

MARCH 20, 1906.

JAMES E. MATTHEW, Esq.,
IN THE CHAIR.

GERMAN HYMNODY.

(FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE MIDDLE OF THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY).

BY THE REV. G. R. WOODWARD, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS SUNG BY THE QUIRE OF GRAY'S INN CHAPEL UNDER
MR. J. C. LONG, MUS. BAC. OXON.

It is commonly thought that the German Choral had its birth in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, *i.e.*, at the period of the Reformation in Germany. This is a great mistake. We may allow indeed that it reached its zenith at that time; but it was the fruit of seed sown in previous ages, and can boast of a long and noble ancestry. No nation in the world is possessed of so rich a treasury of Sacred Song as Germany. Considering the short time placed at my disposal, and the number of illustrations to be given, I trust that I may be pardoned for at once plunging *in medias res*.

A.—The chief sources from whence the German Choral is derived are the following:—

(i.) *The Liturgical Hymns, in the Latin tongue, of the Catholick Church in the West, with their Proper Melodies.*— Thus we have the “Veni, Redemptor gentium” (A) a hymn of the fourth century by St. Ambrose, which became in the vernacular “Nun komm der Heiden Heiland” (B):—

HYPO-DORIAN MODE.

Veni, Redemptor gentium. Iambic, dimeter acatalectic.

(A)

Ve-ni, Redemptor gen-ti-um, Os-ten-de par-tum Vir-gi-nis :
Mi-re-tur om-ne se-cu-lum : Ta-lis par-tus de-cet De-um.

Nun komm der Heiden Heiland. Trochaic, 7-7-7-7.

(B) 

Nun komm der Hei - den Hei-land, Der Jung-frau - en



Kind er - kannt : Des sich wun - der al - le Welt ;



Gott solch Ge - burt ihm be - stellt.

Other instances might be mentioned, such as “A solis ortus cardine,” of the fifth century, which we have as a Choral in the form of “Christum wir sollen loben schon”: or the “Veni Creator Spiritus” (of the ninth century), translated as “Komm Gott Schöpfer, heiliger Geist.”

(ii.) *Vernacular Geistliche Lieder, or Spiritual Songs of the people.*—But before going further, it seems right to give honour where honour is due, and briefly mention the Song-Schools at the Abbeys of Fulda, and St. Gall, in the ninth and tenth centuries, not to speak of the influence of the Crusades (by which the Western nations of Europe came in contact with the traditions and legends of the East), or of the Swabian line of Emperors, who, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, did much to encourage the cultivation of chivalrous, popular and religious poetry; not forgetting the Troubadours of Provence and the wandering Minstrels. These all contributed, in their day, to the development of the second source of the German Choral, viz., “Vernacular Geistliche Lieder.” Pre-eminent among these comes the famous Easter Hymn (*a*) “Christ ist erstanden.” It has been described* as the oldest and strongest of all German Church-songs, and can be traced back to the middle of the twelfth century. It was chanted not only in Church, but on the battle-field, as at Tannenberg in 1410 and at Pavia in 1525; sung before meals, at the yearly display of the Imperial Reliquaries at Nürnberg from 1424 to 1524; taken up by the audience and spectators of the Medieval Mystery, Miracle or Morality Play; still in use all over Germany, Catholic and Lutheran alike; still to be heard at Monte Cassino in Italy, and during Easter-tide sung by the Benedictine monks there, with thrilling effect. In 1550 Wizel tells us “Here chanted the whole Church with loud resounding voices and joy unspeakable ‘Christ ist erstanden.’”

* See P. Ambrosius Kienle, O.S.B., “Kleines Kirchen musikalisches Handbuch.” Freiburg im Breisgau, 1893.

“Of all other songs” said Luther, “one may grow weary, but ‘Christ ist erstanden’ will wear for ever.” It consisted originally of but one verse, with Alleluys :—

(a) *Christ ist erstanden.*

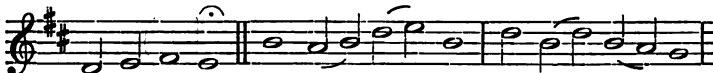
Dorian, or 1st mode.



