

besetting sin. In Christian art we need enough rhythmic energy to promote life and enough contemplative stillness to promote thought. There is clearly a profound significance in the etymological likeness of the words wholeness and holiness, sanity and sanctity. Indeed, it would seem that *sanus* and *sanctus* are respectively the static and dynamic versions of the same overmastering Idea. However that may be, the words wholeness or wholesomeness will, either of them, furnish a good working definition of the best aim of Church art.

When all is said it remains to be observed that our struggle for adequate music is one with our other struggles after perfection. Experts may try to point out services and anthems that are fitting. But probably perfected Christian music is just as rare as perfected Christian manhood. One thing is certain: as Churches should be the very strongholds of national aspiration, enterprise, and the struggle for steadfastness, so Church music should be the best product of the time, the very leaven of all music. There already exists a superb substructure; there are also a host of able builders who have only to think long and clearly enough, and to feel strongly enough, to carry the work through and

On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the city of God.

## MUSIC AND CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

### A PAPER

THE SUBSTANCE OF WHICH FORMED AN ADDRESS DELIVERED  
IN THE JERUSALEM CHAMBER, WESTMINSTER, TO  
MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH MUSIC SOCIETY, ON WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 19, 1913,

By H. WALFORD DAVIES

### I

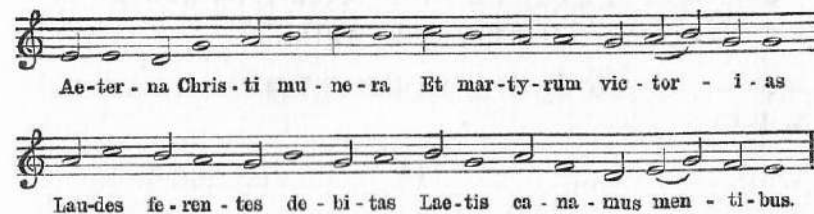
THE art of music as we know it spent a serene and prosperous childhood in the care of the Church. It was virtuously and christianly brought up; and a guess may be hazarded that one-fourth if not one-third of all the best music at our disposal to-day is in some real sense Church music. It is clear that Greek traditions had their influence upon early Christian music. In the Oxford History Mr. Wooldridge writes:

Short survey  
of Church  
music.

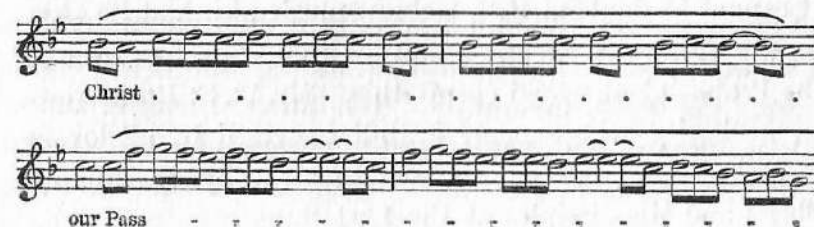
The hymns composed by St. Ambrose are undoubtedly the earliest specimens of Christian composition known to exist; . . . the scales upon which these hymns are based are the accepted Greek scales; the Hymns conform in all respects to the current practice; . . . in short, we find in Christian music the old music continued with just that degree of difference which might be expected in the work of a new race which has something new to express.

It cannot be doubted that Hebrew music also had its part in the formation of the new Christian art. The use of the Psalms alone would ensure this. Mr. W. S. Rockstro—an authority whose name is to be revered by all lovers of ecclesiastical music—supposes that the hymn sung by Christ and His disciples at the Last Supper, naturally the

*In exitu Israel*, was not improbably sung to a melody very like the *Tonus Peregrinus* to which we still sing it, and which has been associated with the wandering psalm from time immemorial. This wonderful chant, taken together with one of the hymns of St. Ambrose, may well furnish typical examples of the first efforts of Christian music. The chant is known by all; but of the Ambrosian hymns one may be quoted here (as given in the Oxford History):



