it is found in the *Tenebrae* service of the last three days of Holy Week.

However, all in granting the influence of Jewish and possibly of Greek traditional melody upon that of the Church, it is impossible to posit as an absolute thesis an adoption note for note, despite the opinion of such an eminent historian as M. Gevaert,

<sup>1</sup> *Grove's Dict., Hebrew Music.*   <sup>2</sup> *Ref., Ibid.*

who thinks that the first Christian songs were reproductions, more or less faithful, of pagan melodies anterior to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> But this we do know: that during the time when pagan Rome was using scenic representations for the inspiration of her songs, accompanied by the lyre or cithara, Christian Rome sang the story of man's Redemption in the psalms of David, and this holy art remained after pagan Rome had been demolished.<sup>2</sup>

For that which has to do with ancient Greek Music, one must concede that although certain clear notions concerning the theory of music have been left by the philosopher and writer on music, Aristoxenus, the scanty remnants or fragments of ancient Greek melody actually at our disposal still leave it impossible for us to obtain any absolute information regarding even the type of music used by the ancient Greeks. Although one may believe that this was purely monodic in character, one can, according to Vincent d'Indy, put forth scarcely more than a hypothesis in this matter, because the only documents which exist on the subject are critiques or appreciations, and not musical texts. One finds himself comparable in this respect, continues d'Indy, "to an individual of the thirtieth century, who, in order to reconstruct the present state of our art, should have at his disposal only a certain number of musical chronicles taken from contemporaneous reviews, or some treatises on harmony. Let us agree that this would be insufficient to serve as the basis for a serious work, and not seek to go farther back than the first centuries of the Christian Church, of which the songs have been quite faithfully preserved for us."<sup>3</sup>

From the time when the Church was freed under Constantine, Christianity made art serviceable. Certain parts of the liturgy had, however, used song long before this. But the music of the Church now took on an artistic form as well as a systematic association with the liturgy. Music was the most important of all the liberal arts in the celebration of the cult.

In Rome, even as early as the Pontificate of Celestine I (d. 432), cantors and a *schola* of particularly educated voices,

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. IV, <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. I. <sup>3</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. IV,

mostly of religious of the Lector School, brought their artistic attainments to the service of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

As to the liturgical usage of the psalms and canticles, i. e., the partitioning of their texts and the distribution of the roles between the choir and the people, there are three principal manners, which were similarly used in the Mosaic Liturgy.

The oldest of these forms of liturgical song is the Refrain by the cantor and the congregation, later by the *schola*. To the same classification belongs the *Responsorium* (Respond). In the Respond the repetition is not always at regular intervals, while in the Refrain it is. The Respond consists of a repetition by the people or by the *schola* of the words pronounced by the reader or by the chanters, that is, they respond with a complete repetition of the verse in whole, or with a repetition of a part of that which they have already uttered in whole. The *Responsorium breve* (the "short" Respond) of the "Little Hours" illustrates this. Formerly the *Responsorium prolix* (the "long" Respond), which follows the Lessons of Matins, was sung in the same manner.<sup>2</sup>

Such was likewise the original form of the *Gradualresponsorium* or Gradual of the Mass: after the Lesson or Epistle a whole psalm with a refrain after each verse was sung by the soloist on a raised place (*gradus*), the step of the ambo. Between 450 and 550 when the music of the Gradual became more elaborate, only one psalm verse was sung after the introductory passage had been repeated; and at the conclusion of the verse the introductory passage was sung once again.<sup>3</sup>

At this epoch the Gradual claimed for its rendition the most educated chanter of the Lector School, and while the Gradual was being sung neither the celebrant nor his assistants proceeded with the liturgical ceremonies, but listened to the singing. The immediate repetition of the fore-phrase was not rigorously maintained after Gregory I, during which epoch the length of the Mass was shortened, so the Gradual thereby lost its responsorial character. The repetition of the fore-phrase after the verse was also eventually

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch.*, Einl. <sup>2</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI. <sup>3</sup> *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. XI

discontinued, but the present revised Vatican Edition of the *Liber Gradualis* permits this repetition. The abandonment of the original responsorial manner of singing explains the peculiarities of text or or of tonality in certain of the Graduals, for instance: on the feast of John the Baptist, the verse ends with the suspended thought: *Et dixit mihi*, awaiting the *Priúsqvam* etc., of the fore-phrase; likewise, in the Gradual *Dómine praevenísti*, the verse ends on D (Tonic of the I or II Mode), while the fore-phrase of the piece ends on E (IV Mode).<sup>1</sup> The first Gradual text not taken from the Psalter is that of the first Feast introduced after Gregory I, the Feast of the Dedication.<sup>2</sup>

The liturgical acclamations *Et cum spírítu tuo*, *Habémus ad Dóminum*, etc., are wrongly termed when called Responsds.<sup>3</sup>

The *Glória laus* of Palm Sunday is an example of the Refrain proper.

The Alleluia (Hebrew for "Praise God") of the Mass is a responsorial chant. The verse, however, was added at a later period (about the VII century) to the *melisma* which originally closed the exclamation of praise with the elaborate vocalization of which St. Augustine speaks in such poetic terms.<sup>4</sup> The Alleluia with its verse is the only song of the Mass which, throughout the centuries and even until today, has kept its responsorial character.<sup>5</sup>

From the Saturday after Easter to Trinity Sunday (exclusive) the *Gradualresponsorium* is omitted, and a second Alleluia song replaces it.

It is a mistake to call the entire part of the Mass between the Lesson and the Gospel the Gradual, as composers since the XVII century have done. The Alleluia has little in common with either the text or melody of the Gradual, although the latter was originally responsorial in form; they are really independent compositions, and were at first separated by a reading from the Prophets, so that (taken from the Jewish custom) every reading was followed by a song.<sup>6</sup> Because of the abandonment of this ritual, later composers thought that the Gradual and Alleluia were parts of the same piece. Dr. Wagner points out a remission on the part of the

<sup>1</sup> *New School of Grég. Chant*, Part I, Ch. XI. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einf.* <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, pp. 84, 85. <sup>5</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XV. <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. VII.

printers of the Missal in not separating these two pieces, just as they are placed independently in their song forms in the *Gradule*. "Here," says this distinguished historian of Church music, "we have one of the cases where, without a knowledge of the history of Plainchant, a proper understanding of things liturgical is impossible."<sup>1</sup>

Liturgically, the Gradual and Alleluia completed the readings, so that a *solo* type of melody did not appear in the liturgy, except when prepared by a reading.<sup>2</sup>

The second musical form of Church chant is identified with the antiphonal manner of singing in the Synagogue. Antiphonal chant is very little younger than responsorial in the liturgical organization. The antiphon of the Synagogue used as an instrumental prelude or as a sung solo immediately preceding the psalms, was alluded to in Chapter V.<sup>3</sup> We have seen, as well, that the psalms constitute an enormous part of the text of the liturgical chant of the Church.<sup>4</sup> In the course of a psalm or canticle in early antiphonal chant, a sort of primitive refrain or antiphon was intercalated. Originally, the antiphon was repeated after each two verses, but later it was sung only at the beginning and end of the psalm. The *Invitatorium* (Invitatory) *Veníte*, notwithstanding the fact that its beginning is repeated in the manner of a Respond, is antiphonal in character, because of the way in which the antiphon is inserted between the groups of verses.<sup>5</sup>

Originally, an entire psalm was ordinarily sung after the Antiphon at the Introit (*Antiphona ad Introitum*), as also at the Communion (*Antiphona ad Communionem*), particularly the 33rd (*Benedicam Dominum*) at the Communion. The length of the song of the Introit was formerly adapted, by means of the psalm verses, to the length of time necessary for the entrance of the celebrant and his attendants. The text of the Introit inaugurates the Feast.

The Introit and Communion had their lengths curtailed. Outside of Rome, in places where there was not the same elaborate ceremony, they started to shorten the singing; consequently, all of

<sup>1</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XV. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 127. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 125. <sup>5</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI.

the verses of the Communion eventually disappeared. In the Middle Ages the giving out of Holy Communion at High Mass went out of practice, so there was no further necessity for a long accompaniment. The *Requiem* Mass (so called because of the first word of its Introit) alone, with its Communion verse, reminds us of the ancient practice.

Both the Introit and Communion can be traced back to the beginning of the V century, and both developed in the same manner.<sup>1</sup> Their character is that of an accompaniment to the liturgy, in contrast to the solo responsorial type, at the artistic execution of which, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> the liturgical action ceased.

The Introit as sung today, with its psalm verse and Gloria Patri, has the ABA form of the responsorial Alleluia, but it is antiphonal in character, since there is no immediate repetition of the fore-phrase. Its verse is still marked Ps. (*Psalmus*) in remembrance of the entire psalm formerly sung at this place.

The text of the Introit acts as a "herald" for the sentiment of the particular Feast which the Mass celebrates. It should always be sung in Gregorian Chant, as thereby the universality of the Church is revealed from the beginning of the Holy Sacrifice. In no case should it ever be omitted.<sup>3</sup>

The Offertory of the Mass was so called because at this place in the Sacrifice the faithful brought their offerings to the altar. At first it too was antiphonal (*Antiphona ad Offerendum*) with a much more florid melody than the Offertories of the present *Graduale*. At Rome, where, since the VII century, the solemn Papal Mass has served as liturgical model for the entire Latin Church, the singers of the *schola*, as well, brought their offerings to the altar: so the psalm verses were given over to one or two soloists (the chanters), and the choir busied itself only with the refrain. This produced a very interesting cyclical structure: it started with the antiphon by the *schola*, followed by one, two, or at most, three psalm verses by the chanters. After each verse, the *schola* repeated the last part of the antiphon. At the end, the entire antiphon was resung by all: A BaCaDa A.<sup>4</sup> As soon as the ceremony of the offer-

*Gesch., Einl.* <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 139. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XV. <sup>4</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*



ings of the faithful disappeared, the necessity for a prolonged Offertory song ceased. From the XIII century on, the Offertory everywhere was but one simple song piece without any verse. The Offertory of the *Requiem* Mass, with its single verse, is the only reminder of the old usage.<sup>1</sup>

The place occupied by the Offertory is that of the artistic central point of the Mass, that which was originally granted to the *Gradualresponsorium*.<sup>2</sup>

The third manner of rendering liturgical song was likewise adapted from Jewish custom. It consists of the singing of a psalm from one end to the other, repeating nothing and intercalating nothing. This chant may be on one tone or on several tones. The Tract (L. *tractim*, straightway) of the Mass exemplifies this manner of execution. Whether it be varied in modulation, or whether in its manner of execution it be sung alternately by two choirs or by solo and choir, it is, nevertheless, *in directum* (going straight along) in its manner of delivery. The term *in directum* belongs to the idea of the way in which a text is combined, and not to any special variants in its melodic intervals.<sup>3</sup> The Tract replaces the Alleluia on days of penance; its melodies represent the oldest form of *solo* psalmody in the Mass,<sup>4</sup> and it was originally executed by alternate solo and choir.

During all of the period of formation a differentiation between two different kinds of liturgical song took place in the development of the Mass. The Proper (*Proprium Missae*) is the term that was applied in the latter part of the Middle Ages to the group of songs endowed with almost daily variable texts, and with few exceptions psalmodic in nature.<sup>5</sup> These songs were arranged according to the *Proprium de Tempore* and *de Sanctis*. These were the obligatory song pieces in the early history of the Mass, and were at that time the only group contained in the Mass song book, the *Antiphonarium Missae*, afterwards called the *Graduale*.

The term Ordinary (*Ordinarium Missae*) was given at the end of the Middle Ages to the group of songs which in text, litur-

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XV. <sup>3</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XVI. <sup>4</sup> *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. XI. <sup>5</sup> *Ref.*, p. 86.

gical function and melodic composition detach themselves from the aforementioned group. The texts of the second group are practically invariable and not taken from psalmody, nor are these texts subjected to the change of Church season and Feast, while those of the Proper are. This fact had a decisive influence on the musical destiny of the Ordinary, which started by being of much less musical interest than the Proper, but which, as we shall see later, became the group which developed an entire world of musical artistry. A development which neither the organizers of the liturgy nor the first musical composers could ever have suspected.<sup>1</sup>

The *Kyrie eléison* (Gr. Lord, have mercy) was, in former times, probably part of a litany sung before High Mass. The litany was established in the Orient in the IV century to implore God's help against calamities, and to neutralize the Arian heresy, which St. Athanasius fought, by the spoken as well as the written word, even until his death (373). The *Kyrie eléison* appears many times in the Oriental Mass liturgy, as well as in the Latin liturgy of Milan.<sup>2</sup>

The early Roman liturgy also used this term of supplication. Some liturgists are of the opinion that the Greek term *Kyrie eléison* was not a fragment of the early Roman liturgy, which was said in the Greek language, but that this term was adopted about the V century in Greek, prior to which time it had been used in a litany of general petition, but in the Latin tongue.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, Dr. Wagner's conclusions are that even at Rome, Greek was the liturgical language until near the end of the III century, and that by this time the song of the *Kyrie* must have become so much a part of the prayer of the people, that at the occasion of the first codifying of the Latin liturgy, the Church dared not change the Greek term to Latin.<sup>4</sup>

St. Gregory, in his time, points out the difference between the manner in which it is sung at Constantinople, where all of the people intone as well as sing it, and at Rome, where it is intoned by the clergy assembled around the altar, and answered by

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl. and Einf.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>3</sup> *Cath. Ency., Kyrie.* <sup>4</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*

the congregation. During Gregory's time the *schola* took no part in the execution of the *Kyrie*.<sup>1</sup>

Like the psalm pieces of the Mass, the *Kyrie* was primitively fitted to the needs of the liturgical ceremony. In the developed Roman liturgy the *Kyrie éléison* functions as a continuation or direct sequence of the Introit song. The introduction of the *Christe* was one of the liturgical changes of Gregory I.<sup>2</sup> The ensuing repetition of the *Kyrie* makes possible an aesthetic, workable structure, symbolizing a threefold supplication, directed to the Holy Trinity. It was soon after Gregory's time that it became customary to sing nine implorations.<sup>3</sup>

Originally, the *Kyrie* was not included in the singers' Mass book, the *Antiphonarium Missae*. Whether it was owing to harm through misuse, or whether it was that "the singers, in the course of time, wanted all of the songs,"<sup>4</sup> in any case, the participation of the people in the singing of the *Kyrie* disappeared about the X century, and from then on it was given either to the *schola*, or to the clerics or monks—those in the proximity of the altar. So in this way, the congregational singing of the *Kyrie* disappeared. Furthermore, the *Kyrie*, as a congregational song at its origin, did not resist innovations, as did the songs of the Proper, rendered originally by the cantors with the assistance of the *schola*.