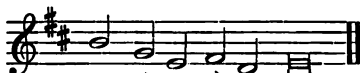
Christ is a - ris - en From his three-day pris - on :



Meet it is to make mer-rie : Je - sus will our so-lace be.



Al - le - lu - ya. Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,



Al - le - lu - - ya.

See “Cowley Carol Book,” No. 43.

(b) “Ein Kindelein so löblich” (Christmas-tide), grounded on “Dies est leticie,” a twelfth-century hymn, now generally known in Catholic and Protestant Germany as “Der Tag, der ist so freudereich.” This exquisite Carol, or Choral, is extolled by Luther as a “Schön christliches Lied, das allenthalben gesungen wird,”—“a lovely Christian song, everywhere sung.” Johann Spangenberg, in 1581, describes it as “one of the oldest songs of our good old forefathers, sung by them possibly for some hundreds of years before now.” V. Herberger, in 1615, speaks of it with enthusiasm thus: “‘Ein Kindelein so löblich’ is inherited by us from our old German great-great-grandfathers. It has come into such wide use in Christendom, that it will continue until Doomsday. The melody is good, the words still better.” For the words of the above Choral, freely and beautifully translated by Dr. J. M. Neale and set to its proper melody, see “The Cowley Carol Book,” No. 18, “Royal Day, that chaste gloom.”

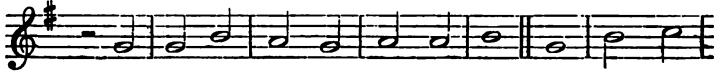
Here is another Geistliches Lied: (c) “Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist.” To Dom. Ambrosius Kienle, in his book already quoted, I am indebted for the following tribute of praise bestowed upon this venerable and devout Choral. The latter is first mentioned by Berthold von Regensburg (* 1272) thus :—“This is a right profitable song: the longer ye sing

the better will ye love it, and sing it, and call upon God with all devotion from the ground of the heart. It was a goodly find, and an useful; and a wise man was he, whoever first invented this Song." For the music and English words of this Choral, see "Songs of Syon," No. 65.

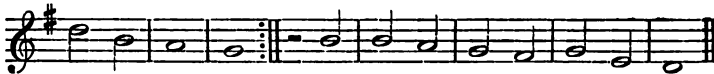
(iii.) The third source of the German Choral is to be sought and found in the *Old German Volkslieder* or *Secular Folk-Songs*.—Amongst many examples we may name the following: (a) "Wach auf, mein Herzens Schöne," which supplied the melody, motif and metre of "Nun freut euch, lieben Christen G'mein," known in England as "Great God, what do I see and hear":—

Nun freut euch, lieben Christen G'mein.

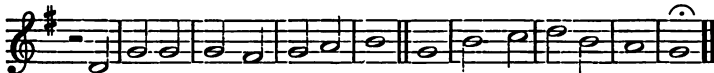
KLUG, 1535.



The Lord of might from Si - nai's brow Gave forth his
And Is - rael lay on earth be - low, Outstretch'd in



voice of thun - der: } Be - neath his feet was pitch - y night,
fear and won - der: }



And at his left hand and his right The rocks are rent a - sun - der.

(b) "Mein G'müth ist mir verwirret," became "O Haupt, voll Blut und Wunden."

(c) "Vater unser im Himmelreich" is probably a South German Air.

(d) "Inspruch ich muss dich lassen" became "O Welt, ich muss dich lassen."

(e) "Entlaubet ist der Walde" is to be recognized as "Ich dank dir, lieber Herre."

(f) "Jetztund kömpt die Zeit heran" supplied the melody and quatrain of "Ach wann kompt die Zeit heran"; and English men and women little imagine that when singing "Songs of praise the Angels sang" they are using an old German secular air—A Shepherd's ditty to his lady-love.

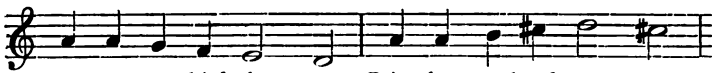
(g) "Ich gieng einmal spazieren," in like manner, passed into "Helfft mir Gotts Güte preisen."

(h) "Ich hört' ein Fräulein klagen" has survived under the words of "Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn."