Such unaffected strains seem fair examples of the simple material from which our Church music steadily grew; and it grew like a flower or a tree, organically. Like other natural organisms, it had need from time to time of watchful cultivation and sometimes of the use of a pruning-hook. One way in which it grew rather wild may here be cited for special notice, for not only does it typify a besetting sin of Church art, but the compilers of our most recent Protestant Hymnal have, together with much else that is of supreme excellence, thought well to revive specimens of it, presumably for English use. I refer to the ultra-florid inflections of plain chant which the musician-priests enjoyed on Festivals. The following is in the *English Hymnal*:



If the reader will try to imagine the corresponding contrapuntal exuberances he will not find it hard to understand Wiclif's diatribe at the end of the fourteenth century, when he said:

Of short time there were mere vain japes invented; descant, simple and florid counterpoint, that stirreth vain men to dancing more than to mourning. For when there are forty or fifty in a choir, three or four proud and wanton rascals will so trick the most devout service that no man shall hear the sentence and all the others will be dumb and look like fools.

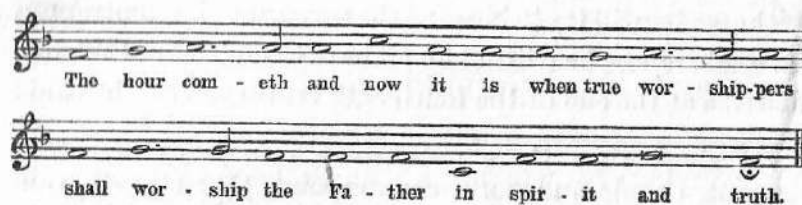
Wiclif would have dealt havoc with a pruning-knife; but it was reserved for Cranmer to apply it to good purpose later on. The latter, in a quaint letter to Henry VIII written in 1545, gives his opinion that

the song made unto his Litany should be some devout and solemn note which he trusts will much excitate and stir the hearts of all men to devotion and godliness.

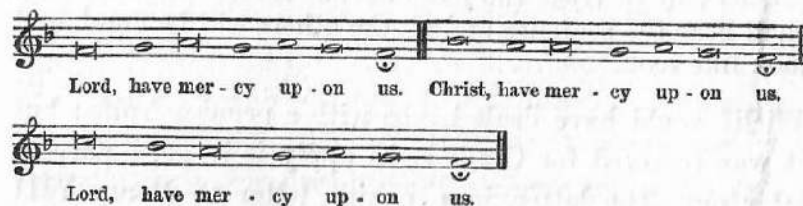
Not 'to be full of notes', but as near as may be 'for every syllable a note'. Five years later (1550) Marbeck's book of Common Prayer noted exactly fulfilled Cranmer's *dictum* of 'for every syllable a note', while it retained the spirit of the ancient plainsong upon which it was constructed. But Marbeck did far more than this. Clearly a man of strength as well as a singing-man and organist at Windsor, he faced the stake, and was condemned to death, only to be saved by the favour of Gardiner and the interposition of one of the Commissioners. With a devout spirit and musical genius, he set himself to bring beautiful melody into closest touch with the words themselves. The outward audible inflections of the one were directly inspired by the inward spiritual needs of the other. Evidences of this are to be



found at every turn in the well-known Nicene Creed, in some of the Post-Communions, of which the following is one:



and perhaps most conspicuously of all in the *Kyrie*:



Here, though only in melodic form, may be found the sound and substantial basis for English liturgical music. No unprejudiced listener can doubt that there is in Marbeck that which is as spontaneous and inevitable as are the words. It may be believed that much of it will endure as long as the Liturgy itself. It is both vital and simple enough to form a corrective for every species of 'vain jape to this day.

Marbeck, however, does not provide more than a musical Liturgy; and this meets but one-third of normal requirements, since all music in churches naturally includes both the gratuitous offerings of *non-congregational* skilled music such as Anthems and Voluntaries, and the *congregational* additions called Hymns, as well as the liturgical Amens, Responses, Glorias, Creed, Canticles, &c., in which the choir and congregation join. Both hymn and anthem were evidently in effective use in the sixteenth century. In Strype it is recorded:

1559, September. The new Morning Prayer at St. Antholin, London; the bell beginning to ring at five, when a Psalm was sung after the Geneva fashion; all the congregation, men, women and boys, singing together.