A very significant musical development was brought about by this change of persons in the rendering of the *Kyrie*. Until now (about the X century), the chant of the *Kyrie* had been a simple one, more a call, an imploration, than a song; and this interpretation had been accepted by the composers of the early epoch. Following the period when its singing was taken over by the educated voices of the *schola*, a great number of melodically interesting and cultivated settings took the place of the former very simple ones. The composition of the newer melodies continued from the XI century until about the end of the Middle Ages, and the notation of this piece gradually penetrated into the song books of the Church.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>2</sup> *Vg. Epist.* 9, 12. <sup>3</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

Immediately following the *Kyrie* in the Roman Mass is the *Glória in excélsis Deo* (Glory to God in the highest). The *Glória* of the Mass is sometimes called the "Greater Doxology," to make evident its form distinction from the "Lesser Doxology," the *Glória Patri*, etc., used at the end of the psalms.<sup>1</sup>

The Greek model for the *Glória* of the Mass was a morning Hymn, which is sung even today in the morning Office of the Greek Church. The Church of Milan followed this Greek custom until the XVI century. An old document says it formed part of the early Christmas Mass.<sup>2</sup> Pope Symmachus<sup>3</sup> extended its use to Masses said by Bishops on Sundays and feasts of Our Lord and of the Martyrs; the ordinary Priest was permitted to intone it only on Easter Sunday. Not until the XI century was its use made general.<sup>4</sup>

Its late incorporation into the Mass impressed it with the character of a "Feast song" which could be omitted in ordinary cases. The *Glória* has never been an established part of the Ordinary of every Feast. It is omitted on many days of the liturgical year, including all days of penance, to which its spirit of exaltation is not suited. It has never arrived at a place in the Mass equal in importance to that of the other pieces.<sup>5</sup>

What is particularly noticeable is that, unlike all of the other Mass songs considered until now, the *Glória* was intoned by the celebrant at the altar, and not by either the chanters, or by the clergy assembled around the altar as was the *Kyrie*. The celebrant was privileged to permit its being sung or omitted, and therein lies its facultative character. After the intonation by the celebrant, the assembled clerics or monks, and not the *schola*, continued it.<sup>6</sup> The intonation of the *Gloria* by the celebrant exclusively has never changed.

The original role of the *Gloria* in the history of the Mass, that of a song of celebrant and clerics, gave it, accordingly, the character of a recitative. St. Augustine of the IV century speaks of its approaching recitative more than psalmody. Later, the sing-

<sup>1</sup> Ref., *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einkl.* <sup>3</sup> Ref., p. 24. <sup>4</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einkl.* and *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. X. <sup>5</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einkl.* <sup>6</sup> Ibid.

ers asked for a more artistic composition for Feast days, so melodies more ornamental were written and designated for particular Feasts, each having its own intonation. These new melodies were eventually placed in the singers' books after the songs of the *Kyrie*. In most cases the composer treated the *Glória* with a less decorative melodic formula than the *Kyrie*.<sup>1</sup>

The youngest Mass song is the *Credo in unum Deum* (I believe in one God). It is of Greek origin, and made its first Occidental appearance in Spain (introduced by the Council of Toledo in 589), then went into Gaul. Milan, too, had used it for a long time before it was permanently inserted in the Roman liturgy by Pope Benedict VIII (d. 1024) at the express wish of St. Henry II, Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

The rubrics of an old Roman Sacramentary state that the Bishop intoned the *Credo* if he did not wish to preach; accordingly, the *Credo* and the sermon, or homily after the readings, excluded one another, as each was a composition in shortest summation of that which can be preached as principles of Faith. The presence today of both the *Credo* and the sermon in the course of the Mass is therefore not originally Roman.<sup>3</sup>

Intoned by the celebrant, and originally continued by the assembled clergy as was the *Gloria*, the *Credo*, too, had and still has a facultative nature, and today there are many days during the Church year when it is omitted. Its first melodic design, recitative in character, is likewise accounted for by the fact that it was originally rendered by the assembled clergy, instead of being taken over by the particularly trained voices of the *schola*.<sup>4</sup>

The facultative character of the singing of both the *Gloria* and the *Credo* in the present liturgical Mass would, therefore, seem to be attributable to the fact that, unlike the other pieces of the Ordinary, which were originally sung by the people, these were left to the assembled clerics, who were notified that they were to be sung, only through the intonation being given out by the celebrant. Such a procedure demanded an alertness which might

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid* and *New School of Greg. Chant*, Part I, Ch. X.    <sup>3</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* and *Einf.*, Ch. VII.    <sup>4</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*

more easily be expected from those immediately around the altar than from those in the body of the Church. Nevertheless, the sentiment of the *Credo*, as a public acknowledgment of Faith, rightfully belongs to the entire congregation. As Dr. Wagner exclaims: "There can scarcely be anything more sublime than when the whole congregation, men and women, boys and girls, take part in the singing of the *Credo*."<sup>1</sup>

To earliest Christianity belong the three "Hodies" of the *Sanctus*, which in text and primitive melody form a continuation of the Preface. The *Requiem* Mass adopted a melodic *Sanctus* which emanates from the preceding Preface.

As opposed to the present procedure, the *Sanctus* was originally intoned by the celebrant and rendered by all present. The liturgical books of Rome show that when the assisting clerics sang it alone, they substituted for the congregation. Congregational singing of the *Sanctus* continued for the longest time in Gaul.<sup>2</sup>

The eventual assumption by the *schola* of all of the singing in the Mass opened the way for a more melodic pattern for the *Sanctus* than that of the original recitative type, which, as stated above, had been a continuation of the formula of the Preface. In the song books of the Middle Ages are found numerous songs of the *Sanctus*, with perhaps more of the *Gloria*, and an even greater number of the *Kyrie*.<sup>3</sup>

The question as to whether the *Benedictus* should be sung before or after the Consecration was decided by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1909, which decision stated that it should be sung after, as prescribed in the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*. Subsequent decrees have emphasized this decision.

Dr. Wagner has this to say relative to the various decrees: "One might doubt that this decision affects Gregorian Masses. If we approach the question of history more closely, we must say that the *Benedictus*, in its text, melody and liturgical meaning, belongs to the *Sanctus*, and should really not be separated from

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einkl.* <sup>3</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einkl.*

it. Both constitute one unit from the beginning, and in the Middle Ages the Canon was not begun by the celebrant until the people had sung the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* to the end, even as the celebrant at the present time prays the *Benedictus*. Moreover, the liturgical situation speaks against the separation of the *Benedictus* from the *Sanctus*, for, in the mouth of the celebrant, *qui venit* denotes 'who comes' [or 'who cometh'], meaning in the Holy Consecration; in the mouth of the singers, on the contrary, the word *venit* has another meaning, the preterit: 'who came.' Furthermore, one of the life conditions of liturgical song in general is perfect unity between the altar and the choir.

"How does it happen that the prescriptions of the *Caeremoniale* and of the subsequent decrees [of separating them] arise? This is explained by the practice of the many-voiced *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*; figured music [florid melody] extended the length of the *Sanctus* extraordinarily, so the *Benedictus* immediately united to it would have added even further to the great amount of time expended. With time, one became accustomed to singing the *Benedictus* after the Consecration because of the time it took to sing it, and in the places where polyphonic music was regularly rendered at High Mass, as in the Papal Chapel at Rome, it came about by itself to sing the *Benedictus* after. This, then, like many other things in the *Caeremoniale*, became codified.

"So here we have a case where Gregorian Chant is robbed of its superiority as norm and measure of all Church music by assent of liturgical authority. Perhaps, at a later time, the original practice will be revived for Gregorian Chant."<sup>1</sup>

Already in 1500 it was the custom to sing a Motet — an *O Salutáris* or something similar—between the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei*. Sometimes the composer embodied the Motet in the composition of the Mass, and in order to have sufficient time for its rendition, either the development of the Ordinary was curtailed or a part of the text might even be omitted. This latter procedure is found in a Mass of Pierre de la Rue (d. 1518), and

<sup>1</sup> *Einfl.* Ch. XV.

one sees in Cherubini's C major Mass, in which the *O Salutaris* takes no less space than the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* together, an example of the first mode of action.<sup>1</sup>

In referring to the fact that the *Motu Proprio* permits the singing of a Motet to the Blessed Sacrament, according to the custom of the Roman Church, after the *Benedictus* in a Solemn Mass, Dr. Wagner adds the following comment: "Then the Gregorian Chant *Benedictus* before the Consecration is as good as presumed, and, in this case, the *Benedictus* would de facto be sung in this way. In any case, the only reason for the existence of this Motet to the Blessed Sacrament is to fill up, in an artistic manner, the break that has taken place between the *Benedictus* and the *Pater Noster*. It is therefore self-evident that the Motet dare not be a pretext for shortening the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* or for leaving out the *Benedictus* entirely. A decree of May 22, 1894, determined that the celebrant should not be retarded because of it [the Motet] in the celebration of the liturgy."<sup>2</sup>

The *Agnus Dei* was originally sung or omitted ad libitum. Pope Sergius I (d. 701) prescribed its incorporation into the Mass. In the corresponding place in the Greek Mass stands quite a rich song. Pope Sergius, born a Syrian, may have wished to have an analogous one, for at Rome the rendering of the *Agnus Dei* was taken from the clerics and from the people, and the educated voices of the *schola* took possession of it. The melodic development of the later songs of the *Agnus Dei*, as in the case of the other songs of similar destiny taken over by the trained singers, was thereby augmented.<sup>3</sup>

It would seem that this song was originally repeated as often as was necessary to fill in the time consumed by the ceremony of the "kiss of peace," which it had to accompany. It was soon adapted to the triple form, and *dona nobis pacem* was substituted for the closing phrase of the last repetition. Only at St. John of the Lateran at Rome, the Papal Church of the Middle Ages, does the old practice still remain of singing *miserere nobis* three

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*   <sup>2</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XV.   <sup>3</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*



times; this explains why the Mass composers of the polyphonic age often close with *miserere nobis* instead of with *dona nobis pacem*.<sup>1</sup>

Two appendages which were never an organic part of the Mass, and which are younger than even the latest of any of the parts of the Ordinary, are the Trope (L. *tropus*, turn) and the Sequence (L. *sequentia*, follow). Only the latter of these two types was ultimately embodied in the liturgy. Where, in the liturgical ceremonies of solemn rites, the empty spaces are now filled out by organ playing, in the X century this function was accomplished by the human voice; hence, to the long vocalizations of the Alleluias a further amplification was added, even as today the Greek chanters (in whose liturgy Plainchant is still used exclusively) insert Alleluias in the intervals and prolong the melodies to conform with the duration of the rites they accompany.<sup>2</sup> To this *melisma* words were adapted, and in France, in the IX century, the name Prose (L. *prosa*) was given to this musical addition, because here the words followed the lines of the music and not any scheme of meter;<sup>3</sup> consequently, the oldest Sequences follow strophe pairs of most different range and structure, built on the pattern of the Byzantine Hymn.<sup>4</sup> While the artistic craftsmanship of a composition in ancient and modern times, as a rule, ornaments the text with the melody, in both the Trope and Sequence the texts were composed more as a *raison d'être* for the melody, which, with the words, became practically always syllabic in type.

The Proses finally detached themselves from the body of the piece and took on an independent existence. From the XII century on the Sequence begins to approach the Latin Hymn, in that the strophes are like one another in extension and form. Later, they themselves acquire their own song form. The Sequence *Dies Irae* of Thomas of Celano, O.F.M. (d. circa 1250), is irregular and does not conform to the usual type; it expresses rather the Lied form. It was originally not a Sequence at all, but a Trope to the *Responsorium Libera me*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, *Grove's Dict.*, *Sequence*. <sup>4</sup> *Einfl.*, Ch. III. <sup>5</sup> *Gesch., Einl. and Einfl.*, Ch. 111.

Blessed Notker of St. Gall, and the Monastery of St. Martial in Limoges from the X century on, fostered the writing of Sequences. Adam of St. Victor (d. 1192) in Paris brought the composition of the Sequence to its highest poetic as well as form perfection. St. Thomas of Aquinas' *Lauda Sion* owes its scheme to a Hymn to the Cross, *Laudes Crucis attollámus*, composed by Adam of St. Victor.<sup>1</sup> Southern Germany and France remained particularly favorable to the composition of the Sequence. The original mode of execution for the Sequence was that of alternate solo and choir.

The Tropes, properly speaking, were only "parasites," which never attained the status of an independent song piece in the liturgy of the Church. The Tropes did, however, arrive at an elaborate and almost independent composition. They were composed with their own words, in which texts they may be reproached for having often portrayed the sentiment of the particular Church feast, thereby infringing on, and destroying the force of, the role which belongs to the religiously superior character of the Proper.<sup>2</sup>

If we regard only their abuses, it can be granted that their association with the liturgy was a disturbing one. Their musical mission, however, Dr. Wagner champions, and, in support thereof, he points out that they clarified many of the rich vocalizations of the Proper and Ordinary by placing a word syllable under each of the notes. The *neumatic* melody of the *Kyrie fons bonitatis* (so named from its associated Trope) was found in X century documents, while the form of the same melody as *syllabic* *Kyrie* and Trope is not cited until the XI century. As the songs of the *Kyrie* gradually penetrated into the song books, they were often grouped with the Sequences and Tropes, to which the *Kyrie* stood in close relation.<sup>3</sup>

Some of these vocalizations acted as a prelude to the Introit, drawing their inspiration from the text; others prolonged the Gradual and Offertory; others, lastly, and it is here that the

<sup>1</sup> *Les Mél. Grég.*, Ch. XIV. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch.*, Einl. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

movement became more hardy, threatened a veritable danger to the liturgy by interpolating it, commenting on it, burdening it with an original ornamentation sometimes very awkward and very poor, not only in the Introit, Gradual, Offertory and Communion, but in the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, and even to the *Ite Missa est* (the vocalization lasting to the end of the Gospel),<sup>1</sup> but never in the *Credo*. Even the Epistles were "troped," but not the Gospels. In the Office, the closing Respond of Matins, especially, came under this sweeping innovation.<sup>2</sup>

These were places where the soloist could do marvels, and the rhythmic signs which, in certain ancient manuscripts, accelerate the movement of the Offertories, would tempt one to think that these were sung with a certain haste, in order that the chanters might arrive more quickly at their cherished Trope verses, which, with their repetitions, "might easily take on the proportions of a symphony."<sup>3</sup> So difficult were these Trope pieces, with their extended and frequently changing texts, that even the *schola* was at times unable to render them, much less the congregation. The Tropes and Sequences were executed mostly by the particularly educated voices of the chanters, and were specialized as *solo* pieces, thus offering themselves as a means of musical progress.<sup>4</sup>

The Tropes had a further mission, in that they were the foundation soil for actual polyphonic music, nor could this new art dispense with them until it was definitely on its way. If, with the Sequences, they are "the overripe fruit of the spiritual poetry of the late Middle Ages,"<sup>5</sup> which opened the way to a decline, the effect of their existence was, on the other hand, one of benefit to musical art in the last analysis.