(i) "Graff Andres Schlick, der edle Herr" is known as "Lobt Gott, ihr Christen alle gleich."

(j) "Flora, meine Freude," as "Jesu, meine Freude."

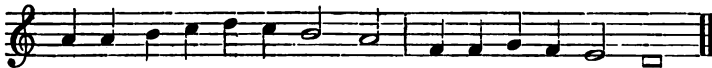
Jesu, meine Freude.



Je - su, my chief plea - sure, Price-less pearl and trea - sure,
'Tis from thee I bor - row An - ti - dote for sor - row,



Sun-shine of my heart! } Hav-ing thee, O well is me!
Balm for ev - 'ry smart: }



But, without thee, all my glad - ness Turn-eth in - to sad - ness.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century there was a considerable number of fine secular melodies floating about, and many of these were enlisted in the service of the sanctuary. Some of them were known as "Hildebrand's Ton," "Herzog Ernst's Ton," "Jacob's Brüder" (sung by pilgrims on the road to and from St. James of Compostella), the "Lindenschmiedlied," "Bruder Veit's Ton." This last is called in some of our modern English hymnals "Saxony," but it is given in such a degraded form as hardly to be recognizable.

(iv.) *The Minnesinger*.—Though comparatively few of the Minnesinger melodies can be traced, there can be little doubt but that some of their tuneful lays and songs, particularly those in praise of Our Lady, may be found in such collections as the "Graduale Mosburgense," a MS. of the year 1360, and the "Piae Cantiones" of Peter of Nyland, printed in 1582. For though these minstrels' principal theme was "Minne" (love), yet they sang also of religion and patriotism, "Of faith, holiness, freedom and manly worth, of spring, and the golden time of youth." They were mostly men of knightly rank, and they sang at Court, and in baronial halls and castles, before "lords and ladies gay," to the accompaniment of "geigen" or fiddle. Amongst the Minnesinger must be mentioned with special honour the names of Walther von der Vogelweide and Wolfram von Eschenbach.

To this period, roughly speaking from the beginning of the thirteenth until the fourteenth century, belong probably such noble numbers as :—

(a) "Ein kind geboren zu Bethlehem" ("Puer natus in Bethlehem")—

DORIAN AND HYPO-DORIAN MODES.

A Babe is born in Beth-le-hem, In Beth-le-hem.

Al-le-lu-ya.
Great joyance for Je-ru-sa-lem, Al-le, Al-le, Al-le, Al-le-lu-ya.

The *Canto fermo* of the above is in the *lower part*. The descant (being in itself an attractive tune) gradually ousted the original air, and was harmonized by Bach and others as the chief melody. See Bach's "371 Vierstimmige Choralgesänge" No. 12, and "The Cowley Carol Book," No. 1.

(b) "Es ist ein Reis (Ros) entsprungen" ("Flos de radice Jesse") :—

The no-ble stem of Jes-se Hath flow'r-ed at . . this tide, }
Re-joyce good Christian peo-ple, Re-joyce ye, far . . and wide. }

In Ma-ry see the stem; And who the Flow'r but Je-

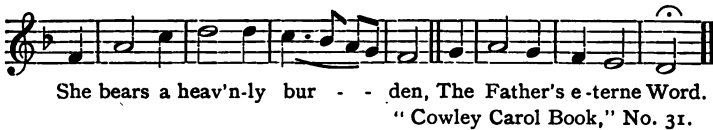
.-sus, the Babe of Beth-le-hem.

The above is the representative of an earlier Volkslied. "This melody, like a sweet-scented flower, is doubtless much older than the oldest source to which we have hitherto been

able to trace it" (Meister). "The wonderfully beautiful melody has saved the words from perishing" (Hoffmann). The four-part setting of the above by Michael Praetorius, 1609, cannot possibly be improved. See "Cowley Carol Book," No. 19.

(c) "Es komt ein Schiff geladen" (gefahren)—

JOHANN TAULER.



(d) "In dulci jubilo." "Already known about the year 1350, being mentioned in the life of Blessed Suso" (Kienle). "Beautiful beyond description" (Vehe, 1537). The text is a mixture of Latin and German lines, "macaronic" as it is called. For introducing this melody into this country Englishmen owe a debt of gratitude to R. L. de Pearsall.