And at the Chapel Royal on mid-Lent Sunday, 1560, according to the same writer:

Service concluded, a good Anthem was sung.

## II

It may here be noted in passing how urgent is the A suggestion. present need that a clear line be drawn between the respective contributions of the choir and the people, between so-called congregational and non-congregational effort. The confusion is frequent and always detrimental to both. They have obviously different origins, different functions, different ideals to fulfil. On the one hand, even if the fine possibilities of congregational music are known, yet they are seldom realized; many well-meaning members of congregations seem to join in the whole service with half a heart instead of joining in half of it with a whole heart. The non-expert congregational part of the service should above all things be simple, infectiously vital, and hearty. The expert contributions may be complex, but in any case should be appropriate, technically masterly, and good to listen to. Further, it is much to be wished that in the parts of the service where both congregation and choir take part some antiphonal or responsorial use should be adopted. For example, in the Psalms the congregation might frankly be asked either to sing only the second half of each verse, or else to join in the even verses and leave the odd verses to the choir, or to a select part of the choir, possibly even to only one expert soloist. Such treatment, though unusual, is clearly in accord with good traditions;

and if used it would incidentally quicken that wholesome rivalry of utterance as between choir and congregation which makes for heartiness.<sup>1</sup>

### III

Short survey  
concluded.

It is safe to say that in Marbeck, in the Lutheran hymns of the period, and in the simple anthems of Farrant, Tallis, Morley, and others, are to be found a dignified if perhaps austere musical foundation, practically contemporaneous with the first Prayer Book, upon which all subsequent English Church music in its three distinct branches has been built. Examples of that splendid period are constantly to be heard in our cathedrals and in many churches, and are being made more available every day. Indifferently sung they may be made futile, even repellent. Fitly sung they can sound as vital to-day as when they were written, both in their perfected polyphonic manner, as in 'Bow Thine ear' (Byrde), and in the homophonic and easier style of 'Lord, for Thy tender mercies' sake'—generally attributed to Farrant—as also in the latter composer's beautiful 'Call to remembrance', or in Tallis's Dorian Service. Fine specimens of the transition period of the seventeenth century are also still to be heard, from Gibbons's curious and daring experiment, 'This is the record of John, to Pelham Humfrey's 'Hear, O heaven', Wise's 'The ways of Zion', and Purcell's voluminous and necessarily mixed contributions, of which the simplest (such as 'Thou knowest Lord, the secrets') are surely the finest. After Purcell, the mighty Handel; then Dr. Boyce—a sort of musical Dr. Johnson—Maurice Greene, Croft, Battishill (whose

<sup>1</sup> A commendable plan is to give the one part to a small expert section of the *Decani* choir unaccompanied, and to allow the rest of the choir, with organ, to lead the other and congregational parts.

'O Lord, look down from heaven' is certainly a stroke of pure genius), and many another—all these conspired to build up the fine fabric, handing on and enhancing in many ways the tradition they had received. Of nineteenth-century composers S. S. Wesley outshone all others, and though much has been done since by many fine writers, no appreciation of their work can be attempted here.

In even the hastiest review of English Church music there is no possibility of turning a patriotic blind eye upon that part of the sacred music of Europe which is constantly in use in England and is well adapted for our purposes—notably that of the great German masters. Music is clearly an universal language; and though it is weakening, if not actually insincere, to use a music which is foreign to our needs, it would also be seriously impoverishing if those responsible for the repertoire of any English cathedral or church were to refuse to draw upon Palestrina and di Lasso, upon Bach, Haydn, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, as well as many men of other nations and other periods whose genius obviously meets English conditions.

### IV

In all this music, old and new, there is or there is not an inherent qualification for use in sacred services. It is not very hard to believe in the future of Church music, but believers need to find first-hand reason for the faith that is in them, not to rest content with reasons once perhaps sufficient but now inadequate to withstand the criticisms of intelligent doubt. What truly fits the art to be an aid to worship? Apart from the sacred words to which it may be set, can there be innate musical qualifications of an anthem as distinguished from a theatrical or concert piece? What right has present-day music in present-day churches?