Tutilo of St. Gall (d. 915), author of many Tropes, was probably dependent on French models, even as Notker had been for his Sequence compositions. Examples of Tropes are also found in X century manuscripts of France, England and northern Italy. The Church of the Middle Ages in Germany in no way encouraged either their composition or their execution.<sup>6</sup> From the XIII cen-

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, *Grove's Dict.*, *Trope*. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>4</sup> *Gesch.*, *Einl.*  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

tury, their general popularity started to decline, although certain Tropes of the Ordinary lasted until the XVI century. The Tridentine Missal of 1570<sup>1</sup> eliminated all of the Tropes and retained but five Sequences. Certain of the Tropes did, however, remain in separate forms. The *O filii et filiae*, sung at Paschal Time, was a Trope to the *Benedicamus*.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, without the Tropes and the Sequences, the liturgical Mass encompasses ten song pieces, if the Alleluia and the Tract, which mutually exclude one another, be considered as one. It consists, then, of five pieces for the Proper and five for the Ordinary, which, together, accompany the entire Sacrifice from the entrance of the officiating celebrant and his attendants to the dismissal of the congregation. The exact portioning of the different forms is adapted to awaken interest in the changing liturgical situations; every place where it is fitting and proper the sung praise of God is expressed, and "the liturgical ceremonies give loving consideration to their beauty completed by song."<sup>3</sup> This ensemble constitutes a well-constructed whole, full of sublimity and rich in artistic ornament. One may truly state that Gregorian Chant has exhausted every melodic and rhythmic device of artistry in the domain of modal free rhythm.

We have already seen that the songs of the Mass, even from their origin, divided themselves into two classes: the Proper and the Ordinary.<sup>4</sup> The sentiment of the Proper is directed more towards the altar and the *particular* participation in the Holy Sacrifice with the celebrant; the Proper remained, in later times, with the liturgical choir, which stayed in the proximity of the altar, that which was not the fate of the Ordinary. This group unites, as we have seen,<sup>5</sup> because of its text, liturgical function and melodic interpretation—all of these, in contrast to the more specific character of the Proper, symbolizes the *general* participation or the community of all present with the celebrant; it contains a broader thought and sentiment. The texts of the Ordinary seem to "call for music,"<sup>6</sup> with their different types of religious sentiment; the

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 133.  
<sup>6</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*

<sup>2</sup> Ref., *Grove's Dict., Trope.*

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch Einl.*

<sup>4</sup> Ref., p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> Ref., p. 144.

supplication for the forgiveness of sin cries out in the *Kyrie* and the *Agnus Dei*; there is also an outer form relationship between these two pieces, in that each repeats its text three times. The *Gloria* is a song of praise; the *Credo* embraces the knowledge of Christian Faith; the *Sanctus* is a song of adoration. No one of these pieces goes into the contents of each Feast, as does the Proper. This meaning of the Ordinary—that of carrier of the general Christian sentiment—stayed with this song group of the Mass, even when those of its pieces which had originally been sung by the congregation were taken over by the clerics or by the *schola*.<sup>1</sup>

In Plainchant Masses, the music of the Proper of the Mass, which was, as we know, from a very early time sung by the educated voices of the *schola*, comes down to us as a musical type superior to that of the Ordinary. Except for the *Credo*, which we shall later see remained for special reasons recitative in character,<sup>2</sup> the pieces of the Ordinary developed, after the X century, into Plainchant musical productions which, if of less artistic merit than the solo parts of the Proper sung by the chanters are, nevertheless, easily comparable to the parts sung by the *schola*, and are, therefore, most worthy associates of these beautiful melodies. In fact, the composers of the Ordinary largely employed the rich melodic material which they found in the Proper, with which to construct their forms.<sup>3</sup>

The Gregorian Chant Proper, of higher antiquity than the Ordinary, has, since the VII century, remained as good as untouched in its organization. Its pieces were little used by later composers, and comparatively few Introsits, Graduals, etc., have been composed since that time. The pieces of the Ordinary, on the contrary, took a different course. These latter pieces were generally not, during all of the Middle Ages, officially regulated by the Church regarding an established norm for their melodies. These melodies changed from district to district, although certain of them became sufficiently well established to gain for themselves a more general recognition.

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*    <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 157.    <sup>3</sup> *Gesch., Einl.*

The composers could therefore take a certain liberty with the Ordinary without fearing conflict with the liturgy. Besides, the invariability of the Ordinary texts (with the exception of the particular retention of the *miserére nobis* of the *Agnus Dei*,<sup>1</sup> and the *dona eis requiem* of the same piece in the *Missa pro Defunctis*—which Mass, moreover, has an independent character), as opposed to the variability of the texts of the Proper,<sup>2</sup> made the former quite naturally more acceptable to musical composers, who were not interested in having the fruits of their labors performed perhaps but once during the year. In only one Mass—again the younger *Requiem* Mass—do we find an invariable Proper associated with the Ordinary; and this association did not come about without hesitation, and only at a late date, since, until the Mass reform of the Council of Trent<sup>3</sup> this Mass had had a Proper in France and one in Germany not only different from each other, but both totally unlike the present established one. The reason why the particular Proper of the Mass for the Dead eventually combined with the Ordinary of the same Mass, is the same as that which placed the general Ordinary of all other Masses in a unique class: the invariability of the text.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the Tropes which were interpolated into the pieces of the Ordinaries were, as already mentioned,<sup>5</sup> composed of texts in which the thought related to the sentiment of the different Church feasts, brought about the selection of particular pieces of the Ordinary for particular Masses. The song books of France reveal this information.<sup>6</sup> Gradually it became the custom to sing a certain special *Kyrie* for Christmas and another special one for Easter. A further step in the codifying of the Ordinary was brought about by the establishment of the Common of the Saints (*Commune Sanctorum*), which was taken from the existing Propers. This classification, the Common, includes the greater number of Saints. It was then found expedient to assemble Proper formulas which would conform to particular classes of Saints, in so far as such Saints did not individually claim special pieces of their own.

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 150. <sup>2</sup> Ref., pp. 143, 144. <sup>3</sup> Ref., pp. 132, 133. <sup>4</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>5</sup> Ref., p. 152.

<sup>6</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I.

Thus came about, after the XII century, the *Commune Apostolorum, Confessorum, Martyrum, Virginum*. To the Ordinaries were given designations such as *Solemniter, In Summis Festivitatibus* or *Festive, Dominicaliter* or *In Dominicis, Ferialiter* or *Feriale*; and also *De Tempore Paschali, De Confessoribus, De Uno Martyre, De Pluribus Martyribus, De Beata Virgine Maria*. Naturally, the books themselves, even of the same countries, did not agree in their designation of the pieces. What in one place was called *Kyrie Dominicale* in another was called *De Martyribus* or *De Apostolis*. Such differences existed even until the XIX century.<sup>1</sup>

The last step in the codifying of the Plainchant Ordinary was taken when a unit was formed from existing Ordinary pieces, and this unit was designated for a particular Season or Feast, under a certain heading, as: *Tempore Paschali, In Festis Solemnibus, In Festis Duplicibus, In Festis B. Mariae V., In Dominicis infra annum, Infra Octavas, In Festis Simplicibus, In Feriis per annum, In Dominicis Adventus et Quadragesimae, In Feriis Adventus et Quadragesimae*. These are listed in the *Graduale Romanum*. However, the *Credo* was always excluded from these Ordinaries. In the present *Vatican Ordinarium Missae* (sometimes called *Kyriale* from its first piece) but four melodies of the *Credo* are given (the *Liber Usualis* contains two more listed with the Chants "ad libitum"), and these are grouped together. The first *Credo* is marked as the authentic tone, but the three following tones may be used where it is customary (*Praeter praecedentem tonum authenticum, alii subsequentes usu jam recepti assumi possunt*).

It was because of the nature of its basis as the "Knowledge of Faith" that the artistic reproduction of the song of the *Credo* was not touched by the distinction of Church feasts or epochs, at least not in ancient times. There was but one manner of singing it, and that was rather a recitative than a melodically developed way of interpreting the text. From the XII century on, timid attempts were made to bring forth a more florid melody for Feast days, but not many of these compositions found grace be-

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I.

fore the Church authority,<sup>1</sup> and the four contained in the present Vatican Gradual, including the XVII century Plainchant *Credo* of Dumont, are of a simple melodic type.

The songs of the celebrant, the Orations, Preface and Pater Noster, as well as the musical readings of his assistants, the Epistle and Gospel, belong to those liturgical recitatives which "never forsake the threshold of the holy place and the abode of the altar, and are as good as untouched by the destiny of musical art."<sup>2</sup> Their *Toni* have been established for many centuries and are not submissive to modal structure. These melodies, recitative in character, are governed by the accents of the words they accompany. Unfettered, the liturgical words dominate here, and are never ornamented with artistic formulas. This bestows upon the text a greater resounding strength and envelops it in "a secret dress."<sup>3</sup> It is the wish of the Church that all may follow with understanding the Holy Sacrifice, even without knowledge of Latin. "The celebrant must always remember that he sings also for the faithful who are present, and should render the text for them with the greatest possible clarity."<sup>4</sup>

The *Motu Proprio* states that the melodies of the celebrant must be sung without accompaniment.<sup>5</sup>

In the Middle Ages music belonged to the Quadrivium,<sup>6</sup> at which time there were few who were not versed in song and *scientia musica*. Rabanus Maurus of Fulda (d. 856) said: "*Clericus qui non cantat, non est clericus completus.*" Dr. Wagner adds that that applies today also, in the broader meaning of a certain elementary historical and theoretical education.<sup>7</sup> He then continues: "The ordinary man of the people may formulate no judgment with regard to the theological knowledge of his pastor or chaplain. But he notices it right away and does not conceal his judgment, if the songs at the altar are ugly, or poorly and thoughtlessly rendered. On the contrary, the priest has won much when his altar songs are worthy and uplifting."<sup>8</sup>

There should also be a clear understanding between the cele-

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch., Einl.* <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid* and *Einf.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>4</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>5</sup> Ch. V, Par. 12. <sup>6</sup> *Ref.*, p. 94. <sup>7</sup> *Einf.*, *Einl.* <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*



brant and the choir conductor regarding the *Gloria* and *Credo* chosen for rendition, as the choir should continue, without interlude, the particular *Gloria* or *Credo* intoned by the celebrant.

Originally, the celebrant did not recite at High Mass the words which the choir sang, as he does today, but left the fulfilment of this liturgical act to the particular persons to whom that function was entrusted. Never did a singer dare omit a piece or part of a piece, otherwise the liturgy would have been incomplete.

The advent of Low Mass brought about for the singer an eventual change of status in his function in the liturgical celebration. The celebrant at Low Mass was obliged to recite that which, at High Mass, was sung by the choir, as well as the chants of the Deacon and Sub-deacon. This reacted on High Mass, and he began to recite there, as well, the texts which on this occasion were sung by the choir. He then needed a more complete collection of prayers, and the Sacramentary, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> was enlarged into the Missal, with the additional inclusion of the Lessons, Epistles and Gospels, as well as of the texts of the choir chants: Introit, Gradual, etc.

These circumstances brought about an eventual renunciation on the part of the singers of a dignity with which the organizers of the liturgy had invested them. The duty of the singers now lost its liturgical meaning: from then on the celebrant had to pray the text whether or not it was sung. The sung part took on somewhat the aspect of an ornamentation. The function of the singer was now a relatively inferior one, and still is, in comparison to that of its origin, for, whether or not the choir omits a piece of the Mass, if the celebrant prays it, the liturgical prayer, as such, is complete.<sup>2</sup>

Let us, then, make this short resumé: The Roman Plainchant Choral was the *Concentus*, generally sung by more than one voice (hence Choral).<sup>3</sup> The congregation originally sang all the acclamations and answers associated with the songs and reading of the celebrant and his assistants. The Ordinary of the Mass, the *Gloria* and

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 132. <sup>2</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. VII. <sup>3</sup> Ref., *Grove's Dict.*, Choral.

*Credo* excepted, was also sung originally by the congregation. In the Papal Mass of the VII and VIII centuries, the Ordinary was sung by the clerics who were assembled around the celebrant, but the congregation joined in the singing of the acclamations and answers (*Et cum spiritu tuo, Habemus ad Dominum, etc.*). Elsewhere, the congregation sang the *Kyrie, Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, as well as the acclamations and answers. From about the X century on congregational singing of the Ordinary unfortunately disappeared. The fault was not with the Church, nor with the people: the *schola* made more and more inroads on the Ordinary. The composers started now to write more difficult melodies, so the educated voices of the choir appropriated to themselves all of the songs of the Mass. The new Ordinaries then became more difficult and the people could not arrive at executing them. The advent of polyphony completed the course already begun. The congregation let itself be swayed by the charm of the new music, and gradually abandoned its inherited and traditional right.<sup>1</sup>

All of this means, then, that at the origin of the Church the congregation participated, in a *special* way, with the celebrant in the mysteries of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, even as the parts of the body enjoy, in union with the head, the life of this association; nor can the head despoil itself of the body for the benefit and perpetuation of its own life, since the organism is complete in the whole only inasmuch as it is complete in *all* its parts.