(v.) *The Meistersinger*.—The "Minne-gesang" of the chivalrous knight was succeeded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the "Meister Gesang" of the middle-class artisan. At Nürnberg, Augsburg, and other South German towns Singing Schools were established. On holidays, burghers and 'prentices of various trades met for the study and performance of vocal music. The students were composed of "Scholars," *i.e.*, beginners. They began by studying the *Tabulatur*, with its formidable rules. After passing this examination, they became "School-friends." When able to sing according to Code, they were called "Singers." When able to compose words for other persons' tunes they became "Poets"; and when competent to write songs and words of their own, "Meistersinger." From these latter was chosen a "Marker" to note musical errors in the candidates' exercises. Poems irreligious or immoral were strictly forbidden. The prizes varied, the highest being a silver chain and a medal stamped with the likeness of King David.

The Meistersinger reached their meridian in the middle of the sixteenth century; after that they declined. Here and there they lingered on, but by the middle of the nineteenth century they had completely died out. Richard Wagner has immortalized the "Meistersinger von Nürnberg" by his opera

of that name. In his admirable Choräle "Wach auf," and "Da zu dir der Heiland kam," he has quite caught the spirit of the Old German Choral.

(vi.) *Foreign element.*—German Hymnody has been enriched by the importation of melodies from neighbouring countries. For instance: "In dir ist Freude" is an Italian madrigal, "A lieta vita," by Gastoldi da Caravaggia (1591); "Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit" is a French secular tune, "Il me souffit de touts mes maux"; "Freu dich sehr, O meine Seele" is Louis Bourgeois' "Forty-second Psalm tune" (1551):—

Freu dich sehr, O meine Seele.



O thou sweetest Source of glad-ness, Light's all-love-ly fountain-head, }
Who a-like in joy and sad-ness, Leav-est none un-vis - it - ed: }



Breath of God-head, highest King, Who, up- hold - ing every thing,



Wilt up-hold, with love undy-ing; Hear, O hear me humbly crying.

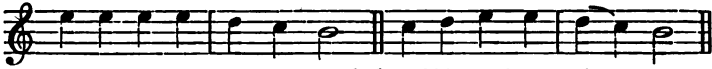
Claude Goudimel's setting of the above, with the melody in the tenor, is quite a model of good workmanship.

Thanks to the labours of Valentine Triller and Johann Leisentrit (1567), we are familiarized with many Bohemian hymn melodies.

B. Among the characteristics of the German Choral is:—

(i.) *Its Tonality.*—One of its chiefest charms, the secret of its power and everlasting youth, is due to the fact that the tunes are written in one or other of the old Church Gregorian modes—*e.g.*, "Vater unser im Himmelreich" is a Dorian (1st mode) melody. "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" is a specimen of the sad second mode. "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" owes much of its popularity to its being a Phrygian or third mode tune. The same may be said of the less-known but equally touching melody of "Christus der uns selig macht" ("Patris sapientiæ").

Christus der uns selig macht.



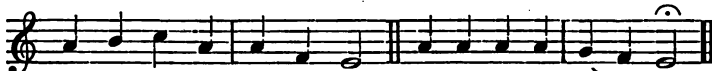
On the wood his arms are stretch'd, And his hands are riv - en :



Through the ten - der Flesh of Christ Might-y nails are driv - en :



In like-wise his bless-ed feet Are to tor-ture giv - en,



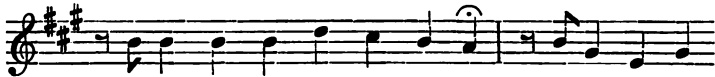
As the hands that had so oft In our bat-tle stri - ven.

For one of M. Prætorius' settings of this melody, see "Songs of Syon," No. 34.

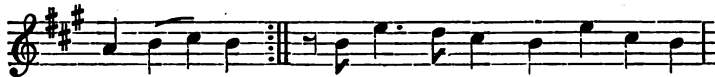
Specimens of fourth, fifth and sixth mode might easily be found. "Gelobet seystu, Jesu Christ" (Christmas) is a stately Choral in the eighth mode.