Concerning  
the relation-  
ship between  
Religion and  
Music.



In face of the facts of history and of the expressed opinion of a variety of distinguished men, it is not easy to dispute that hitherto the art has entered the Church in some sense in its own right. To regard but one fact: that for nineteen centuries it appears persistently in the worship of every kind of Christian community, including the Society of Friends; and to quote but one non-musical man, Napoleon, who said:

Of all the liberal arts, music has the greatest influence over the passions, and is that to which the legislator ought to give the greatest encouragement. A well-composed song strikes and softens the mind, and produces a greater effect than a moral work, which convinces our reason, but does not warm our feelings nor effect the slightest alteration of our habits.

Human vision naturally widens and lengthens with the progress of knowledge. Science teaches us to take ever longer views, and the greatest and highest things seem to become remoter every day. Music in its turn becomes more complex and temporarily at least more sensational, and the cleavage between much of the most arresting modern music and that which seems suited for use in worship becomes more marked. This makes it the more desirable at the present time to relate music as we know it with religion as we know it. Is there a natural and permanent bond between them? And if so, what is music's obligation to the Church?

It would seem that there is a twofold bond. Good art has at least two supreme qualities in common with good life: both are essentially *free*, and both are essentially *orderly*. Perfect art has a further quality in common with perfect life: both are essentially *whole*; and this wholeness includes that which may be called proportionateness or balance, since excess of any one essential part necessarily crowds out or dwarfs some other essential part, and whole-

ness is then impossible. The exacting ideal of 'be ye perfect' accounts at once for Christianity's triumphs and inconsistencies. Similarly the requirement of perfection in Church music accounts both for the triumph of such rare works as Bach's *Sanctus* and the humiliating falsity of many a poverty-stricken Church anthem.

Any observer of himself and his friends recognizes a recurrent human joy in the exercise of every natural faculty from the obvious lowest to the dimly apprehended highest. Our faculties, our exercise of them, and our joy in that exercise are probably quite indivisible. For purposes of analysis, however, they are conveniently classified under the familiar heads of sensation, emotion, reason; and above these are discovered the continual play of less obvious and, as we believe, more momentous faculties which may be grouped together as intuitional. It is intuitively that we grasp matters of knowledge without proof, of wisdom without learning, of many big human guesses at things higher than the mind—quite and for ever beyond the thinking machine of man—unreasoned, unreasonable, none the less persistent, and at the very least as much to be reckoned with in any whole account of human affairs as the more obvious factors of existence. Now music is clearly concerned with the three first and well-known orders of faculties. To them it appeals. For their pleasure it is created. It is the direct product and indirect producer of sensational, emotional, and intellectual activities. But religion is concerned with the mysterious fourth order of faculties. Its whole endeavour is to bring the known and seen into complete subjection to the unknown, unseen. But here two facts should be carefully noted, one about music and one about religion. On the one hand, music is not only a pleasing exercise of the feeling and thinking faculties; it shows numberless signs of the

great fourth order. It is variously and appropriately described as intuitive, inspired, imaginative, creative. Then, on the other hand, religion does not attempt to insist that men shall cease to be sentient, but only that sensation, emotion, and reason shall take their due places, subordinate and subjugate to the higher faculties about which it is supremely concerned. It would really seem that all the wrong-headed notions of religion arise from some unworkable and unholy division or duplicity which refuses to admit the whole man, spirit, soul, and body, into a consecrated oneness of joyous activity. Similarly the wrongful and futile estimates of art seem to arise from an exclusive or partial view of it as a decorative or emotional or sensuous matter. A common kind of partial thinking separately identifies the great issues of Ethics and Aesthetics with that part or symptom of themselves which chances to be most noticeable. By this means they become divided and even opposed in men's minds. It is like the unthinking and more disastrous opposition often made which sets the real against the ideal, between which there is certainly neither opposition nor division, but only distinction. No unreal ideal can exist, the ideal in all cases being the remote real. If it is not this, it is then only a disconnected and useless vision. In the same way Art and Religion cannot truly be placed in opposition.