Is it not, then, for the mutual benefit of both celebrant and congregation that the enlightened author of the *Motu Proprio* is striving, when he states in such simple language that "special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times"?<sup>2</sup>

That history repeats itself we all have heard time and time again, and if we do not insist upon being too absolute with regard to this theory, we must grant its truth. For from the beginning of time, we see like events in history producing like results, and

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> Ch. II, Par. 3.

since the similarity in these various instances is not necessarily between the elements or factors which go into their making, the analogy must lie in something more profound than a mere relationship of kind to kind in the persons or things encompassed in the situations involved. In the last analysis, it consists in the common cause, with its effect, of particular events as a means of presenting to man, in some special manner, an occasion for arriving eventually at greater light in the working out of the problems which govern his destiny.

M. Camille Mauclair, in a beautiful tribute to César Franck, speaks of the course of action taken by this great master, of happy memory, after the death of the composer of the *Nibelungen Ring*, at which time the "monstrous Wagnerian eruption" had all but paralyzed the initiative of the general composer. M. Mauclair says, speaking of Franck: "Any other musician (at that time) would have advised an anti-Wagnerian reaction. The question, however, was not to avoid imitating Wagner by doing the opposite to what he did; but to retrace once more, after the general upheaval, the natural relations between music and all those things which the human soul will always crave to express."<sup>1</sup>

To follow this procedure, the retracing of the course of our subject back to its origin, be it by the spoken or written word, is, we believe, the only way to ever arrive at a knowledge of the nature and being of traditional Gregorian Chant before the "terrific upheaval"<sup>2</sup> of the Renaissance.

In tracing this short history of the Mass, we have, therefore, endeavored to return to the source of the liturgy in its identification with melody, which particular musical art we know as Plainchant, or more familiarly as Gregorian Chant.

We have already been told<sup>3</sup> that the outward construction of the Mass, as of the Office, is entirely intelligible only when we know the historical development of Church song. On the other hand, many purely musical things in the Mass owe their existence to the liturgy, and no historian of music will ever possess a living and

<sup>1</sup> *César Franck*. Introduction by R. Newmarch. <sup>2</sup> *César Franck*, Ch. V. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, p. 134.

penetrating understanding of the old song forms until he becomes familiar with the development of liturgical song.<sup>1</sup>

We may concede that florid music augments the pomp of a church service by a great appeal to the senses, but with the author of the *Motu Proprio* we must affirm that an ecclesiastical function loses none of its solemnity when accompanied by Plainchant alone,<sup>2</sup> and no solemn function should be celebrated omitting it entirely; for it symbolizes the connection of the different ages in the entire Church, and is demanded by the Church, while other types of song are merely permitted.<sup>3</sup>

And lastly, so powerful is the appeal of this music to the sentiment of religious awe, that many souls have been touched by it to the very depths of their being, even to such an extent that it prepared the way for their lasting conversion and admission into the bosom of the Church. Not the least of these is the Holy Doctor St. Augustine. In his Confessions, this master of divine and human sentiment, "the great connoisseur of the heart of man,"<sup>4</sup> writes in the following manner of the emotion he felt on hearing at Hippo the singing which brought back memories of the Ambrosian Chant which had so powerfully affected him at Milan: ". . . Suave melodies, is it not justice that, admitted with the holy thoughts that are their soul, I give them a place of honor in mine? . . . these touching harmonies, ordinary companions of the psalms of David. . . . When I remember the tears that the chants of your Church made me shed the first days when I received the Faith, and that even today I still feel moved, not by the accents, but by the words modulated with their right expression by a pure voice, I recognize anew all the utility of this institution."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. II. <sup>2</sup> Ch. II, Par. 3. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XI. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. II. <sup>5</sup> Book X, Ch. 33. French Translation by Moreau. *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V.

## CHAPTER VII

# ORGANISTS AND CHOIR DIRECTORS

*The voices flowed into mine ears, and  
Thy truth distilled into my heart.*

St. Augustine.

With the X century begins the dawn of a new musical era, that of the *Ars nova*.

The first departure from the monodic type of music in liturgical song was the result of a purely physiological cause: the inability of the men in the congregation to sing in the same tonal octave as the women and children, where congregational singing was still the custom. As a consequence, some of the men sang an octave lower than the women and children, while others adopted an intermediary pitch in conformity with the range of their voices; thus were simultaneous melodies sung in parallel motion, so the effect was, as might be expected, a far from artistic one.

Certain musicians recognized the utility of determining and writing out these intermediary parts, and of regulating their relationship with the principal melody or *cantus firmus*;<sup>1</sup> this parallel accompaniment in fourths or fifths (rarely thirds) was called Organum (since the organ played one voice), and started in Italy as early as the IX century. From about the XI century, the two voices showed attempts at contrary motion. At this time the combined melodies were called Diaphony.

The description of Organum and Diaphony comes to us from Guido and Huchald, with the first examples, written in the XI and XII centuries. The oldest of these types is a Kyrie with the Trope *Cuncti potens* intercalated, where again<sup>2</sup> a formerly melismatic melody is transformed into a syllabic type.<sup>3</sup> This example proves, as well, Dr. Wagner's statement regarding the dependence of the composers of the first departure from monodic chant upon the Trope.<sup>4</sup> Masses written in this style show, as in Plainchant, no repetition of the text other than that found in the liturgy itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. VI. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 152. <sup>3</sup> Coussemaker, *Scriptores, Gesch.*, Ch. I. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 153.

Diaphony made but negligible progress for a period of three centuries, but toward the XIII century, an innovation brought about one of the most determinative factors in the progress of musical history, in its first characterized manifestation of harmony.

At this time, the taste for ornamentation was very developed. The chanters, by virtue of their particular musical education, started to weave an improvised ornamental melody around the *cantus firmus*, which was held by the congregation or by the *schola*—whence the term “tenor.” This style flourished in France, and especially at Paris, in the Organists’ school of Notre Dame. These embroideries in the form of a dialogue, to which the name Discant is applied, were later designated by a dot (*punctum*) notation diversely placed against (*contra*) those which represented the principal melody; the name Counterpoint was, accordingly, eventually applied to the musical art represented by this notation.

Another decisive influence in the history of Church music, consequently of all Occidental music, was brought about by the advent of *Ars mensurabilis*, which originated in the XII century as the sequel to the cadenced and symmetrical Sequence. This means that an exact determination of the duration of each note was developed by means of a proportional notation, through the transformation of the *virga* and the *punctum* into the *maxima*, *longa*, *brevis*, *semi-brevis*, *minima*, etc., from which our present system of notation has evolved.<sup>1</sup> The art of mensural music was practiced in the Paris Organ School as early as the XIII century.

The scene is now completely laid for the birth of a new melodic expression, which takes on an independent life of its own, with a determined rhythm which is a mere vestige of Plainchant oratorical rhythm; furthermore, melody will now be composed in a many-voiced style, as opposed to the former monodic type of expression.

From the XV to the XVII centuries was witnessed a musical development in which all of the Christian nations of Europe took part, and in which the last consideration of Plainchant for the

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 63,

Ordinary was gradually swept away, through the pronounced growth of the new musical expression in the Ordinary of the Mass, as well as in the Motet.

Already in the XV century we see the *Ars nova*, which had even from the XII century fostered the writing of Motets in a secular as well as a religious vein, demanding attention and forcing itself into the liturgical foreground, where until then it had found but little encouragement. Its demands were settled when it was decided to leave Plainchant for the Proper, and permit the new art to be used for the Ordinary, with the privilege of using both in the same ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

During all of the Middle Ages, the combination of Plainchant pieces constituting an Ordinary had not been called a *Missa*. The new musical form, however, now took the right of calling itself a Mass, the term which has since been applied to the musical art expression of the sum of the pieces of the *Ordinarium Missae*: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. The few many-voiced Propers of the Middle Ages were, on the contrary, never able to arrive at an independent musical form.<sup>2</sup>

Counterpoint developed slowly until the XV century, at which epoch the standard-bearers in this art were the Netherlanders and Flemings. They were not only European court conductors, but the chief musicians in the college for the Papal singers at Rome as well. Josquin Deprés, Dufay, Okeghem (XV and early XVI centuries), stand among the great composers of this school of early polyphony. French and German composers, as well, were now writing in this style.

The Netherlanders and Flemings having brought their technical skill to Italy, the art of counterpoint took firm root in Rome and Venice. But to the great consternation of the authority of the Church, worldly themes were introduced to such an extent into the Mass compositions, that polyphony finally risked being banished from the Church entirely. As a consequence of the decisions of the Council of Trent on the subject of Church music,

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Giovanni Pierluigi, better known by the name of Palestrina, his birthplace, was charged by a Papal Commission to reform the style of polyphony to correspond with the new demand for the clear enunciation of the liturgical text.<sup>1</sup> One of the principal works of Palestrina, his famous *Missa Papae Marcelli* (1567), produces, of itself, an epoch in musical history.

The XVI century, with its galaxy of polyphonic masters, the Flemish Orlande de Lassus, the Spanish Vittoria among the greatest, but headed by the name of the Italian Palestrina, brought the art of many-voiced liturgical vocal expression to a supremacy which, in all the succeeding generations, has never been equalled, much less surpassed. So superior was the gift of the great Palestrina in the expression of sacred art, that even secular themes, under the workmanship of his harmonic and contrapuntal treatment, take on a devotional sentiment.<sup>2</sup>

The Masses of Palestrina (94 in number, and composed in from four to eight voice parts), and the Motets of Lassus (some 1200) are monuments of polyphony in which the composers drew largely upon the melodic matter of Gregorian Chant for the inspiration of their themes (Ex.: Palestrina's *Iste Confessor* Mass). Their modal construction, as well, is based upon that of Plainchant. These master works contain the fundamental elements of liturgical music.

The invention of music printing, from the beginning of the XVI century, was favorable to the rapid establishment of the new school of polyphonic music in the universal Church.

Certain musical form distinctions between the Plainchant liturgical Mass and the many-voiced liturgical Mass should be signaled.

The different parts of the Mass and of the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which tradition has assigned to them—hence the texts of the Plainchant liturgical song are excellently identified with their musical raiment. However, the unity between the different *pieces* of a Plainchant

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 28 and *Grove's Dict., Palestrina.* <sup>2</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XI.



*Ordinarium* is a purely liturgical one—higher than that of a purely melodic or tonal one. There is no inner consideration of a melodic or structural arrangement which might place this ensemble in the category of an embryonic cyclical form. Outside of the liturgy, there is no consideration of a unity of its parts. Furthermore, there can be no practical unity between these constituent parts: they have been embodied in the liturgy at too many different epochs, with corresponding melodies, and even with certain text variants.<sup>1</sup>

This accounts for the fact that in the present revised edition of the Vatican Gradual, one is permitted to sing the *Kyrie* of one Mass, the *Gloria* of another, the *Sanctus* of another, and so on, except on *Ferias*, even though the groups of the Ordinary are arranged according to the rank of the Feast (*Qualislibet cantus hujus Ordinarii superius in una Missa positus adhiberi potest etiam in alia, feriis tamen exceptis*; etc.).<sup>2</sup> The melodic or tonal similarity between certain of these pieces is a purely exceptional one, and the first attempts at many-voiced music, likewise, retained the idea of a disassociation of melodic or structural relationship between the different pieces of the Ordinary. Therefore, when Pius X points to Gregorian Chant as the norm of all Church music, one must interpret this as meaning that liturgical Plainchant is actually the norm for the development of the melody which associates itself with the text of the liturgy, but not the pattern for the development of a historical musical form of melodic and tonal relationship among consecutive pieces.<sup>3</sup> One sees in a Plainchant Gradual of Basel, printed in 1500, in which the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, etc., are arranged independently, how little the claim may value, even historically, of combining certain pieces of the *Ordinarium* into a unit.<sup>4</sup> It was not until the period of the full development of the new type of musical expression, that a tonal or melodic unity among these different pieces was successfully achieved.

Certain XVII century attempts at writing Plainchant Masses with an imitation of the unity of the many-voiced, the *Cinque*

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I. <sup>2</sup> *Editio Vaticana*. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XV. <sup>4</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I.

*Messes royales en plain chant* of Dumont in particular, scarcely overstep the boundaries of their own countries.

So thoroughly was music practiced in the medieval song schools connected with the cathedrals or monasteries, that until the Protestant Reformation, the history of music is practically the history of the Church; and at this epoch we see the Ordinary, which began in such a simple recitative manner, become the norm of a musical development which, we repeat,<sup>1</sup> neither the organizers of the liturgy nor the musical composers themselves could ever have suspected. Nevertheless, the composers of even the great polyphonic era were governed by the sentiment of the liturgical text in their musical expression, so it was a long time from the birth of the Church before "the Mass dared to take the step from the Church to the concert hall."<sup>2</sup>

Even Palestrina, confined within the limits of the sacred text of the Mass, says d'Indy, is constantly arrested in his expressive soarings by a sort of sentiment of respect, which hinders his giving there the same free course to his dramatic expression that is found in his Motets.<sup>3</sup> And one might add, nevertheless, that it is this very quality of a disciplined restraint of power in a supreme expression of art in the Palestrina Masses, which gives them a harmonious relationship with the holy and the spiritual, and which makes them worthy to be given the second place in Church music, after Gregorian Chant, by the author of the *Motu Proprio*.<sup>4</sup>

It was but a debt of gratitude reimbursed, for the new art to lay the fruit of its labors at the feet of the liturgy. "In the holy precinct it had become great, and without the loving beneficence of the fosterer of all serious art it would have led an unhappy existence."<sup>5</sup>

The new musical art had been spurred on by the celebration of the cult, and it was in the field of Church music that it celebrated its first triumphs.

Plainchant had grown up with the liturgy, so it required many centuries for a new musical expression to feel at home

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 144. <sup>2</sup> *Gesch.*, Einl. <sup>3</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. X. <sup>4</sup> Ch. II, Par. 4. <sup>5</sup> *Gesch.*, Ch. I.

in the organization of the Mass, and only the genius of polyphony could ultimately or adequately, though not perfectly, replace the Plainchant Ordinary, with its popularity of many hundreds of years.