"Es ist das Heil uns Kommen her" is an example of the seventh or Mixo-Lydian scale :—

Es ist das Heil uns Kommen her.



Re-joyce, good Christians, raise the strain : The Cru - ci - fied
The sol - dier guard was all in vain ; The Lord hath burst



is ris - en : } Seal, nap - kin, earthquake, moon by night,
his pris - on : }



Bear witness with the An-gels bright To Jesu's Re-sur-rec - tion.

See "Songs of Syon," No. 52A.

(ii.) *Its Irregularity of Rhythm.*—Another secret of the German Choral's fascination here. By rhythm is meant the pauses and breaks in the flow of the melody, the uneven length of the notes, the quickening up or slowing down of the movement. The charm and character of the tune depend first upon its melody, and next on its rhythm. To equalize the value of the notes and to write them all with one distinct recurring accent and beat, destroys the individuality and beauty of the tune. The introduction of bars has something to answer for in this matter. The desire to promote congregational singing may be urged as the motive; nevertheless it reduces the Choral to such unsupportable uniformity, that after such mutilation the tune is generally cast away altogether.

Here is an instance. Philip Nicolai's Choral (1597):—

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme.

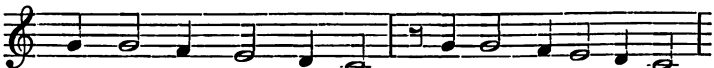
Songs of Syon, No. 1.



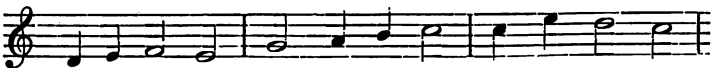
Up! a-wake! from high-est stee - ple, The watchmen cry, A -
Hear those cla - rion voi - ces knell - ing, The hour of midnight



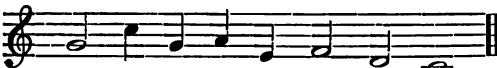
- wake, ye peo - ple; O Sa - lem, from thy slum-ber rise! }
loud forth tell - ing; Say, where are ye, O Vir-gins wise? }



The Bridegroom comes; a - wake! Up! lamp and lan-tern take;



Al - le - lu - ya. With rea - dy light ye must to - night



Go forth to join the mar-riage-rite.

How a fine melody may be, and has been, ruined by equalizing the value of the notes may be seen by comparing the Genevan Psalm tune, No. cxi., with its modern representative, that goes by the name of "Commandments." The notes may be the same, but the spirit is fled.

A leading authority on music considers the following as fine a specimen of rhythm as can be imagined :—

Personent hodie. "Piae Cantiones," 1582.



Let the song be be - gun, For the bat - tle is done,



And the vic - to - ry won: And the foe is scat - ter'd,



And the pris - on shat - ter'd: Sing of joy, joy, joy :



Sing of joy, joy, joy: And to - day Raise the lay,

rall.



Glo - ria in ex - cel - sis. See "Cowley Carol Book," No. 56.

(iii.) *In its Peculiar Metres.*—For a complete and systematic table of all the different metres of the German Choral the student is referred to Joh. Zahn's admirable work "Die Melodien der deutschen Evangelischen Kirchenlieder." The stanzas may be briefly described as varying in length from two up to twenty-six lines. Besides the Classical Sapphic, Alcaic and Elegiac, plenty of examples of Long Measure and Common Measure are to be found, together with many other more or less pleasing metres. Strange to say, Short Metre (as it is called) is conspicuous by its absence. One beautiful and remarkable feature of German Hymnody as distinguished from English is the prevalence of a well-assorted combination of the Iambus and Trochee. Sternhold and Hopkins' Metrical Psalter, though itself practically obsolete, has nevertheless exercised a permanent influence on the prevailing metre and general character of our Hymns, which is Iambic. The German language has an immense advantage over ours in its ready supply of Trochaic endings or feminine rhymes. English lyric and ballad poetry owes

much of its charm to these double rhymes ; but a constant supply of them is not easy to procure. English translators and writers of sacred verse have always admired but have too often avoided metres entailing feminine rhymes, apparently because of their difficulty ; but whenever anyone has taken the trouble, he generally has been rewarded.