I have heard art sweepingly described in the pulpit as a 'plaything'. This is probably an extreme case of partial thought, and may well be set against the opposite and equally thoughtless extreme that puts music apart from all ordinary human affairs, as a *divine* art! Surely the obvious truth is that it is quite as human as any other department of man's activity and quite as responsible as any. Whoever has energy, and freedom to express that energy through any intelligible medium, he is a responsible

potential artist. Energy obviously brings power; freedom to use it brings responsibility. Wherever a free spirit expresses itself in any terms of recognizable orderliness, there is art. Vital energy expressed with freedom, but in no recognizable terms of orderliness, is quite apparently energy run to waste and not art. Similarly, energy expressed in orderliness without any element of free choice is the work of an artizan rather than of an artist. Indeed, art may not inappropriately be summed up as always in some sort inspired orderliness, or as orderly inspiration. Thus it may be seen that every purposeful activity in life is in the profoundest sense one with art. It is by no violation of a great word that we speak of the art of warfare, the art of arranging flowers, the art of cooking, and so forth, as well as the art of poetry, since the useful and fine arts have their most essential properties of freedom, orderliness, and attempted wholeness in common. Uninspired orderliness for the one part, and chaotic impulse for the other, are familiar in most human departments, and are perhaps the two most disastrous and unpardonable things in life. The one involves so much death, the other so much lost life.

Now there will probably always be a certain mental questioning of the credentials of all that men call inspiration, whether in religion or art—a questioning perhaps salutary when it is modest, disheartening when it is presumptuous. But even the most aggressively agnostic temper will not find it hard to feel that one great use of Christian public worship is to formulate and communicate a superior order of life; to suggest balance to the unbalanced man, and to the already well-ordered life to hint at a superior order. Nor will it be difficult to see that music, in its turn, is an innately suitable handmaid to worship precisely because she also seeks to formulate and communicate something free and joyous in terms of com-



prehensible orderliness. And further, it may be noted that since music builds in an invisible intangible world of sound, since it is in this sense incorruptible, since its imaginative and mental appeals are strong and its sense-appeal slender, it has a nature which suits it for sacred use. This may account for the striking fact that the great composers seem ever inclined to take their art with a seriousness which some of their admirers have not unnaturally found annoying. Beethoven's declaration that in his work he 'communed with God without fear' is borne out by his peers and also in lesser ways by many lesser men.

Let it once be seen that a free spirit expressing itself through some medium in some intelligible way is not only typical of practical life but is of the essence of religion and of art; and let it be granted that a man's use of his freedom affects or influences his surroundings, then it becomes obvious that purveyors of Church art are not less responsible people than purveyors of bread to eat or houses to live in on the one hand, or purveyors of sermons on the other. A musician, who records human experience in terms of music, will in the process assuredly be liable to communicate disposition, a leaning, a taste; he will reveal his bent, whether he desire to do so or not; hence his responsibility. He may be pre-eminently sensational in his tastes, then he will dwell on sensational effects; he may be morbidly emotional, or a thought too intellectual. Any artistic utterance naturally reflects the taste and quality of the particular artist, and even of the particular age that produces it; it can suggest vulgarity or refinement, muddle or clearness; it can communicate many shades of impulse; it can indicate ungoverned feeling or restraint. 'Whenever I hear ——'s music', said a skilled and sympathetic listener, 'I feel in vulgar company.' Musical grapes do not grow on musical thistles. And it would seem to be true that, even apart

from all else, the extraordinary power of music as an exact register or language of human impulse forms an innate qualification which amply justifies its use in church, and at the same time explains its deplorable shortcomings, failures, confusions, and incongruities. It is a right language for right feeling, a fine medium for fine thought and for that which we call aspiration. But it is so attractive, so fascinating in itself, that it is apt to become its own end in a variety of beguiling ways; it can degenerate, exactly as fine oratory can degenerate, into mere performance, a display divorced from its purpose, undermined by insincerity, and at last the very playground of futile hero-worship and pitiable egoism.

