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A N T H E M S

BY

CYRIL BRADLEY ROTHAM

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ANTHEMS

WHAT is an anthem, and how did the word acquire its modern significance? These questions, especially the latter, cannot be answered in a moment. All that can be attempted here is a brief setting forth of some of the evidence.

Clearly there is some connexion between the antiphon (Lat. *antiphona*) and the anthem.

The word antiphon has several meanings; for our present purpose we need consider only the following:¹

About the fourth century A. D. we find that the antiphon is recognized as a short text sung to a solo melody before a psalm² and repeated after each of the verses performed by alternate choirs.³ The intimate musical relation thus created between antiphon-melody and psalm-melody persisted through the subsequent development of the *cantus antiphonus*. This development was in the direction of simplification and shortening, and followed two separate lines. Either the antiphon came to be sung only at the beginning and end of a psalm (or group of psalms), as is the case in the psalmody of the Daily Office; or the psalm itself was reduced to a single verse, as, for example, in the Introit. The latter process was carried still further, and ultimately the psalm disappeared altogether, leaving the antiphon-melody as an independent composition, as is the case with many Processional antiphons.

¹ For further information as to the history of the Antiphon from both its liturgical and its musical aspects, see article 'Antiphon' in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd ed.); Procter and Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*; P. Wagner, *History of Plain Chant*, chap. ix (Eng. trans. of 2nd edition, Plain Song and Med. Music Soc.); Gevaert, *La Mélodie antique dans le Chant de l'Église latine*.

² A term including the Biblical Canticles.

³ This custom is still found in certain cases: unaltered in the case of *Nunc dimittis* as sung at Candlemas in the Roman Rite (Grad. Rom. 2nd Feb.); and in a modified form in the case of the Invitatory Psalm.

Of these psalmless antiphons one special group is of immediate interest to us, viz. the group of 'Anthems of Our Lady' ('Alma Redemptoris,' 'Salve regina,' &c.), one of which was sung daily at the end of Compline,¹ in a position exactly corresponding to that in which the rubric of our present Book of Common Prayer directs 'the Anthem' to be sung at Evensong, after the Collect 'Lighten our darkness'.

There is evidence that before the middle of the sixteenth century free compositions of a contrapuntal character were sung at this point in the Service. In the Bishop of Rochester's Injunctions, 1543,²

'Yt ys ordered that the prests clarks and Choristers with the Master of the Choristers shall syng . . . every holyday in the yere an Anteme in prycksong immediatly that Complayn be fully done & ended.'

A further stage is exhibited in the Royal Injunctions for Lincoln, 1548:³

'They shall fromhensforthe syngge or say no Anthemes off our lady or other saynts but onely of our lorde And them not in laten but choseyng owte the best and most soundyng to cristen religion they shall turne the same into Englishe settyng therunto a playn and distincte note, for every sillable one, they shall sing them and none other.'

The custom thus long established was allowed and authorized by Elizabeth's Injunctions of 1559:⁴

'Item, because in divers collegiate and also some parish churches heretofore there have been livings appointed for the maintenance of men and children to use singing in the church, by means whereof the laudable science of music has been had in estimation, and preserved in knowledge; the queen's majesty neither meaning in any wise the decay of anything that might conveniently tend to the use and continuance of the said science, neither to have the same in any part so abused in the church, that thereby the common

¹ Possibly as early as the middle of the thirteenth century. Maskell, *Mon. Lit.* iii. 74 (note 11).

² Frere, *Use of Sarum*, ii. 235.

³ Bradshaw and Wordsworth, *Lincoln Cath. Statutes*, iii. 592.

⁴ Gee and Hardy, *Documents illustrative of English Church History*, p. 435.

prayer should be the worse understood of the hearers, wills and commands, that first no alterations be made of such assignments of living, as heretofore has been appointed to the use of singing or music in the church, but that the same so remain. And that there be a modest and distinct song so used in all parts of the common prayers in the church, that the same may be as plainly understood, as if it were read without singing; and yet nevertheless for the comforting of such that delight in music, it may be permitted, that in the beginning, or in the end of common prayers, either at morning or evening, there may be sung an hymn, or suchlike song to the praise of Almighty God, in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised, having respect that the sentence [i.e. sense] of the hymn may be understood and perceived.