Here is an example by Ben Jonson :—

“ I sing the birth, was born to-night
 The Author both of life and light ;
 The Angels so did sound it :
 And like the ravish'd Shepherds said,
 Who saw the light and were afraid,
 Yet search'd—and true they found it.”

And another by John Mason Neale :—

“ Young and old must raise the lay
 That their heart engages :
 For the Child is born to-day
 Who is King of ages.”

The above double rhymes are refreshing after seven long-metre quatrains such as this :—

“ The voice says, Cry ! O let us cry !
 Though standing on death's awful brink,
 Men feast, they jest, they sell, they buy,
 And cannot see, and will not think.”

Here is another example of a German Choral, iambic and trochaic endings. It has been translated by Miss F. E. Cox :

Stein und dornig ist der Pfad.

“ Steep and thorny is the way
 To our home in heaven ascending :
 Happy he who every day
 Walks therein, for Christ contending :
 Happy when, his journey o'er,
 Conquering he to Christ shall soar.”

This is the original metre—a stanza of six lines trochaic with double rhymes in the second and fourth lines. A melody in the above metre has been mangled and adapted to Keble's “ Sun of my soul,” an iambic stanza of four lines. “ As with gladness men of old ” has been similarly spoiled. Joh. Hermann Schein wrote and harmonized a fine tune for a six-line trochaic hymn, but his setting, now called “ Eisenach ” or “ Leipzig,” has been shamefully handled by English musicians, and shortened into Long Measure and

re-harmonized. Nevertheless it is still attributed to Schein, with all the *shine* taken out of it. But to return to German metres.

The writer of the Nibelunglied had much to do with the origin of a popular German hymn melody—practically, that of our “Jerusalem the Golden.” But the Minnesinger may be considered as having influenced, if not having formed, the model of the best German Choral metres. In their song, each verse commonly consisted of three parts. The first two parts were called the *Stollen*, or *Posts*, and corresponded more or less to the Greek *Strophè* and *Antistrophè*. The third part, generally the longest, was the *Abgesang*, and would represent the *Epode*.

Take the following for an example :—

An Wasserflüssen Babylon.

“ Beside the flood of Babylon (*Strophè*.),
 We sate us down in sorrow :
 When as we thought on thee, Syón, (*Antistrophè*.)
 We wept by night and morrow :
 Our psalteries and harps unstrung (*Epode*.)
 Upon the willow-trees we hung :
 Our masters, void of pity,
 (That led us captive) oft would call
 Upon us for a madrigal,
 A song of Syon-city.”

It may be mentioned, to judge from the number of excellent tunes in the metre of “Great God, what do I see and hear,” that this was a specially favourite measure.

AUTHORS—(i.) OF THE WORDS :—

Of the host of German hymn-writers, several names stand in the foremost rank of merit. The earliest of these is Martin Luther. His work consists of translations of old Latin hymns and antiphons, metrical versions of certain psalms and other parts of Holy Scripture, with a few hymns mainly of his own composition, all marked by characteristic vigour and plainness of speech.

Nicolaus Herman, Pastor of Joachimsthal in Bohemia, less known than he deserves, has been described as a “poet of the people, homely, earnest and picturesque in style.” His hymns appear not to have been written for church use, but for the children of his schools, in order to supplant profane songs.

Paul Gerhardt, whose early years were spent amid the horrors of the Thirty Years’ War, is to my mind the greatest poet of them all. Of his 117 hymns, some of the loveliest are his “Geh’ aus, mein Herz, und suche Freud,”

“Befiehl du deine Wege,” “Nun ruhen alle Wälder,” “Frölich soll mein Herze springen,” and “O Haupt, voll Blut und Wunden.”

Johann Scheffler, called “Angelus Silesius,” a convert to Catholicism, who took Holy Orders, has enriched German hymnody with some of its choicest treasures. These became even greater favourites with the Lutherans than with his co-religionists. “Liebe, die du mich zum Bilde,” and “Keine Schönheit hat die Welt,” alone are monuments of their author’s piety and poetical genius.