This, provokingly enough, seems for the moment to reduce the whole question of the use and choice of music in church to one of *morale* or good taste. We may think or wish to think of Church art as only decorative, as just an added delight, a gift, a gratuity, a luxury, of no moral significance one way or the other, simply a pleasant ingredient added to the prescription that is to save a sick soul. In the finer sense it is some of these things. But can this be a complete and true estimate? Can one section of human activity born of freewill be partitioned off and labelled non-moral? When Dr. Hadow, in his *Studies in Modern Music*, writes: 'It is the one art in which no human being can raise the false issue of a direct ethical influence. Of immediate moral bearing it has none. It means nothing, it teaches nothing,' one may feel confident that it is the *moralistic* rather than the *moral* in art against which such a statement is flung. Is it not Stevenson's 'canting moralist' that we despise? Can any art cease to be either progressive or retrograde, either below the level of those to whom it is submitted or above, either (as we say) 'to the good' or 'to the bad'? The non-moral view of art seems quite vain when we reflect

that a man's bearing, his gesture, his gait, his every word have their infinitesimal weight in the total conduct of mankind. Much more substantial is the responsibility of those who presume to stain a church window, decorate a pillar, or compose an anthem—or sing one. They are builders. Their work is avowedly 'for the use of edifying'—they are in fact exceptionally responsible architects; though it is much to the good if they suffer from no overburdening sense of it, but—in Wordsworth's fine phrase—'do God's work and know it not'.

## V

Standards of fitness.

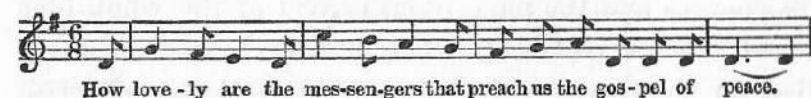
Fitness, behaviour, tact, are crucial in most departments of life; but just as it is even more urgent to secure an appropriate behaviour in church than in a concert-hall or theatre, so Church music has to be the more scrupulously attentive to its matter and manner. If a man pirouetted to his seat in a concert-room, he would only appear a peculiarly high-spirited and refreshing fellow. A curate who moved rapidly and fantastically to the lectern would be thought irreverent as well.

It seems that an impression exists in some quarters that the Church Music Society, including many music-lovers of refined taste, have recently identified fitness in Church music with dullness. A few days ago a northern cathedral organist wrote to a member of the Society's Committee: 'Byrde in D won't do for Lancashire churches.' Agreed. The revival of certain sedate beauties of the past is a small part of the Church musician's work. It is a much more important task to help to cultivate a clear-headed judgement that can reject all irrelevant music and then, of the multitude of works old and new that will still remain, to secure an adequate, perceiving, and technically sound rendering.

In the process of rejecting and choosing Church music there are obviously four tests—the melodic, harmonic, rhythmic,

and dynamic. Of these the fourth is comparatively unimportant, since all extravagant or sensational effects (violent contrasts of *ff* and *pp* and the like) may be easily modified or altogether obliterated in performance; and pieces which depend upon them for their effect can be avoided.

The melodic and harmonic tests are more important; they naturally go together, and should be as searching and as exacting as possible. They can only be considered here very briefly; they may, it is hoped, be dealt with more fully in some subsequent papers. Cheap, complacent, conventional tunes and 'tuney' tendencies often betray themselves most readily by their affinity to the drawing-room ballad and to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  part-song. Mendelssohn's sacred melodies are generally appropriate and sometimes glorious. But he has afforded at least one singular and well-known instance of a kind that should be avoided:



If this be compared with the following:



or, still better, with the following:



the profound difference in quality will be easily perceived. The chief inflective symptom of complacency in the first example is to be found in the leap of a seventh from a weak short note. Of course, its rhythmic form is in itself almost fatal.<sup>1</sup> Religious music is superabundantly melodious, but

<sup>1</sup> There is a splendid moment later in the same chorus ('To all the nations') which tends to redeem it.