In England, both William Byrd's contrapuntal style for the Latin rites and Orlando Gibbons' polyphonic works for the Anglican Church present XVII century modal types of composition. Henry Purcell of the same century, and Handel of the following, brought forth the Cathedral Anthem, in which a new and hardy type of many-voiced music not only established itself in the Anglican Church, but became an influence for general musical development as well.

But the progress of vocal expression was not the only influence directed toward an ultimate transformation in Church music, all of which was later to bring about a necessity for reform in things liturgical. The advent of instruments into the Church played an enormous role in its musical destiny.

In the first centuries of the Church, no musical instruments were allowed in the Divine Service (this custom is still retained in the Oriental Church), undoubtedly because the flute and cithara carried with them the stamp of the pagan theatre. The Fathers of the Church spoke against their use from a spirit of moral wisdom. The liturgy developed itself in song.

However, the liturgical service was sufficiently well established in the course of the centuries to fear no foreign influence through admission of the organ into either the churches or monasteries.

The first organ in the Occident made its appearance in the VIII century. It was a gift from the Court of Constantinople to Pepin the Short, and was installed at Compiègne. Charlemagne had a similar one constructed for the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. Pope John VIII, in a letter, written in 880, to Anno, Bishop of Friesingen, requests that a good organ be sent to him, and a skillful player to instruct the Roman artists.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ref., *Grove's Dict., Organ.*

Very simple at first, the organ developed constantly to greater perfection. From the IX century on, one encounters this instrument in the Church as an ornamental part of the service. This means that it came to the Church originally as a free instrument, and was only later used for accompaniment as well.<sup>1</sup>

Directly after the beginning of the departure from Plainchant, in the Middle Ages, the organ was often used as a substitute for failing voices. At first, it functioned, in this capacity, as the second voice to Gregorian Chant (Organum).<sup>2</sup> This same custom (the organ substituting for a failing voice part) prevailed in the later many-voiced Mass. This brought about the habit of playing the organ, even in Plainchant Masses, for certain sung parts, and the erroneous impression came about that organ playing might be employed to replace the sung word. Such an unliturgical procedure was naturally not favored by the Church, merely tolerated, and often decried as well as forbidden.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, for serious reasons, it was permitted to play the organ for the sung parts, provided the latter were recited. The *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* was the first liturgical book to mention this custom in Rome about 1600.<sup>4</sup> This procedure of the organ as a voice substitute is, then, the first step of the present day practice of recitation sometimes heard in the place of singing during certain parts of the Mass, especially in the Proper.

These recitations, accompanied with soft organ playing, should be slowly and distinctly rendered, on a tone easily within the range of the voice. The part recitation in liturgical song should be so adjusted that the entire rendition always terminate with singing. The *Credo* is the only Mass song for which it is forbidden to substitute in any part a recitation of the text.<sup>5</sup>

Musical instruments other than the organ were not in favor in the Church during the Middle Ages. Beginning with the XV century, they were used for Church feasts in certain places, such as the rich Netherlands and commercial Venice. In the XVII century, the court orchestras of the European capitals started to come into

<sup>1</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 163. <sup>3</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XII. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Ch. XIV. <sup>5</sup> *Decret. Generale*, May 22, 1894, *Inf.*, Ch. XV.

prominence, and they soon penetrated into the holy precinct. A special place, the tribune, was erected for them in the body of the church, and there they took their stand with the singers of the Ordinary, while the Proper stayed near the altar with the liturgical choir. In this same century, the organ, as well, rose to pronounced heights of art in both the Catholic and Protestant churches. A worthy contribution to the art of Church organ music are the works of the renowned Roman organ master Frescobaldi (XVII century), who composed many excellent organ verses as preludes, interludes and postludes for the Plainchant Offices.

The organ was often used now as a bass voice in obligato style (General Bass). From this period comes the initial practice of the "harmonized" accompaniment of Gregorian Chant.

Polyphonic music with double-chorus (which latter practice had come from Byzantium) found its fullest expression in the great basilicas of Rome, for which, in the XVII century, many-voiced Masses were composed. These were written with and without accompaniment, and contained voice parts ranging from 16 to 48 in number! At the same period, the Mass written in concert style (the *Concerti Ecclesiastici*), which comprised solo songs with organ bass and violin, brought the virtuoso style of the opera into the church.

It was during this period (XVII century) that Cantata style, as well, typified by the productions of the Roman Carissimi, became more and more evident. This classical form, consisting of introduction, solos, duets, trios and choruses, with instrumental preludes, interludes and cadenzas, was further developed in the XVIII century. Thus we arrive at a real architectural structure of the music of the Mass. Such music, of Neapolitan operatic stamp, is the complete antithesis of a cappella polyphony. Instruments now began to have their own form expression, and a Sonata or a violin Concerto, later also a Sinfonia, often replaced the Graduals, Alleluias and Offertories. This practice continued until the XIX century, and even monasteries were not free from it.<sup>1</sup> The musical triumphs of Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi left their mark

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XII.

on Church music as well. Let us portray to the mind how far removed is this type of music from the true liturgical style, when we recall that a certain modern critic appraised Verdi's *Requiem* as his *greatest opera*.

So firmly had instrumental music also, by this time, taken hold in the Church, that its particular expression, so foreign to all that the human voice is called to interpret in the House of God, became the pattern of sung music as well. Instruments changed the style of Mass music. One might call this the epoch of the full musical emancipation of the individual from things liturgical. Furthermore, the orchestra was composed of secular musicians, who had many musical duties of a worldly nature, apart from their participation in the Church service. The organ, as well, now seized every available occasion during the Mass to fill in with preludes and interludes, and actually crowded song out of its legitimate territory.<sup>1</sup>

Benedict XIV, in his Encyclical *Annus Qui* (1749), had already listed the instruments that might henceforth be retained in the Church, where even at his time, they practically dominated.

The statutes of the Papal Chapel prohibit the use of instruments, and purity of vocal style was still guarded by the XVII and XVIII century composers of the Papal Choir, although certain concessions to a more modern type of musical expression were not entirely absent even here.

Benedict XIV's reform could not re-awaken the old interest in Gregorian Chant; this was impossible at the time. In the parish churches, as a consequence, the mixed choir came into existence.

In France, the Revolution worked havoc with liturgical music. The choir conductors and boys' choirs, deprived of remuneration, disappeared from the cathedrals.

The song books of German-speaking countries, even until the XVI century, testify to a greater fidelity in the preservation of traditional Plainchant than that evidenced in either Italy or France, in which two countries all kinds of musical experiments had taken

<sup>1</sup> *Einfl.*, Ch. III.

place.<sup>1</sup> But even Germany was not eventually immune to the general trend. In this country, where Gregorian Chant, even as early as the VIII and IX centuries, had ceded somewhat to the *Kirchenlied* (which grew out of the exclamation *Kyrieleis*, as sung in the vernacular by the congregation), the instrumental, as well as the later Wagnerian operatic style, finally made its inroads into Church melody.

How far we are from the nature of liturgical music in the harmonized Mass music of the XVIII and XIX centuries, with its orchestral organ accompaniment, an ensemble of instrumental thought development with voice mixture!

Let us make a contrast: While in modern harmony the chief voice is harmonized for support, in Palestrina's polyphony the voices move horizontally. Nor must his homophony be considered as identical with the later "chord writing," in which a melody is "harmonized" with accompanying voices; for in Palestrina's homophony the voices still remain independent, except that in this form of expression they are all united in but one rhythmic interpretation of the text (*Contrapunctus simplex*). This homophonic style was the result of the *Falso Bordone* (*Faux Bourdon*) cited as early as the XII century,<sup>2</sup> in which the lowest written voice (the bass) was sung an octave higher, and the remaining voices moved around it in equal step. This produced the sound of simple chords.

In polyphony, the voices weave in and out freely and independently, and meet naturally—they meet because they "must meet." They are horizontal melodies, and harmony is the result of their ensemble, for there is rhythmic movement in harmony even as there is in melody. Through imitation, the voices participate mutually in the themes, which are presented with a variety that is satisfying only because the listener is already familiar with their rhythm and melody; the result is variety in unity, a requisite of art. In this superposed voice leading of the Palestrina melody, no one voice dominates over another, for each is subservient to the text.

The modulations of the old polyphonic composers were limited.

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XI.

They modulated mostly in the Church Modes and in a few related harmonies. But this was far from proving a restriction on their skill; for the very docility of such musical expression is capable of producing in the hearer "an enlightened, supernatural and often seraphic devotion. Its sphere is the expression of collectivity that bends itself willingly under the sentiment of the Church."<sup>1</sup>

For a long time Palestrina's music was improperly conducted, by indicating the *cum sono* as a place of strength, or force. We may now gain a clear idea of how to conduct this music by quoting Charles Bordes' instructions: "Do not consider (in the transcriptions of Palestrinian music) the measure bars *other than visual guides to divide the song into equal parts, without any anxiety to introduce periodic returns of strong beats. Palestrina's music, like Gregorian Chant, is a purely rhythmic, and not a metric music.*"<sup>2</sup>

Modern music, with its wide choice of tonality, can vacillate hither and thither in its often useless and contradictory modulations, selecting that which complies with the mood or even with the fantasy of the composer, in what Vincent d'Indy calls "indecisive fluctuations between light and darkness, producing on the auditor a painful and deceptive impression comparable to that which a poor human being provokes in us when, weak and inconsistent, he is unceasingly tossed about from east to west, in the course of a lamentable existence, without aim and without belief."<sup>3</sup>

Cardinal Sarto (later Pius X) rendered, in a commentary relative to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, a practical and detailed judgment on the operatic and cantata style which had taken such full possession of Church music. This Pastoral letter, to which we referred in Chapter I,<sup>4</sup> contains the following reflections: "For this reason has the Congregation of Rites, in its regulations of September 24, 1884 and July 6, 1894, not only condemned bringing certain musical forms into the liturgical functions of the holiness of the Temple, since they are most improper, but has also especially commissioned the Bishops to watch over sacred music, and has even enjoined the infliction of Ecclesiastical punishment, so that worldly

<sup>1</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XI. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>3</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. VIII. <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, p. 84.



music would be kept far from the Church. And to this belongs most especially the theatrical style which has become so widely diffused in Italy during our century. Truly, it contains nothing that recalls Gregorian Chant and the stricter forms of polyphony. Its inner character is frivolity without reserve. Its melodic form, even though it flatters the ear exceedingly, is sweet to excess, its rhythm is that of the most danceable Italian poetry, its object only to please the senses, and consequently it contains nothing but musical effects; naturally, the more affected are its concertized solos, and the louder its choruses, the more it pleases the masses. Its character signifies the fullest expression of the so-called conventionalism, which in the composition and arrangement of the particular pieces appears like a complex of the entire *partitura* [score]. There is always an aria for bass, a romance for tenor, the duet, cavatina, cabaletta and the final chorus—all conventional pieces. I will not call attention to the fact that often these theatrical melodies are combined with the Holy Text; even more frequent new ones have been created, but always fashioned after those of the theater; and one has thereby so violated the secrets of our Faith as to merit the reproach of Christ to the desecrators of the Temple of Jerusalem: *Vos autem fecistis illam speluncam latronum.*

“One cannot say that, with its latest prescriptions, the Church enjoins only Gregorian or polyphonic song, and absolutely forbids modern compositions. No, this Mother of true progress does not hinder our century from also enriching itself with its own works of genuine Church music, if only the new compositions—there are so many of them—emulate the old ones by a completely religious style, and all frivolous and noisy theatrical music, vocal and instrumental music of worldly character, be banished.

“I know that the opponents of Church music do not fail in arguments for maintaining intact their tenacious stubbornness, but it is sufficient to enumerate these in order to refute them.

“The first argument is the great reverence in which the composers delight, some of them zealous Catholics, who write their

music in a spirit of devotion by endeavoring to give a good musical expression to the words of the holy text. If this is enough to excuse the masters, it is not sufficient to save their compositions. They did not see the false stream that tore along with them, and thought, in good faith, that every musical form, if it expresses any kind of a meaning of the words, should for this reason alone be allowed to be used in the Church. . . .

“Spoiled taste also rises up as an enemy of sacred music, since undeniably worldly music, because it is easily understood, and above all easily grasped from a rhythmical standpoint, is all the more pleasing the less the hearer has had the benefit of a good musical education. One says, therefore, that the people like them [worldly Church works], and has the courage to insist that if he changed and abolished that kind of music in the Church, it would diminish the participation of the faithful in liturgical functions. But without pointing out especially that mere pleasure never furnishes a true critical judgment in holy things, and that one should not give in to the people in things that are not good, but should teach and educate them—I say that the misuse of the word people is exercised too much; for in reality they give evidence of being more devout and serious than one usually thinks; they have a taste for holy music and go constantly to the churches where it is rendered. . . .

“Let no one say that if Palestrina were living today he would write an entirely different music. If he were with us, with his perfect knowledge of the rules of liturgy and art, he would be capable of producing only a music which corresponds to the holiness of the place, and which flows from the Eternal Source of all holy music that is Church Song.”

“This commentary on the operatic Church style of the XVIII and XIX centuries, a commentary on the regulations of the Council of Trent,” Dr. Wagner adds, “is sharp but not unjust, and delivered with penetrating and expert knowledge. It carries its argument in itself.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XII.

Edgar Tinel, in a speech at Mechlin in 1902, at the outset of the movement for a general restoration of Catholic liturgical music, suggested that Bach's vocal style be copied.

Undoubtedly, as Hubert Parry so truly says in his "Study of a Great Personality," music, to Bach, was the apparatus of worship, and it has been truly observed, the line of demarcation between the sacred and secular forms was for him not decisively drawn.<sup>1</sup>

Surely a rare beauty reflects in certain of his melodies, the Chorals and a large part of the Christmas Oratorio, for instance, Bach's own devotional mysticism. The Cantatas, however, have a clear dramatic element. But as a model of healthy aestheticism, the musical world has unanimously agreed on the fearlessness of Bach's unsurpassable fugal composition, for the inspiration of which instrumental work one must revert to the Lübeck concerts of Buxtehude. But Bach's vocal style in the St. John and St. Matthew Passions, as well as in the great B minor Mass (in which the stupendous contrapuntal chorus of the *Credo* is developed on the traditional Plainchant intonation of the same song) is a combination of instrumental as well as vocal workmanship. Nor did the influence of organ style in vocal music cease with the works of the master of the Thomasschule.