In the First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549), in the 'Ordre for the Visitacion of the Sicke', the rubric appears 'Addyng this Anthem', immediately before the well-known words 'O Saviour of the world . . .'.¹ Also, in the same book, in the order of service for 'The Firste Daie of Lente, commonly called Ashe Wednesdays', appears the rubric 'Then shal this antheme be sayed or song', immediately preceding the words 'Turne thou us, good Lord'. In the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI (1552) the word 'anthem' has disappeared in both contexts. In the corresponding places in Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book (of which there are two versions, one in English for ordinary use, the other in Latin for the more learned), the English version corresponds to the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI, but the Latin version retains the word 'Antiphona' in each connexion, as the Latin equivalent of the word 'Anthem'. In the present Book of Common Prayer (1662) appears for the first time the well-known rubric 'In Quires and Places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem'. Thus the Latin *antiphona* seems to have passed into the English Prayer Book, (as Dr. Frere observes,) not in connexion

¹ 'O Saviour of the world . . .' seems to be the one instance of a true antiphon retained in our Book of Common Prayer.

with the psalmody, but in the form of an independent musical composition in parts. It must be remembered that 'the Anthem' does not replace nor in any way represent the 'Office Hymn'.

So much for the origin of the anthem. But there is another form of church music intimately connected with the anthem—the motet. What are its distinctive features? Thomas Morley, in his celebrated *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Musicke* (printed in 1597), has the following passage, which is interesting in more ways than one: 'A Motet is properly a song made for the Church, either upon some hymne or Antheme,¹ or such like, and that name I take to have been given to that kind of musick, in opposition to the other which they called *Canto Fermo*, and we commonly call plain song: for as nothing is more opposite to standing and firmnes than motion, so did they give the Motet that name of moving, because it is in a manner quight contrairie to the other, which after some sort, and in respect of the other standeth still. This kind of all others which are made on a ditty, requireth most art, and moveth and causeth most strange effects in the hearer, being aptly framed for the ditty and wel expressed by the singer: for it wil draw the auditor (and especially the skilful auditor) into a devout and reverent kind of consideration of him for whose prayse it was made. But I see not what passions or motions it can stir up, being sung as most men doe commonlie sing it: that is, leaving out the ditty, and singing onely the bare note, as it were a musick made onely for instruments, which will indeede shew the nature of the musick, but never carry the spirit and (as it were) that lively soule which the ditty giveth: but of this enough. And to return to the expressing of the ditty, the matter is now come to that state that though a song be

¹ Doubtless referring to the words or melody, or both, of the plainsong hymn or antiphon.

never so well made and never so aptly applyed to the words, yet shall you hardly find singers to expresse it as it ought to be: for most of our Church men, (so they can crie louder in the quier than their fellowes) care for no more; whereas by the contrairie, they ought to study how to vowel and sing cleane, expressing their words with devotion and passion, whereby to draw the hearer as it were in chaines of gold by the eares to the consideration of holy things. But this, for the most part, you shal find amongst them, that let them continue never so long in the church yea though it were twentie years, they wil never study to sing better than they did the first day of their preferment to that place; so that it should seeme that having obtained the living which they sought for, they have little or no care at all either of their owne credit, or wel discharging of that duty whereby they have their maintenance.'

The Motet seems in general to have been a composition for church use with Latin words, whereas the title 'Anthem' connotes the use of English words.¹ It is not always easy to distinguish between motets and anthems, since certain works by sixteenth-century English composers appear to have been written to Latin words, which were afterwards translated into English to suit the requirements of the reformed English Liturgy. Several composers of the Elizabethan period, notably William Byrd, composed both motets (with Latin words) and anthems (with English words) during the time of transition, for each form of service.

Now can we formulate any test or tests that will differentiate the noblest type of anthem from that which is commonplace or bad? Most people who have thought about the matter are agreed that such differentiation is

¹ For further information about the origin and history of motets, see the exhaustive article by the late Mr. Rockstro in the 2nd edition of *Grove's Dictionary*.

The true composer, first of all, will choose words which have strength and meaning for us human beings; and in doing so, he must feel that he has the necessary literary training and musical gifts which will enable him, in the first place, fully to grasp the spirit and rhythm of the words, and next, by means of his music, to intensify their meaning. That the composer should realize the rhythm and accentuation of the words which he proposes to set to music is a first principle. False accentuation is one of the most irritating faults of the inexperienced or bad composer. (It must be admitted, in this connexion, that the unintelligent pointing of the Psalms and singing of hymns which is still common in churches produces so many glaring false accents weekly and even daily, that most listeners get their ears blunted and soon accept false accentuation almost as part of the Church ritual.) From the musical point of view, another test of a good anthem, as of a good hymn-tune or any piece of vocal music, is the movement of the voice parts. All the parts—treble, alto, tenor, and bass—should have musical scope. Why, for instance, should the treble part have the monopoly of that essential factor in music, melodic interest? Why should altos or contraltos, tenors and basses, be compelled to sing parts which are really unfit for human consumption, merely because, through no fault of their own, Nature has decreed that they are not to possess treble voices all through life? The greatest composers usually have melodic interest even in their harmonic effects. Take for instance this extract from that little masterpiece of devotional tenderness, of musical strength and originality, by Henry Purcell—'Remember not, Lord, our offences':¹