Amongst others who deserve more than passing notice are Paul Speratus, author of “Es ist das Heil”; Nicolaus Decius, author of “Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr,” and of “O Lamm Gottes unschuldig”; Nicolaus Selnecker; Bartholomæus Ringwaldt; Martin Schalling; Philip Nicolai, author of “Wachet auf! ruft uns die Stimme,” and of “Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern”; and Martin Rinckart, to be envied as the writer of “Nun danket alle Gott.”

On the whole it may be said that the melodies of the German Chorals, as music, are equal or superior to the theology and poetry of the words. The latter are not seldom indefinite, tautologous, diffuse, and often hardly worth while translating. But they compare favourably with Tate and Brady, and even with Sternhold and Hopkins; and certainly they never degenerate into vulgarity or irreverence, nor is there to be found in German hymnody the like of the following extract from a so-called Spiritual Song quoted by Dr. Neale:—

Dear friend,

I’m glad to hear that well you bear the stroke,
By which a gracious Hand your thigh-bone broke:
The coach on which you rode, when homeward-bound,
Upset, and threw you flat upon the ground.

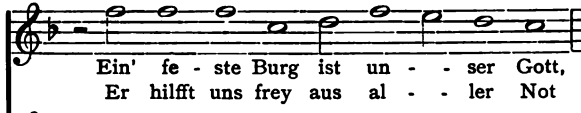
(ii.) OF THE MELODIES AND SETTINGS:—

In the majority of cases it is practically impossible to say how far the authorship of the melodies themselves is due to the musicians to whom we owe the harmonies and settings. While Luther is known to have invented several new melodies, he more often made use of those already popular, whether sacred or secular. Thus the tune of his “Sie ist mir lieb, die werthe Magd,” a versification of Rev. xii., was originally a secular song beginning “Ach! Lieb mit Leib.” The air of his Chorale, “Jesaia dem Propheten das geschach,” is said to be an adaptation of an old Gregorian *Sanctus*, *Agnus* and *Credo*. The following example, taken from W. Bäumker’s excellent work entitled “Das Katholische deutsche Kirchenlied,” vol. i., p. 29, shows Luther’s great

musical ability in shaping some apparently old material into a magnificent new Chorale. Anyhow, there is a strong family likeness between "Ein' feste Burg" and the "Missa de Angelis" *Credo* and *Kyrie* :—

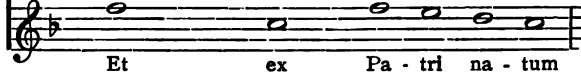
"EIN' FESTE BURG" (1545) compared with "MISSA DE ANGELIS"
Credo and *Kyrie*.

Val. Bapst
Gesangbuch.

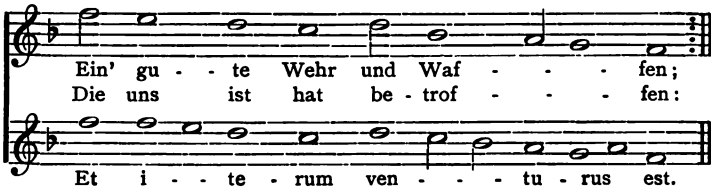


Ein' fe - ste Burg ist un - - ser Gott,
Er hilfft uns frey aus al - - ler Not

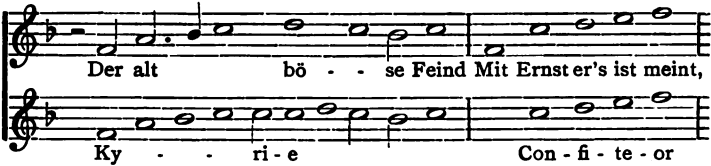
Roman
Graduale.



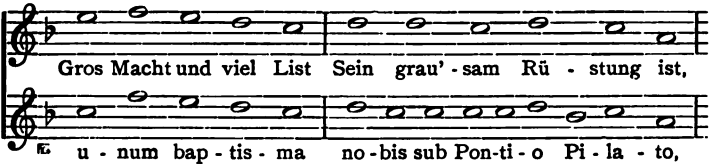
Et ex Pa - tri na - tum



Ein' gu - - te Wehr und Waf - - - fen;
Die uns ist hat be - trof - - - fen:
Et i - - te - rum ven - - - tu - rus est.