The great progress in organ building during the latter half of the XIX century, creating unexpected possibilities of tonal color, prepared the way for seeking out new expressions in Church music. Thus, Masses were composed in which this free organ style was also unrestrainedly carried into vocal ensemble.

The existence of a distinction between a genuine vocal melody and a genuine instrumental melody, by the very nature of each, is one of the first essentials that a Church musician must know and arrive at understanding, be he composer, organist, choir director or singer.

The particular form of music for the Church is the song expression of a Latin text. The liturgy itself developed in song, and, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> for a very long time knew no instruments.

<sup>1</sup> *Bach, Grove's Dict.*    <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 169.

Both Beethoven and Wagner spoke of the a cappella song as the ideal type of Church music. "Pure music must only be rendered by sung voices," said Beethoven.<sup>1</sup> Wagner, in his plan for a German National Theatre, deals also with the practical treatment of Church music. He wrote the following in 1849: "His [Palestrina's] works contain within them the blood and the highest perfection of Catholic Church music. . . . The first step to the decline in true Catholic Church music was the introduction of orchestral instruments into it; through them and through their ever freer and more independent use, a sensuous embellishment which injured it pierced through the religious expression, and exerted a most harmful influence over song. . . . The human voice, the immediate carrier of the holy word, but not the instrumental decoration nor hardly the trivial violin playing in most of our present Church pieces, must, nevertheless, have immediate preference in the Church, and if Church music is to succeed in arriving once again at its original purity, vocal music alone must represent it."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Peter Wagner adds this remark to the foregoing: "How would he later have judged those who carried his own style into Church music?"<sup>3</sup>

It is significant to note that Wagner himself in his great religious opera takes just the opposite course, in that which has to do with the functions of the voice and the orchestra, to the one he advocates in Church music; for in *Parsifal* he lets the instruments develop the thought and sentiment, while the voices mix in orchestral polyphony.

Liszt, too, recognized the necessity of a reform in Church music, and tried to counteract the type that prevailed at his time with his *Missa Choralis*. Yet it was the very "harmonic curiosity"<sup>4</sup> which followed Wagner and Liszt, and which they each decried in its application to Church music, that so singularly nourished symphonic orchestral organ accompaniments coupled with a vocal style based upon the opera aria.

<sup>1</sup> Thayer, *Beethoven, Einf.*, Ch. XII. <sup>2</sup> *Gesammelte Werke und Dichtungen, Einf.*, Ch. XII.  
<sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XII. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

Practically all the great classic composers (Brahms excepted) wrote a certain amount of Catholic Church music, but very few of these compositions can be considered as specimens of genuine liturgical expression.

If we study Dr. Wagner's conclusions on this subject, we learn that Josef Haydn's rhythm is too jovial for Roman Church music. His brother Michael wrote in a somewhat more liturgical style, that which Josef himself admitted. Mozart, whose last great work is his *Requiem* and whose most liturgical is the famous *Ave verum*, expresses himself largely in melody which savors of the opera. Schubert's Masses reveal the style of the greatest composer of Lieder, while Weber's Masses, although more important, portray the master of opera in a style that is restless and lacking in uniformity.

Cherubini is the most important Church composer of the early XIX century. Berlioz, in his few Church compositions, is too strange and gigantic in tonal power, while Gounod's lyric contributions to Church music often verge on the sentimental.<sup>1</sup>

And was the secret of the liturgy found by the composer of the Ninth Symphony in his Mass in D, which d'Indy calls one of the most sublime monuments of religious music?<sup>2</sup>

How in keeping with the character of the genius to have shut himself up in his room in a house deserted by servants and denuded of every comfort, in his devotion to the composition of this Mass. Schindler describes the scene which occurred during the elaboration of the *Credo*, when he found Beethoven singing, shouting and stamping, as if in actual conflict of life and death over the fugue, "*Et vitam venturi*," his appearance wild and dishevelled, he himself faint with toil and twenty-four hours' fast!<sup>3</sup> Here we have from the "most perfect work of the Titan of Symphony"<sup>4</sup> as powerful a human expression as music is capable of producing. But, once again, does this type of dramatic expression identify itself with Catholic Church music? If we reflect on all that we have studied up to this point, we must grant that Beethoven's

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Chs. V and IX. <sup>2</sup> *César Franck*, Ch. V. <sup>3</sup> *Beethoven*, *Grove's Dict.* <sup>4</sup> d'Indy, *César Franck*, Ch. V.

*Missa Solemnis* is not the product of an accepted musical expression of the Roman liturgy.

In reference to both this gigantic musical work and Bach's B minor Mass, Dr. Wagner has the following to say: "This [the Beethoven Mass in D] and the Bach B minor Mass, constitute the most colossal disregard of the text of the Ordinary that history has ever produced. The musical interpretation is the most subjective conceivable, and completely independent of the liturgy, indeed almost of time and place; broadest forms, highest striving of vocal and instrumental power, the most individual tone language, a great wealth of genial and sublime moments, that is what distinguishes these Masses; as works of art they are invaluable, as Church works problematic."<sup>1</sup>

César Franck, perhaps more than any other composer of secular music who has ever lived, arrived at an expression in instrumental music which is indeed a spiritual homage of living faith. For Franck's music is that of the *hardy* mystic. Gentle, tender, serene, these compositions, nevertheless, radiate a spirituality which *vibrates*. But as regards liturgical music, the "*Pater seraphicus* whose ingenuousness and modesty were limitless . . . remains in his Church music, with a few exceptions, a *soloist*," says Charles Bordes.<sup>2</sup>

Vincent d'Indy explains this by saying that Franck was very indifferently informed regarding the monumental polyphonic works of the XVI century, editions of which were rare and not very accessible in his day. Furthermore, he knew nothing of the research work of the Solesmes Benedictines in the subject of Gregorian Chant.<sup>3</sup> "But what would he not have written for the Church if once his beautiful soul of a religious musician had been fully opened to the serene beauty of these [earlier] masters!" says Charles Bordes in the same article from which we have already quoted.

Concerning Franck's Mass for three voices, d'Indy does not hesitate to say that despite the sweet and simple prayer of the *Kyrie*, the serenity of the *Sanctus*, and the *Agnus Dei*—"a little

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. V. <sup>2</sup> *Le Courrier Musical*, Nov. 1904, *César Franck*, Ch. V. <sup>3</sup> *César Franck*, Ch. V.

chef-d'oeuvre of expressive concision and of melodious tenderness . . . which closes with a *pianissimo* of the three voices without accompaniment which seems like the threshold of a mystic *janua caeli*"<sup>1</sup>—the Mass, with its other parts, stands quite outside the framework of true Church music by reason of its "unevenness."<sup>2</sup> Franck's Church music is, therefore, as his devoted pupil and biographer admits, inferior to that which he produced in other styles—orchestral, pianoforte and chamber music.<sup>3</sup>

So neither simplicity nor complication act as the measure for the success or failure of the mission of a work of art. It is whether any such production be in harmony with its surroundings—church or concert hall—in its expression of the meaning of the place, and to what extent or degree of perfection this work corresponds to its mission through service to the cause of its being, that makes of any aesthetic creation a greater or lesser work of art in the fulfillment of a *particular* demand made upon it.

Gregorian Chant is, then, the most perfect musical expression of the Church, and Pius X, as we have seen, places it first, classic polyphony, especially that of the Roman school, second, and modern music which conforms to the liturgical norm third, in the scale of preference.<sup>4</sup> In no one of the liberal arts which serve the Church has she claimed a particular style as her own other than in the art of music. All Church music other than Gregorian has something of the accidental in its character. Gregorian Chant alone is comprised in the very organic existence of the liturgy.

If we wish to be progressive in our Church compositions and still remain liturgical, which we must, our regard will have to be like unto that of the great polyphonic writers—*out* and *back*; for these composers drew constant nourishment for their works from Gregorian Chant. The Church is no enemy of progress, but only of the abuses which often accompany it, as for example the application of the rhythm and style of instrumental music to Church song.

The impression exists among certain followers of the liberal arts, and we speak most particularly of musicians, that one must

<sup>1</sup> *César Franck*, Ch. V. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>4</sup> *Ref.*, pp. 14, 15, 16.

only go on from where his predecessors left off; that to spend time delving in the past is to retrograde. Musicians of this persuasion are convinced that they are called to speak the language of *today*, to produce what *our* century wants, in the idiom that the present generation understands. It is all very well, they say, for scholars whose vocations call them to it, or whose tastes lie in that direction, to spend their time reconnoitering in the past, but they want to achieve everything possible in the present, and for that reason are determined to devote their time and energy strictly to putting into practice the doctrine of modern accomplishment; in other words, they are determined to devote themselves to that which for them is *real*, not to that which, in their eyes, has been laid away to eternal rest. And still, in the very realm of natural development, our life of today is the result of yesterday. How can it be otherwise in the world of art, which uses nature for its model?

The *Motu Proprio*, all-embracing document that it is, breathes the spirit of progress as well as that of tradition. The *geniune* Church music of today is not the production of the present, nor will exclusion of the past produce works of the future. "With a thousand threads Church music hangs on to its past."<sup>1</sup> Just as Plainchant composers themselves, as we have discovered, used the traditions of pagan art as well as those of the Old Law, transforming both into Christian art, which has survived the centuries, so must the artist of today find his nourishment in tradition, if he expects to create that which will likewise survive future generations. Only to his own harm will the present day Church composer discard the tried forms of ancient times. Develop them in keeping with new conditions one can, but demolish them one cannot. Pius X is himself the model master who grants whole-heartedly that composers may retain the particular musical idiom of their respective countries if they so desire, the only restriction being conformity to the laws of the liturgy. At the same time, he recognizes the "excellence, sobriety and gravity" of certain modern Church compositions.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. VII. <sup>2</sup> *Ref.*, p. 15



The *Motu Proprio* starts a new period in Church music, and composers of all nations can base their particular expressions upon its precepts as upon the Magna Charta, Dr. Wagner asserts. "Never, so far as I know," the same commentator emphasizes, "has a like recognition of the rights of the artistic characteristics of the nations been expressed by the highest Church authority."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wagner states, furthermore, that we are today in a period of transition with respect to Church composition.<sup>2</sup>

Pius X does not maintain that the more closely a Church composition reflects the norm of Gregorian Chant the greater is its artistic development; but he does affirm, that under such conditions the liturgical qualifications of such a work are more ideal.<sup>3</sup> Neither fantasy nor the theatrical has aught to offer in a production which must embody only holiness, art and universality.

Our attention has been drawn to the fact that certain musicians, in all sincerity, would like to know something of Gregorian Chant as a type of musical art, but are not interested in the "religious" phase of the subject. If it can be approached merely as a "branch of musical science," well and good, but if not, Gregorian Chant is "not in their line."

Without enlarging upon the fact that the spirituality which identifies itself with Divine religion is not only the unique element of inspiration in the composition of this particular Church art, but also the sole source of nourishment which keeps it ever alive, let us quote what a composer of secular music has to say on this subject in relation to *all* art.

Vincent d'Indy taught and wrote the following: "In fact, the principle of all liberal art is incontestably religious faith. Without *Faith*, there is absolutely no Art. It is through faith, and even, if one will, through *religiosity*, that *utilitarian* art, responding to the necessities of the life of the body, is transformed into *liberal* art, the means of life for the soul." Referring to the five liberal arts which he had previously cited, he continues by declaring that these arts "do not live except by a common life, and mutually pene-

<sup>1</sup> *Einfl.*, Ch. IX. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. VI. <sup>3</sup> *Ref.*, pp. 14, 15.

trate one another, to the point where it is sometimes difficult to establish with certainty their respective bounds. They are, in fact, not *different arts*, but *different forms* of Art, of the **Unique Art**.

“Art is *one* in itself; only its expression, its manifestation, differs following the procedure employed by the artist to express it [as stone for architecture, marble for sculpture, color for painting, the word for literature and sound for music].

“The reason for this unity of Art is of a supernatural order: above all human necessities soars the aspiration toward the Deity, the *élan* of the creature toward his Maker; and it is in Art, in all its forms, that the *soul* seeks the *means* of uniting its *life* with the Being Who is its principle.

“Even antiquity attributed to Art a supra-natural power over animate and inanimate beings; the myths of Orpheus and Amphion, to mention only what relates to Music, are there as evidence.

“The idea of Art appears to us from its origin, therefore, indissolubly bound up with the idea of religion, with adoration or with the divine cult.

“Thus it is that the house of man becomes the temple of God, with its symbolic sculptures and its sacred paintings. Applied to acts of collective adoration, Poetry becomes Prayer. The body joins with the soul through mimicked prayer, in a simultaneousness of rhythmically regulated movements; monotone psalmody is finally succeeded by the melody of the canticle, the musical elevation of the soul towards God.”<sup>1</sup>

Yes, Art *borrow*s from nature, but art does not *bloom* until it adds unto itself certain elements which make man *live better*—we call this *culture*; it *dominates* matter.

We return now to the musician who would like to know something of Gregorian Chant, but who insists that he is in no way interested in the role which religion plays in the existence of this art. We refer him to the eminent authority just quoted, in order that any notion he may entertain regarding the justification

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Introduction.

of a complete disassociation of Divine faith from *any* liberal art, be it secular or sacred, may prove itself to be but a hallucination, which the nature of truth itself makes absolute. All of the history of permanent Art makes evident this truth in a revelation that needs no further attestation.

The long disputed question as to whether Gregorian Chant could legitimately be accompanied, since it is a traditional melody composed without the aid of instruments, was scientifically settled by M. Louis Niedermeyer (d. 1861), whose eminent musicianship, coupled with a profound labor in the field of Plainchant, brought about the revelation that Gregorian Chant could be harmonized by its own tonality. For a long time prior to this discovery, Gregorian Chant had been sung with a harmonized accompaniment in modern tonality: an incongruous association of two different tonal systems.

A most important precept to keep in mind is, that an accompaniment written or played *according* to the Modes is not necessarily one that is *in* the Modes, and that a purely modal accompaniment remains within the modal sphere of its song.

A very pronounced progress has taken place in the science of Gregorian Chant accompaniment during the past twenty-five years. This may be attributed to the research study of the old manuscripts of Plainchant, which has brought about, among other things, as we saw in previous chapters, a very intensive ferreting out of the *rhythm* of Plainchant, which element, with those of tonality and modality, must be entirely conserved for a properly constructed Plainchant accompaniment.