¹ Only anthems which are published in cheap octavo form are (designated) quoted in the course of this paper.

A 3

ther take Thou ven - geance of our sins, but spare . .

not ther take Thou ven - geance of our

take Thou ven - geance of our sins, good

sins, but spare . . . us, good

ven - geance of our sins,

us, good Lord, spare . . us, good Lord

sins, but spare . . us, good Lord

Lord, but spare . . us, good Lord

Lord, but spare us, good Lord

Only one instance has been chosen to illustrate this particular point, but it could be multiplied fiftyfold from Purcell's anthems alone. To be able to write real and not sham voice parts, and to be able to hear them when they are sung, implies education both in the composer and the listener. Those who can hear only the top part in an anthem, or in any other piece of good music, have not gone very far in musical appreciation. It is fatally easy both to write and to listen to an anthem which consists of a commonplace tune in the treble part, simply, even baldly harmonized in four parts. But is such a production worthy

of the words to which it is set, or of the place in which it is sung? Does it lift the listener out of everyday surroundings to a higher plane? If not, surely it has not been worth while. A feeling akin to despair is produced in the mind of an intelligent and devotional listener at hearing the public recital by a choir of some passage from the Old or New Testament, redolent of deep thought and fine diction, set to commonplace or trivial strains, which bear the mark of an illiterate and inartistic mind in every bar. The result is called an anthem; and the intelligent listener (there are many such) is conscious all the time that the anthem should be, musically at any rate, one of the great moments of the Church Service.

Education then is required from the listener as well as from the composer. If music is to have its place in the Church Service, clearly it must be the best that can be found; and the listener should learn to understand and appreciate it. We must not be satisfied until the congregation in church, as well as the audience in the concert-room, is content only with music that is rational, sincere, and, in some sense at least, inspired.

Let us now survey some of the work of the greatest composers of the anthem, from its earliest days to the present; and in so doing, let us realize that a fine anthem, like any other piece of music which serves to intensify noble words, is never out of date.

In no period of the world's output of music, it is safe to say, has the artistic spirit shown itself more vital than in the motets, anthems, and madrigals of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. During those years the climax of pure vocal music was reached. The part-writing appeals to the singer and listener alike; for never were composers more inspired to give all the voices melodic interest, or to bring out the spirit and meaning of the words which they

set. Nevertheless, insight and care are needed in these days for the interpretation of the music of that era. Some historical knowledge is called for, without which the effectiveness of modal writing, with its accompanying feature of rhythms that are frequently foreign to the later system of bars, cannot adequately be realized. Those who find it difficult to grasp the significance of modal scales and free rhythms will find the study of folk-songs very helpful towards the understanding of sixteenth-century music.¹

The chief composers of motets and anthems in the sixteenth century were Christopher Tye, Thomas Tallis, Robert Whyte, Orlando Gibbons, Richard Farrant, and William Byrd. Their writings are many; but no cathedral or church can afford to neglect works so accessible and so worthy of a place in our Church Service as

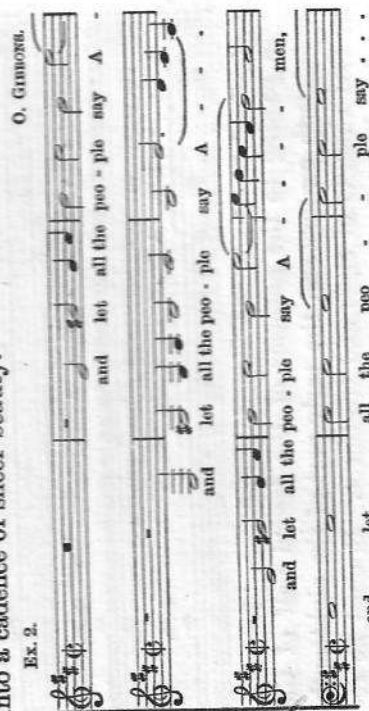
'O Lord of hosts.'	} TYE.	School of Tye.
'I will exalt Thee.'		
'Lord, for Thy tender mercy's sake.'	} TALLIS.	
'Hear the voice and prayer.'		
'All people that on earth do dwell.'		
'If ye love Me.'		
'I call and cry.'	} GIBBONS.	
'O Lord, give Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts.'		
'O praise God in His holiness.'		
'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.'		
'Almighty and everlasting God.'		
'Hosannah to the Son of David.'		
'This is the record of John.'		
'O Thou, the central orb.'		
'Call to remembrance.'		
'Hide not Thou Thy face.'		