never 'tuney'. Its melody arises naturally at every point (and the sense of melody is even present incipiently, though in abeyance, in a genuine monotone), precisely because rise and fall, *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, quickening and slackening, naturally conspire together to make melody in every sincere utterance of such vital ideas as those of the Liturgy. Harmonic fitness is more difficult to determine; it involves much more profound questions. All that can be pointed out at the moment is that the chief offences are of the 'pretty' order. A famous composer lately remarked that to avoid the commonplace he supposed a present-day musician must avoid the chord of the diminished seventh. It is clear that common chords are strong, and are loved by the strong. Browning's expression 'the C major of this life' has passed into the language. Plain chords have acquired a new value lately by reason of the increase of available dissonances and the momentous arrival of the whole-tone chord. One serviceable rule may perhaps be made, namely: that no chords and especially no chromatic chords, with their obvious and even aggressive charm, are to be used for their own sake. With this reservation it may safely be added that every chord is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it be used with relevance, conviction, and judgement.

The rhythmic test is by far the most urgent. It should not be difficult to apply if the principle of subservience be kept steadily in mind. To banish rhythmic art from church is suicidal. Rhythm *may* be elsewhere, but it *must* be in church. Haydn was once asked why his Church music was so cheerful. He replied: 'When I think upon God my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap, as it were, from my pen; and, since God has given me a cheerful heart, it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit.' This touching explanation incidentally furnishes the right plea for the

general cause of rhythm in church. It is true that, speaking broadly, rhythmic animation is not typical of worship-music, since the more conspicuous object of services is the purposeful suspension of outward activity rather than the promotion or provocation of it. Rhythm is generally symptomatic of activity, and deliberate diversion or transmutation of energy into contemplative stillness will cause rhythmic and dynamic excitation to become subdued and subservient in most Christian music. Energy that spends itself in action may store itself in contemplation. Hence it comes that the great asset of Christian music is to be found in a choral *sostenuto*. But this typifies no rhythmless inertia, but rather an alert concerted stillness, and presents purposeful repose as nothing else can, except perhaps the rare silence by consent of a large concourse of people. A sustained chord is the very embodiment in the world of sound of serene contemplation. But its serenity would be characterless, wearisome, meaningless, if it were not related with life. It should suggest energy controlled, not energy spent, and there must be innate rhythm in the stillest *Adagio*. Dance anthems are inappropriate and foreign at least to the English Church, and such are some of Purcell's. But the life and spirit they convey are native to worship and essential to it, and Purcell made alive, though he offended. Again, if chanting is to be vital, such old melodies as the *Tonus Peregrinus* must be sung with rhythmic swing and animation. If it be not so sung, there is an improper Anglican chant which was sung to the *In exitu Israel* in high places thirty years ago which only waits to be revived:



This chant also makes alive, though it offends. It would probably have pleased Haydn. Life is so infinitely greater than propriety; yet propriety is obviously worth attainment. Rockstro quotes the tune *Helmsley* as an example of a popular secular tune adapted for church use, 'from Miss Catley's Hornpipe danced at Sadler's Wells':



Here, however, it is necessary carefully to note the significance of actual *tempi*. A slow pace tends to obliterate the offensive playfulness of dance rhythms and actually adapts them for grave religious purposes. If that were all, it would seem to suggest that on Sunday we are the same frivolously-minded mortals, only that we 'go slow'. But while gravity is largely secured by deliberateness, and mere speed is a factor important to a choirmaster, yet these can but effect an almost valueless propriety. No one can imagine that they constitute the chief, still less the whole, consideration. Certain styles of rhythmic phrase, at whatever pace they be taken, are essentially small-minded and inappropriate for Church use. Chopin's Funeral March affords a familiar instance of this. Its first part has great dignity. Its trio is a polka played slowly. It may acquire sweetness. Nothing can give it loftiness or a large mind. Again, if the following two passages (taken at haphazard from Schumann and Bach respectively) be compared, it will probably be felt that while they have equal animation, one gives the impression of light-hearted exertion for its own sake, the

other of exertion more fundamental designed to serve some larger purpose:



It is generally typical of light music that the rhythmic nucleus or pattern is short, uninvolved, and persistently recurrent. Long rhythms are typical of grave music, such as the finest Church music, and here the exact recurrence of the same rhythmic pattern, though frequent, is less to be expected; it tends to give place to a rhythmic development at once freer and more thoughtful, in which phrases as they recur show signs of expansion and newness where, in a scherzo or in dance-music, simple, insistent repetition would be desirable. The most notable symptom of small rhythm seems to be the constant alternation of shorts and longs; on the contrary, great rhythms show a tendency to long, large groupings of the same values of notes, whether short or long. (See, for example, the long tunes in the Choral Symphony.) Light music is therefore essentially easy to listen to; Church music is more arduous. Rhythmic reiteration (as, for example, of a dance-rhythm or of a war-cry) is invigorating in itself; but mere repetition, while it promotes animation, tends to dissipate thought. Up to a certain point this is appropriate in a ball-room or on a battle-field, or wherever infectious energy is the chief aim. For obvious reasons the church is the place for greatest vitality, together with highest mental illumination; and this would seem to suggest that it must neither



fall behind in animation nor in thoughtfulness. It must be all things to all men. 'Church music', said a fine preacher in St. Paul's Cathedral, 'should make us feel uncomfortable.' Like all other big experiences, it should 'disturb us with the joy of elevated thoughts'.

## VI

## Conclusions.

To sum up, it would seem that the general and permanent reason for the admission into Christian worship of the elaborate art of music is to be found in its peculiar aptness to express and convey vitality in terms of freedom and of orderliness. Further, in the world of sound it is possible to attain an unique presentment of man's outlook and feelings, and at the same time to hint at something progressive and beyond itself. This fine power to hint furnishes the practical ideal of Church music. Common examples of its working may be seen in the definite powers of an anthem or voluntary to express aspiration, peace after strife, persistence through recurrent difficulty (as in Bach's *Passacaglia*), deep contrition, exuberant praise, and the like—all of which abstract ideas are capable of dignified and veracious exposition in terms of pure music. By music it is possible to soothe a troubled man or stimulate a lazy one, provided always that there is ability on the one hand, receptivity on the other, and the will on both sides.

There is a further happy but quite incidental advantage to be found in the fact that the successful practice of choral music depends upon collective discipline and upon a co-operation which must submit all personal considerations to an impersonal idea. This is fortunate, for the necessary discipline and alertness among the choir<sup>1</sup> is an asset in

<sup>1</sup> Solo music is without this great advantage, and for this reason less desirable in church.

worship. Perfect unity in choral song has probably an unconscious influence upon most worshippers, and it is an influence just as beneficent as that of any slovenliness or personal display is deleterious. Church art is essentially impersonal art; the composer is of no more moment than the singer or the listener; and it is here that the greatest *artist* can become, in his turn, what has already been described as an *artizan*—only in an infinitely larger sense—the merest bricklayer in some great building which endures down the ages, and at which the greatest seer only dimly guesses. Perhaps in its impersonality is to be found the completest reason why Church music should have the freedom that Haydn claimed. It must have all the glorious qualities of all music, but in due proportion. No artificial restrictions, whether melodic, harmonic, dynamic, or rhythmic, are in keeping. The only possible restriction is that it must never fall behind. Personal bias is apt to linger, for example, over some favourite melodic curve or new harmonic progression. Neither the melody nor the harmony need be wrong; it is only the lingering that is out of place. Similarly, personal bias may set up severe rhythmic barriers and adopt a remote style of the past, charming to some, second-hand to others. We need remoteness, aloofness, restraint; but we are only justified in reverting to such great music of the past as can be fully endorsed by the present. It must be first-hand. In short, Church music should furnish an escape from all temporalities and personalities—including our own. Here there must be no tyrannies over the spirit, neither the tyrannies of inward indulgence nor those of outward restriction. Any excess is to be strictly shunned in that it will crowd out something; it is refreshing *wholeness* that is needed. Sensationalism and sensuousness are treachery in church. So is intellectuality, though it is not usually a very