The science of tonality and that of modality in their association with the free oratorical rhythm of the Plainchant melody having been acquired, the next step in the study of Gregorian Chant accompaniment is to direct one's attention to the proper understanding of harmony, which, as Vincent d'Indy states, "is not the *science of chords*."

"The study of chords *for themselves* is, from the standpoint of music, an absolute aesthetic error, because harmony proceeds

from melody, and should never be separated from it in its application."

Harmony, according to the definition of the master, is "the simultaneous emission (or the superposition) of many different melodies. . . ."

"Notation represents *succession* (melody) in the *horizontal* sense, and *simultaneousness* (harmony) in the *vertical* sense.

"Musical phenomena should always be envisaged, graphically, in the *horizontal* sense (a system of simultaneous *melody*) and not in the *vertical* sense, as *harmonic science* such as it is taught today does it."<sup>1</sup>

After having laid stress on the necessity of the prudence and circumspection which should accompany one's advance in the study of Gregorian Chant rhythm, Dom Mocquereau states that, strictly speaking, his rules do not belong to him: "Not alone do we find their substance in the writings of Dom Pothier, but again in those of many modern authors, musicians and composers of renown. . . . Besides, these principles have already been taught in one of the large music schools in Paris by M. Vincent d'Indy, of whom the whole world knows the high artistic value, the musical science, the broad and superior ideas. The conversations which we have had with this illustrious composer, the letters which he has kindly wished to write to us, have enlightened us acutely."<sup>2</sup>

The following precepts and rules are set forth in the *Paléographie musicale* for the enlightenment of the organist:

Harmony by itself possesses no proper means for augmenting or diminishing the *dynamic* intensity of its combinations. It is, by its very nature, foreign to all that manifests *force*. It is *movement* that influences chords, which are but an extension, an amplification of a single note. This influence is exercised by means of attraction, not force. There is *rhythmic movement* in *harmony* even as there is in *melody*: by changing the *chords* the *rhythm* is changed.

Musical sounds are united among themselves by a sort of attraction of gravitation which determines their *musical sense*.

<sup>1</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. VI. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

More restrained than the *musical sense* is the *tonal sense*. It results from a more special and more sensitive sympathy of certain tones determined toward certain others.

*Tonalities*, in their turn, have between themselves reciprocal relationships, just as do the tones themselves.

From these diverse movements and attractions of tones and of tonalities springs the whole life of harmony.<sup>1</sup>

We continue from the same source:

1) Every succession of chords is a movement.

2) The linking of these harmonic movements, even as of those of rhythm, proceeds by *arsic* and *thetic* phases, which renew themselves at the first beat of the measure by chords *gifted with the character of movement* during the march of the melody, and by chords of repose at the end. By elementary analysis every *ictus*, every *touching*, is *gifted during the rhythmic march* with a double character: it is at the same time the point of arrival of the preceding rhythm and the point of departure of the following; now, it is this resumption of the movement that is favorably expressed by chords *gifted with the character of movement*. Nothing shows more clearly the intimate relationship of rhythm and harmony.

3) The beats which *carry the rhythm* are at the same time and necessarily the beats which *carry the harmony*.

4) The harmonic analysis of polyphony conducts to the same results as the melodic analysis, i. e., that the use of the accent on the up-beat was a legitimate and very frequent one, which is encountered, even up to the childhood of the art of harmony, not only in Latin, but in all languages.

5) The independence of the accent and the rhythmic stress [in that they are not necessarily simultaneous] finds its justification and its explanation in the very essence of harmony, which cannot interest itself in the *dynamic* phenomenon of rhythm.

The Latin accent is not necessarily on the first beat of the measure.<sup>2</sup> In the same volume is quoted from d'Indy that which

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII, attributed to M. Giulio Bas. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII.

we have already learned:<sup>1</sup> "One cannot even assert that *most often* the first beat of the measure is *rhythmically a weak beat*."

The Renaissance placed the accent on the *down* or *struck* beat, and transformed the meaning of the bar as simply a graphic sign, into a place of periodic stress,<sup>2</sup> contrary to the principles of either Gregorian Chant or polyphonic music, both of which had (as we know) used the bar as a simple graphic sign of rhythmic division.<sup>3</sup>

In the analysis of a VI Mode Introit, wherein he shows that a rhythmic stress on *mi*—a note characteristic of the III or IV Mode—would be an error, save in exceptional cases, Dom Mocquereau observes that it is faulty understanding of the modality and rhythm which produces imperfections in the accompaniments. "However trivial these mistakes may appear objectively," he writes, "nevertheless, they do not lack a certain gravity. To be sure, they do not as yet shock the majority of singers, not even certain masters of Gregorian art. That is because they have not yet penetrated sufficiently the tonal and rhythmic finesses of liturgical music. Wait a few years; little by little their taste will become formed, purified and affirmed, and soon the very ones who now, in hearing these faults, remain unconscious of them, will demand their disappearance: they will shock them almost as much as the enormities of the first official edition [the Medicean];<sup>4</sup> because the true musician, in the face of a work of art, is extremely impressionable; that which causes annoyances, the vivacity of which does not measure up to the gravity which occasions the faults."<sup>5</sup> The accompaniment of Gregorian Chant should, of course, always be a soft and sustaining one.<sup>6</sup>

We have from the same author a very descriptive lesson in the artistic manner of using the organ—the "queen of instruments"—in the celebration of the cult: "To demand of this instrument," he writes, "agreeable interludes which, without clashing too brutally with the sanctity of the place and action, rather refresh the assistants from a breathless attention, has doubtless nothing of the heterodox or of the illegitimate. Some prefer, however,

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 106. <sup>2</sup> *Cours.*, Ch. XII. <sup>3</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. VII. <sup>4</sup> Ref., p. 28. <sup>5</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. X.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII.

that the organ, instead of distracting from the liturgical work, should maintain or keep the sensibilities centered there or draw them back to it. Thus understood, its role will consist in introducing the liturgical chants by preludes, in prolonging them by a sort of commentary of which they will form the theme, more or less apparent; sometimes in interpolating, by placing, for example, variations between two verses of the *Magnificat*: a role humble, modest, but which nevertheless furnishes to the talent of the musician a thousand opportunities to exercise itself, a thousand artistic problems to resolve.

“See, for example, how this transition between two intonations almost identical as to melodic design, one an *Agnus Dei* in a major tonality, the other a Communion in a minor, is managed: the choir has just arrived at the end of the last *Agnus Dei*; the organ plays again the intonation and prolongs it in variations which at first stay in the major, then become *less precise*. A series of glidings. Certain timid touches begin to signal the nearing of the minor. And, as a detour of the way, now see the complete intonation of the Communion approach. However, it is but a flash. The major returns with force, and behold, the battle is on. The chances fluctuate, balance one another; will the adversaries leave one another? For a moment, by favor of a more audacious chord, an attempt at conciliation seems to suggest itself. That would be a confused peace, and if it were necessary to intone at this moment, heaven knows to which side the chanter and the choir would go. But the artist has calculated his time well. Now, under his hands, the minor is again resumed, becomes more and more affirmative, repeats its intonation with an accent of triumph, installs itself in conquering. Chanter and choir can henceforth not make a mistake; they will not even hesitate: the major has finished its life, is well forgotten.

“But in this hesitation between one tonality and another, never for a moment has the listener had the impression of a rupture or of a hiatus. Thus the difficulty itself can constrain the artist as a

godsend, and resolve itself into a little musical chef-d'oeuvre, which, far from interrupting the service, will achieve the harmonious unity of it."<sup>1</sup>

And now a word for choir directors: In the Introduction to the *Micrologus*, which contains a letter from Guido written to his Bishop, Theodaldus, who had placed the master in charge of his Cathedral choir school and had enjoined him to write what was later to become his most famous work, one will find many significant suggestions relative to the great art of pedagogy, especially in the field of the training of boys' voices.

Referring to the rules found in the body of the work, Guido states that he has made them clear and short to the exclusion of philosophical development, in no way, either in whole or in part, following such a course, because he wanted to help "our little ones." The principles he here presents were, he maintains, hidden until his time, because, all in being difficult, they had never been presented in a simple way.

Farther on, in the Preface of the work itself, Guido speaks of the facility with which the boys, after diligent practice in his system of dividing the monochord, were able to sing songs at first sight with a sureness which made them an object of wonder to all.

That Guido's art of pedagogy was a perceptive one is disclosed by his manner of approach—in endeavoring to make of his pupils first *musicians*, then *singers*. He starts a pupil first with the task of practicing his hand in the use of the monochord, while going through the given rules, until he has fully understood the "nature and being of tone."<sup>2</sup> Having stated that, in so doing, he gives the pupil the means at hand to educate his hearing and do without a teacher, Guido then prefixes his theories with the statement: "We shall first see how art, in its imitation of nature, borders on the same."<sup>3</sup> . . . From the many and different ways of partitioning the monochord I present here only one, that he [the pupil] may confine his whole attention to one manner of partitioning instead of to many, and arrive at an understanding of that one

<sup>1</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Microlog.*, Ch. I. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



free from all confusing doubt; moreover, it is of especially great importance that this way of partitioning [the monochord], once clearly understood, never be forgotten."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to his friend the monk Michael, Guido writes, alluding to the attainments of his young pupils: "Nor can I understand with what countenance one who is unable to accomplish these things dares to call himself a musician."<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere, this unique pedagogue of the Middle Ages comes forth with the amazing assertion:

"More weak-minded than other men are the singers of our day. In every art, that which we grasp by our understanding is by far more important than that which we learn with the help of a teacher. When the boys have read through the psalter, they can then try reading the pieces of all of the books.

"The peasants learn very quickly the knowledge of agriculture. For one would doubt that he who knows how to nurture a vineyard, plant a tree or load an ass, having done it at one time in a certain way, will continue, with practice, to do it always in the same manner. Singularly though, not one of our singers or song students, even though he might sing daily for a hundred years, can arrive at singing the smallest antiphon without the aid of a teacher; yet they spend enough time with singing to suffice for the learning of all worldly and spiritual science. . . . Therefore, it has always troubled me deeply to see how our singers are always learning, as the Apostle says, without ever succeeding to a complete mastery of this art."<sup>3</sup>

In addition, we find the following, sometimes pungent, thoughts in Guido's *Micrologus*:

"Besides, you must know that each song, like pure silver, gains in beauty the more it is used.<sup>4</sup> . . . Between the musician and the singer a vast difference exists: the latter merely presents, but the former understands what takes place in music.<sup>5</sup> . . . One must certainly present with good resonance of voice that which he finds corresponds to the inborn character of his spirit.<sup>6</sup> . . . Rules of music are done away with more than those of any other art, because many

<sup>1</sup> *Microlog.*, Ch. III. <sup>2</sup> *De ignoto cantu.* <sup>3</sup> *Microlog.*, Preface. <sup>4</sup> Ch. XVII. <sup>5</sup> Preface. <sup>6</sup> Ch. XVII.

cannot hold themselves on the course that is written before them, and like a swollen river whose bed no longer suffices, overflow at every place where there is a half-tone. . . . Some take the *diesis* [quarter-tone] at the place of the half-tone, and make a song like a burdened wagon that rattles to and fro going over a stony road.<sup>1</sup> . . . If one praises the roaring of a thundering voice as beautiful, then a braying ass should carry off the prize from a nightingale."<sup>2</sup>

Hermesdorff remarks at Guido's blunt way of expressing himself, "but," he adds, "have the expressions of our time a certain standard?"<sup>3</sup> The same commentator states that Guido did not restrain himself on the subject of music, or of the singers of his time, and that this, in view of the prevailing envy of his renown on the part of certain of his contemporaries, prepared the way for the enemies of whom the master complains in one of his letters.

Guido was a teacher and choir trainer, and his writings developed out of his practical work.

The task of the choir conductor is an arduous and often discouraging one, and it may be a source of certain consolation for him to know that in all Christian epochs difficulties, if not always similar, at least as intensive, have beset the paths of all of those who, with genuine zeal, have labored in the field of liturgical music.

Dr. Wagner's lifetime experience, as well as his broad science, prompt him time and time again to betray in his writings the sympathetic understanding he has for the difficulties of Catholic liturgical choir conductors, and in particular for those who are dedicating their efforts to a general furtherance of the love and understanding of Plainchant. From his lectures at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, for theologians and other friends of Church music, we quote the following: "If in any place in the country the poor tormented director manages with the greatest difficulty to bring his singers together, or if lack of time prevents his practicing everything to the extent of fulfilling the letter of the law, then let no one throw stones at him, but rather laud his zeal and wish him God's praise, and at the same time encourage him to strive higher and further."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ch. X. <sup>2</sup> Preface. <sup>3</sup> Ibid. <sup>4</sup> *Einfl.*, Ch. VII.

Realizing, as he does, the imperativeness of a proper co-operation in this work, if at last the servants of the cause of Gregorian Chant are to arrive at restoring it to its legitimate place in the cult, Dr. Wagner writes as follows: "From the expression 'Art needs recognition' one dare not except Church music. How willingly and how easily our choir directors, organists and singers work when they know that they enjoy the good-will of the clergy and of the whole congregation."<sup>1</sup> And again: "Scant recognition or complete indifference in the face of its labors cripples idealism, which the artist needs, in order to do justice to his task."<sup>2</sup>

In speaking of the ideal of congregational singing of the *Credo*, the same author reflects that "nothing is more sublime than when the whole congregation, summoned by the celebrant, solemnly acknowledges its Faith.<sup>3</sup> . . . What a spectacle is presented by the eternally young *Magnificat* of the Mother of God sung by all at Vespers! In order to arrive at this goal with certainty, the pastor or his assistant must enlighten the congregation, through sagacious instruction in sermons or on other occasions, regarding the beauty of the liturgy, this wonder work of the Christian spirit, and warm their hearts to the blessings that are showered upon them through their fervent participation in it. How easy it would be, with right at hand the utterances of the Fathers and teachers of the Church, which are available to everyone in the modern works on the history of the Chant, to awaken in all an understanding of the ideal beauty of congregational liturgical singing. The authority of the Priesthood, that has unlimited power over hearts, must intercede here to bring about the reform. The Catholic people accept all spiritual advice when it is taught with wisdom and conviction."<sup>4</sup>

We have also from the pen of the same eminent authority in his *Elemente des Gregorianischen Gesanges*, written for the installation of the Vatican Edition,<sup>5</sup> the following reflections: "The aversion which is frequently brought in opposition to Gregorian Chant comes from indolence, ignorance of its being, of its history and of its liturgical and artistic worth; further, from the inability of many Chris-

<sup>1</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XII. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. XV. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. X. <sup>5</sup> *Ref.*, p. 134.

tians, who with their entire being live only in the world, to arrive at an inner contemplation; many search too much for what is effect in Church music, while, on the other hand, it is the hidden simplicity and greatness of the liturgy which demand appreciation and esteem.