¹ For further discussion of the proper interpretation of Elizabethan church music, the reader is referred to No. 3 of the Occasional Papers issued by the Church Music Society.

'Bow Thine ear.'	} BYRD.
'Sing joyfully unto God.'	
'The souls of the righteous.'	

(Justorum animae.)

The anthems of this period should usually be sung without accompaniment. Organ support, however, may be given in modern times to those choirs which need it. The examples which we have just considered, with the exception of Gibbons' 'O Thou, the central orb', which has passages for solo voices, are all for full choir throughout, and are technically known as 'full', as distinct from 'solo' or 'verse' anthems. 'Solo' anthems contain parts for one or more solo voices: 'verse' anthems introduce duets, trios, quartets, or other combinations of solo voices: these two varieties of the anthem-form usually have movements for the full choir. For an illustration of typical sixteenth-century writing, we may quote the final bars from Gibbons' 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel'—one of the most inspired short anthems ever written. Notice how the lovely little melodic phrase rises and falls in each part in turn, the tenors above the altos, and the basses above the tenors, the trebles soaring far above the rest, until all the voices sink into a cadence of sheer beauty.¹



¹ Gibbons was fond of elaborating a melodic phrase on the word 'Amen' as a final cadence to his anthems. A fine example is to be found (in five parts) at the end of 'O Thou, the central orb'.

it, just as we in England are re-discovering the music of Purcell. Such church music, typical of its time, is no doubt quite different in spirit from the English church music of the sixteenth century, but it is nevertheless dignified and impressive. Henry Purcell, as we may now learn, seems to have acquired the best characteristics of its technique and to have incorporated them into his own style. Purcell was too great a man to be a mere copyist. His own individuality was strong enough to assert itself in all his more mature work; and we must not forget that he stands for his own era (just as Tallis, Battishill, S. S. Wesley and others, stand for their particular eras) as the musician who was saying new things to his own people, and saying them in the finest possible manner, whether in church music, in songs, in purely instrumental music, or in music for the stage.

There were, of course, other composers, especially of church music, flourishing in Purcell's time. Anthem-writers such as Purcell's masters, Pelham Humfrey and John Blow, as well as Matthew Locke, Michael Wise and Jeremiah Clarke, are well worthy of study: they are representative men of an important era in the history of church music. Locke's neglected anthem 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory' (not long ago published by the Church Music Society) is a very fine specimen of seventeenth-century writing. When once the principle has been grasped that the bar-lines are a guide for the eye only and not for the ear, this work will prove to all listeners alike one of the most striking and beautiful of our great English anthems. The eloquent declamation, the fidelity of the music to the pathos of the words and to every detail of accentuation, is masterly and convincing.

If for the moment we consider Purcell's anthems in some detail, we cannot help being impressed by one or two salient facts: first, the profusion, originality, sincerity, and widely expressive range of this part of his creative output;

and second, the astonishing neglect and comparative ignorance of his church compositions in his own country. With regard to his anthems, at any rate, the excuse cannot be that they are inaccessible; for at least twenty of them are published in cheap octavo editions, and a demand for the rest (many of which still remain in more expensive editions) would no doubt quickly produce complete publications in ordinary vocal score. Purcell's anthems meet many of the needs of the English church seasons and festivals. We will mention but a few of the accessible anthems for various occasions: the words will indicate the suitability of each anthem for church needs:

'Remember not, Lord, our offences.'

'Let my prayer come up.'

'O Lord God of hosts.'

'O God, Thou art my God.'

'Rejoice in the Lord.'

'O sing unto the Lord.'

'O all ye people.'

'Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts.'

'Thou knowest, Lord,' and 'Man that is born of a woman' are, of course, settings of some of the words from the Burial Service. William Croft, whose impressive music for the sentences in the Burial Service is contained in his *Musica Sacra*, thus alludes to Purcell's setting of 'Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts': 'The reason why I did not compose that Verse a-new (so as to render the whole Service entirely of my own composition) is obvious to every Artist.'

Both in the first excerpt given (Example 1 on page 9) and in the following quotation (Example 3) from the anthem 'Praise the Lord, O my soul', we see instances

¹ This very fine and most expressive piece of music is not yet, unfortunately, published in cheap octavo form.

Ex. 3.

PURCELL.

Yes, like as a fa-ther pi-tieth his own... chil-dren,

ev'n so, so... is the Lord mer-ci-ful un-

to them that fear Him. For He knoweth where-of... we are made,

He re-mem-bereth that we are... but dust,

He re-mem-bereth that... we are but dust.

of Purcell's fine instinct for declamation. In the first case (Example 1) notice the perfect setting of the words, as regards stress, rise and fall of the voice, combined with beauty of melodic outline in each voice part. Both melodic phrases—that to 'neither take Thou vengeance' and also that to 'spare us, good Lord'—are admirable from the point of view of absolute music. But more than that: each musical phrase rises or falls where the voice of a good reader would rise or fall: the accented word receives its due musical stress, the unaccented words have their subordinate share in the musical phrase. Further, the resultant effect is strikingly original, from the point of view of the twentieth as well as of the seventeenth century: the harmonic basis of the contrapuntal scheme is most poignant and moving: we feel the work to be that of a master-mind, guided by a sure instinct both for beauty and for dramatic truthfulness. The same considerations apply to our second extract (Example 3), in this case a passage for a solo voice. Again mark the unerring declamation; the impressive melodic drop at the word 'pitieth' and also at the words 'but dust'; the beautiful little 'note-group' on the second syllable of 'whereof'; and lastly, the entire absence of mawkishness or false sentiment in a most expressive piece of tender writing. These two instances comprise but a few typical bars drawn from a deep and comparatively unexplored mine of inspired anthems by one composer.

William Croft and Maurice Greene, with perhaps William

Boyce, are the anthem-composers who stand out during the Handelian period. Croft was the senior of the three, and was composing before the full force of Handel's personality was felt in this country. The writings of the other two, especially those of Greene, show the influence of Handel more directly. The anthems of all three composers are unequal, and, as a whole, have not the consistent dignity which stamp the compositions of their Elizabethan fore-runners. Greene undoubtedly was a great musical genius; but his music, in common with that of the other church-composers of his age, betrays at times a certain triviality which is especially noticeable in the curious trick of writing for two voices in thirds—a mannerism which is apt to become wearisome. A fair number of Greene's and Croft's best anthems still await publication in a cheap form. Nevertheless, there are several fine works in accessible editions by both composers which should be heard regularly in our churches. Greene's 'Arise, shine, O Zion', containing the beautiful treble solo 'The sun shall be no more thy light by day', and his massive setting of 'God is our hope and strength', with the wonderful and dramatic effect of the choral writing at the words 'Though the earth tremble', are unsurpassed in anthem literature. Again, the impressive setting of the solemn words 'Lord, let me know mine end' must be ranked among the really great things in music: the pulsating march-like rhythm which persists throughout is certainly a stroke of genius. Croft's 'Put me not to rebuke', and Boyce's 'By the waters of Babylon' will serve as examples of their respective styles. Both works are dignified and finely expressive of the words.

The two most prominent anthem-composers of the later Georgian period were Jonathan Battishill and Samuel Wesley. Battishill's 'Call to remembrance' and 'O Lord, look down from heaven', with Wesley's Latin motets such

as 'In exitu Israel' and 'Exultate Deo' (both now published with English words for ordinary church use), stand out as landmarks during a time when English church music showed some signs of complacency and even of triviality. Wesley's motets reveal his assiduous study of the works of J. S. Bach: his writing is broad and contrapuntal. Battishill, in his powerful setting of 'O Lord, look down from heaven', reaches great heights. His writing reflects the spirit of the sixteenth century, intensified by the wider harmonic range of his time. A strong and thoughtful individuality marks the setting throughout. The anthem is full. It begins in four parts, with a simple and beautiful musical phrase, which plaintively climbs through the different voices. As the words grow stronger in their appeal ('Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength, Thy mercies towards me?') the music also becomes more forceful and broadens slowly into five, six, and finally seven parts. The ending is most impressive, and must be quoted here:

Ex. 4.