“An impetuous and frivolous generation will scarcely find joy in Plainchant, for it impels to seriousness and recollection. But in the heart of whomever enters into the House of God with the right disposition, and has brought his sensibilities in harmony with the sentiment of the Church, the resounding of Plainchant melodies will awaken the sentiment of piety and devotion, of penitence and gravity, as well as of joy and exultation.

“Nothing is more harmful to the Chant than a faulty rendition. If it is natural,<sup>1</sup> executed without schooling of the voice, the educated person and professional musician feel themselves easily repulsed. Therefore, a good part of the work of the future must be based upon the adoption and diffusion of a more artistic song. Under the wide mantle of a many-voiced composition executed by a strong choir, multiple defects, which would come to light immediately in monodic Plainchant, disappear. Experienced teachers recommend, for this reason, exercises in traditional Plainchant.”

With reference to the statement in the *Motu Proprio* which asserts, “The language proper to the Roman Church is Latin. Hence it is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions, etc.,”<sup>2</sup> the same writer comments: “As long as the Church authority stands steadfast on the organic association of liturgical song with the liturgy itself, and on its uniformity in the whole Church, to that length it is bound to advance this claim.”<sup>3</sup> And again he states: “If anywhere peaceful principles founded upon a solid basis are necessary, it is here, that Church music may not fall victim to accidental taste or wilful humor.”<sup>4</sup>

Certainly the enlightened testimony contained in the reflections of one of the active members of the Commission of the Vatican Edition, a man whose entire life was dedicated to study and teaching of the history of the Church and her Liturgy, must be accepted on its merits.

<sup>1</sup> Ref., p. 20. <sup>2</sup> Ch. III, Par. 7. <sup>3</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. XII. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, *Einf.*

The saintly Pius X, inspired author of the *Motu Proprio*—"a decree which originated in the Pope's spontaneous will"<sup>1</sup>—one of whose first major labors in his pontificate was the inauguration of the return to traditional music in the Church, emphasizes most clearly, in the document just referred to, the psychological conditions which inevitably play their role in the hindrance of a particular movement or reform. He writes in his opening paragraph the following impressive truths: "And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical Canons, in the Ordinances of the General and Provincial Councils, in the prescriptions which have at various times emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from Our Predecessors the Sovereign Pontiffs."<sup>2</sup>

In a universal Church, as is the Roman Catholic, the same general conditions prevail almost everywhere. There are, however, certain peculiarities which attach themselves to such and such a country, or at least to certain localities in the same country; one of these particularities in our country seems to be the misappropriation of the word "method" in its association with the art of Gregorian Chant.

Undoubtedly, the person who dedicates his intelligence and efforts to the formulation of a plan of discipline, be it mental or physical, in order to prepare the way in the search for the essential, or even, in the presence of the essential, to eliminate all obstacles to the continued possession of the same, has no intention of playing

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Vicario, *Regulations for the Prov. of Rome*. <sup>2</sup> Preface.

the role of one who is capable of *transmitting* this essential, for such power must emanate from the principle of life itself. It is unfortunate, then, that lack of reflection can so lightly attribute to some particular method or formula a signification which its author had not the slightest intention of attaching to it.

In the realm of the spiritual, Ignatius of Loyola was surely not laboring for a Christian world that would claim to identify the substance of Faith as "the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius."

Let us descend to the world of pure art: for many years the Leschetizky method of piano technique was very much in vogue, especially in Vienna, where its originator taught; but never, to our knowledge, did any one ever confuse the possession of a talent for the art of music with "the Leschetizky method." One who seeks the *nature* and *being* of the cause which he serves will not easily mistake the existence of such desire for an urge to possess merely a certain process of mental or physical discipline, however superiorly enlightened or informative any such method may be as a particular *means* by which to arrive at his goal.

Strange to say, nevertheless, in an art which transcends even the classical and soars into the realm of the supernatural, some will speak, in the most naive manner, of Gregorian Chant as "the so-and-so method." Such observations merely foil the actual end for which methods exist; and with due respect for the authors of particular systems, who in inaugurating the same have no intention of holding up their achievements as the identity of the living art itself, it must be observed that the persistent and indiscriminate use by others of any certain term in an utterly impossible sense only casts a confused meaning on achievements so worthy in themselves.

Another condition of error, but in this case an unworthy one, resounds as an ugly dissonance in the harmonious growth of any labor in the field of truth. It cannot be designated as peculiar to any given place or time: it is, always has been, and always shall be in a world where undisciplined human passion takes its toll by prevailing over reason. We allude to the inevitable unfriendly pursuit

of the achievements of hard-working men and women, on the part of self-appointed critics. We shall confine our observations to the field of liturgical music.

The persecutions to which we make allusion may take the form of indiscriminate attacks, often delivered with a vehemence which is exceeded only by the magnitude of the accompanying offense on the part of one, whose "loyalty to the cause" impels him to neglect even the most elementary principles of ethics; this stamps his eagerness with a quality which leaves in its wake the savor of all that is contrary to the ideal for which law and order exist.

With perfect aplomb this "defender" enters into foreign territory, and, in the midst of the so manifestly timely labors of a contemporary teacher, vigorously launches his unsolicited criticisms with no pretense of restraint—and this in a milieu where the general laws of ordinary ethics, if not elementary virtue, would deter the average person. Not even deigning to approach the object of his criticism, this champion then goes ardently on his way, with the smug assurance that he is doing it all because of a great "zeal for truth," and a wholesome determination to keep others from "falling into error." All this in the face of the most glaring necessity for a liturgical music reform, long neglected, in the very places where, by all the laws of reason, one could most rightfully assume that such a "champion of the cause" should feel a personal responsibility!

If any one factor more readily than another disqualifies a man as an enlightened and impartial judge of a given situation, it is his inability to recognize the merit of any labor other than that which bears the stamp of his particular "school of thought." Adorned with the halo of this trade-mark alone are any mortal and his work favorably judged, and under this unique "patronage" is one condescendingly accepted into the "inner circle."

Let us take a hypothetical case: what would we think of the faculties of a theologian who, before studying the qualifications of a departed soul as to merit for canonization, would automati-

cally exclude this soul from its justified recognition by the Church, on discovering that the proposed sanctity of this being had not been the product of a school of philosophy and theology particular to a certain given "school?" We should justly conclude, in such a case, that, owing to a lack of profundity in knowledge, just where we might rightfully have expected the greatest lucidity of thought, we had met with the most obvious obscurity.

It is evident that any disciple who has blazed a trail in the vocation to which he has been called by God is, in that which concerns his person and his work, absolutely unperturbed by a behavior which carries with it no evidence of the power of eternal truth; this laborer merely uses such events as stepping stones for mounting higher.

There are, however, many timid souls who are only feeling their way on the road which leads back to the origin of Gregorian Chant and all that it implies. Their minds are easily disturbed, and their very anxiety to arrive at the truth is often the cause of the perplexing doubts which assail them, which doubts are so easily nurtured by their either giving ear to, or having forced upon them, promiscuous opinions.

It must not be inferred that such observations as the foregoing exclude recognition of the fact that an enlightened criticism of any work is not only justifiable but healthy. We must, however, be very clear in our minds regarding the qualities essential for one who poses as both master and critic.

First, let us not confuse the *science* of criticism, which necessitates a long and arduous intellectual process, with the particular act of criticism which reflects a mere subjective contemplation.

The possession of the science of criticism is entirely compatible with the possession of the science of art. And by science of art we do not wish necessarily to imply skilful manipulation, or the art of virtuosity. The virtuoso, as such, plays the role of executant; but the artist *understands* the work. We recognize when this latter science is combined with that of criticism, by the presence of



what d'Indy terms "the irresistible need of transformation"<sup>1</sup> which exists in all artists. For when this type of person has torn down, such an act becomes merely accidental to the fundamental operation which follows—that of replacing with something better what he has been forced to destroy; and therein lies augmentation of values through *quality*—not *quantity*. In this case, one's subjective criticism is dominated by an objective contemplation, which passivity is complemented by a conscious power which drives him to action. Now even when one only strives for the interpretation of a work of art which is the creation of another, his perfection in the objective contemplation of the particular production should be as consummate as the creator's; for to arrive at the full understanding of a work of art, one must equal the artist himself in a given or achieved co-operation of understanding. The interpreter may even go further, by adding to the work, in his interpretation of the same, a more intense culture of soul than that which the artist himself has manifested in his creation. Besides, the latter is invariably incapable of giving to that which he brings forth in this world an expression fully commensurate to the contemplation of his ideal.

Now there exists, in contrast to this combination of genuine artist and genuine critic, an alliance of the merely subjective critic with the inefficient builder. This person tears down, but he is unable to reconstruct something better, because he has plunged into the work of general criticism without having arrived at a degree of perfection, in either manifest principle or accomplished work, superior to that which he decries. Having emerged from a relatively short period of study in a specialized art, he straightway acclaims himself, after this brief novitiate, a "master"—no longer a student. The energy and time which might so well be spent in further personal development in his field of activity, while at the same time he left no stone unturned in seeking out, by rugged labor and perseverance, ways and means of making his art known and loved wherever he might be—we repeat, this

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Romain Rolland in *César Franck*, Introduction by R. Newmarch.

energy and time which might so profitably be spent in such a manner, is often dissipated by giving a large part of it over to foolish disputes concerning centers and schools, placing paramount importance on *where* one has studied and what *method* one has followed, instead of being primarily concerned with the *quality* of one's learning by direct comparison with fundamental principles.

No genuine scholar has either time or energy for meaningless and agitated disputes (we recognize the justification of worthy ones), for any such person is constantly striving after further perfection in his own work through research, study or production. A man of this stamp gains his distinction—for it is that which sets him apart—by filling the role of *servant* to humanity. He is neither looking for, nor expects, nor is even interested in either praise or blame as such; or rather, he is interested in human judgments only in so far as they identify themselves with the vitality of truth itself. For he knows that true judgment is not a synthesis of ideas, but, on the contrary, the reality of only that which is actually represented by the subject and predicate of the object judged. Predilection — not prejudice — delivers true judgment. Needless to say, unless the works of any laborer be vitalized with the sap which flows in the branches of the True Vine, they will soon wither and die, only to be cut down and cast into the fire, as the Gospel tells us. So it is by the *fruits* of his labor that are ultimately revealed one's qualifications for functioning in a given capacity.

The profound intelligence of things liturgical which Dr. Wagner possessed prompted the following wise reflections on his part with respect to Gregorian Chant: "Research, hitherto existing [in this subject] is still far from having solved all of the important problems; even those which are considered settled demand a non-partisan authentication."<sup>1</sup> The erudite Dom Mocquereau, too, having already minutely deciphered the original manuscripts of three Graduals and one Antiphonary, writes in Vol. XI of the *Paléographie musicale*, preceding the discussion of his next An-

<sup>1</sup> *Einf.*, Ch. VI

tiphonary, of "much more yet to be done than that accomplished during the last fifty years." Thus speak the masters.

We should like to call to mind another and most essential characteristic of Gregorian Chant which, by its very nature, prohibits the use of the poetic, but none the less inappropriate, word "angelic" as an attribute of either the quality of the melody itself, or of the manner in which it should be rendered. Gregorian Chant is not the "song of angels;" no, it is *more*—it is the song of *saints*, the cry of the *children of God*—a communion based on the relationship of *person* to *Person*: that which Divine religion signifies. In olden times the singer's appointment was accompanied with the following charge: *Vide, ut quod ore cantas, corde credas, et quod corde credis, operibus comprobes.*<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, this song of the Church has no such designation as "art for art's sake." But it is art—yes, the term Gregorian Chant encloses a whole world of art—art as purificator, art for the sake of the eternal. Born not merely from an objective love of the aesthetic, but rather of blood which flowed in the veins of martyrs, we might well call this art "the song of the vestibule of heaven."

In Rome, in the VI century, St. Gregory criticized the voices of the laics who sang the parts formerly sung by the Deacon, complaining that their voices were "bland through omitting the study of God, which delights."<sup>2</sup> The principal characteristic which the Church longs for in its members is sanctity. It is the message of the *holy* that the Church musician is called to deliver; and how can he do so unless he approaches the Source of all light for his knowledge? And how can he approach this Source, if he permits an overweening self-esteem for his achievements, however exalted they may appear in his own eyes or in those of the little earthly circle wherein he reigns supreme as a "somebody," to act as a barrier to the doorway that leads to the Life of all Truth?

Even the cult, with all that it embraces in Church art in its highest perfection of exterior expression or execution, is nothing

<sup>1</sup> *Inf.*, Ch. XIII. <sup>2</sup> *Pal. mus.*, Vol. V.

other than sterile for the Kingdom of God, and consequently for the Church, unless it emanates, in its continued interpretation as well as in its further development, from a heart united to its Creator through the only means left to us by the Son of God Himself: to be born again of the Spirit. We may know the liturgy through association, we can appreciate it through study, but we will never *understand* the liturgy until we have *lived* it.

In closing, the author of this work dedicates the labor which has been put into it, as well as the experience embodied in it, not alone to the ideal of a reversion to Gregorian Chant executed in its original melodic and rhythmic perfection, but rather more to the ideal of a return to the *living* Faith which made possible such a sublime musical art. Having reverted to this origin, we shall then be ready to come back through the centuries, putting into our song the accumulations of the spiritual growth of the Church down through the ages to this day of our own. Having looked back, we shall then look forward, and leave for the future a song of the present that pulsates with life by the grace of God, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Nothing less than a song such as this will carry the message we have been sent to deliver in the heart of the Church.

And that, in substance, is what we believe is the spirit of Gregorian Chant.

THE END