1st TREBLE. *ff* Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength,

2nd TREBLE. *ff* Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength,

ALTO. *ff* Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength,

TENOR. *ff* Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength,

BASS. *ff* Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength,

Thy mer - cies to - wards me,
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me,
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me,
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me,
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me,
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me,

are they . . . re - strain'd?
 are they . . . re - strain'd?
 are they . . . re - strain'd?
 are they . . . re - strain'd?
 are they . . . re - strain'd?
 are they . . . re - strain'd?

are they . . . re - strain'd,
 are they re - strain'd,
 are they re - strain'd,
 are they re - strain'd,
 are they re - strain'd,
 are they re - strain'd?

Thy mer - cies to - wards me?
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me?
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me?
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me?
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me?
 Thy mer - cies to - wards me?

mf cres.
are they
mf cres.
are they . . .
mf
are they . . . they
are . . . they
cres.
are they . . . re - strain'd . . . are they . . .
re - strain'd, re - strain'd, . . . are they
re - strain'd, re - strain'd,
re - strain'd, are they re - strain'd . . .

dim.
strain'd, . . . re - strain'd,
dim.
strain'd, . . . re - strain'd,
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -
dim.
strain'd, . . . are they re -

f
re strain'd, are they . . . re -
f
re - strain'd, are they . . . re -
f
re strain'd, are they re -
f
re - strain'd, are they re -
f
re - strain'd, . . . re -
are they, are they re -
f
re - strain'd, are they . . . re -

1st & 2nd TREBLES. roll. e dim.
are they . . . re - strain'd?
1st ALTO.
strain'd, . . . are they . . . re - strain'd?
2nd ALTO.
strain'd, . . . are they re - strain'd?
1st TENOR.
strain'd, . . . are they re - strain'd?
2nd TENOR.
strain'd, . . . are they re - strain'd?
BASS.
strain'd, . . . are they re - strain'd?
strain'd, . . . are they re - strain'd?

Notice particularly the two magical silent bars, and the sudden introduction of D flat at the words 'Are they restrained?' Then observe the gradual *crescendo* (heightened by the bass voices, in their most telling register, above the tenors) until a climax is reached where the *forte* marks occur. After that the tremendous fervour of the appeal dies away to a quiet ending. The effect is dramatic in the extreme, yet the bounds of true church music are never violated. It is one more example of the dignity and wide scope of counterpoint as distinct from mere harmonic effects. Music which is fundamentally and structurally contrapuntal sounds fuller and finer, especially in the building up of a climax, than that which is conceived on purely harmonic (and therefore monodic) lines; and no more fruitful field for illustrations of this principle can be found than the best types of anthem which have been already cited.

Among early Victorian writers of anthems the chief are Thomas Attwood, Walmisley, John Goss, and Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Walmisley's and Goss's anthems are too well known to need quotation here. Wesley's creative genius found its outlet mainly in anthem-writing. In such works as 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace', 'Thou Judge of quick and dead', and 'Wash me thoroughly from my sins', we find the working of a mind perhaps more original than that of any anthem-writer since the death of Purcell. In his setting of the solemn words 'Wash me thoroughly from my sins', Wesley dared much; but his fine instinct triumphed. In this anthem he reached a height of dramatic poignancy which has led more than one unsuccessful imitator astray.

Of living composers there is no need to write, except to express the fervent wish that all, and not merely a few, of the most earnest and best-equipped composers of our day would imitate their illustrious brothers of the sixteenth and seven-

teenth centuries, and enrich the churches as well as the concert-rooms of their own country with music of lasting merit. The purpose of this paper has been to show some of the greatness of the past. We should hold fast to the traditions of those great anthem-writers. But surely we should also live in and work for our own time. In secular music we have now composers in whom new and vital impulses seem to be working. Can we say the same of our church music? Apart from an occasional isolated instance of a fine anthem by a living composer, can any one truly assert that any sort of fresh life has been infused into the anthem-form since the death of S. S. Wesley? The great anthems of the past are still to a large extent neglected in our churches and our cathedrals. What takes their place? The answer to this question might be, 'The best work of the greatest composers of the day'. But would it be true? Progress for the moment then seems, curiously enough, to mean chiefly reversion to the past. Let us hope that a great school of modern British composers may arise and flourish, to put new vigour into this part of our national music. Meanwhile, let us look forward to the time when clergy, organists and choirmasters, and also congregations, will be combined to ensure one end in every church in the land—that when music is in hand, only the finest works of every period shall be rendered. This seems at first sight a counsel of perfection. But on consideration, the task will not be found impossible by even humble workers. Education and enthusiasm are the chief necessities. With the help of these two driving forces, notable results can always be achieved.