Der alt bö - - se Feind Mit Ernst er's ist meint,
Ky - - ri - e Con - fi - te - or



Gros Macht und viel List Sein grau'-sam Rü - stung ist,
E - u - num bap - tis - ma no - bis sub Pon - ti - o Pi - la - to,



Auff Erd ist nicht Seins Glei - - - chen.
Et i - - te - rum ven - - - tu - - rus est.

Among "such as found out musical tunes," or composed settings of existing melodies, are to be mentioned the names of Heinrich Isaak, Michael Weisse, Nicolaus Decius, Joh. Spangenberg, Wolfgang Dachstein, Joh. Kugelman, Nicolaus Herman, Ludwig Senfel, Joh. Walther, Wolfgang Figulus, Nicolaus Selnecker, Joachim von Burck, Barth. Gesius, Seth Calvisius, Philip Nicolai, Melchior Vulpius, Hans Leo Hassler, Michael Praetorius, Melchior Teschner, Melchior Franck, Barth. Helder, Heinrich Schütz, Joh. Hermann Schein, Joh. Schop, Apelles von Löwenstern, Joh. Crüger, Heinrich Albert, Georg Neumark, Joh. Rudolph Ahle, and Joh. Georg Ebeling.

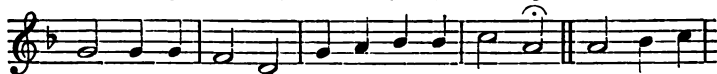
These are the names of some of the chief musicians, masters of the quire, composers and organists who "flourished" between the end of the fifteenth and the middle of the seventeenth century; who, each in his generation, contributed to that storehouse of church song on which Johann Sebastian Bach was brought up from a child, which became part of his very nature, and these he took for the themes of his organ works, church cantatas and the like. Of the above-mentioned musicians special praise and reverence is due to the works, harmonies and settings of Michael Weisse, Seth Calvisius, Barth. Gesius, Melchior Vulpius, Heinrich Schütz (the greatest German composer of the seventeenth century), Joh. Hermann Schein (Cantor and predecessor of Bach at the Leipzig Thomas-Schule), Johann Crüger, and last, but not least of all, to Michael Praetorius, the most practical and industrious church-composer of his day.

As for the melodies and settings which the Gray's Inn Quire have sung this afternoon, they are of age and must speak for themselves. Suffice it to observe that they are the compositions of men who were the contemporaries, pupils, or successors of such giants and masters of counterpoint as Josquin des Pres, Arkadelt, Orlando di Lasso and Sweelinck in the Netherlands; of such consummate madrigal writers as Byrde, Tye, Tallis, Benet, Morley, Dowland, and Orlando Gibbons in England; of Festa, Marenzio, Croce, Vittoria, and Palestrina in Italy; of Bourgeois, Le Jeune and Goudimel in France.

It is to be hoped that editors of modern hymn-books will in future refrain from attempting to amend the harmonies of such men as Philip Nicolai, Michael Prætorius, J. H. Schein, Heinrich Schütz, or Joh. Crüger, for example by filling up their "open fifths" and robbing their work of the characteristics of that particular age, work which is admirable for its honesty, directness and simplicity, bearing evident tokens of truly noble and well-ordered minds.

H. rzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrocken.

J. CRÜGER, 1640.



Ah! dear-est Je - su, what was thy transgres-sion? Say, what the



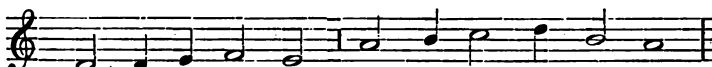
tres-pass where-of thou wast guilt-y? What mis-de-mean-our



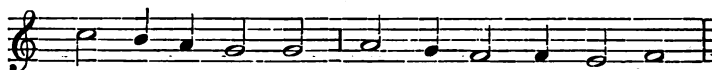
mer - it - ed the sen - tence— Death on the Rood - tree?

Christe, du Beistand.

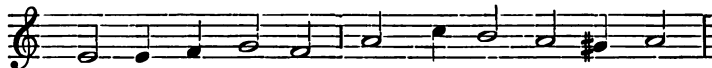
APELLES VON LÖWENSTERN, 1644.



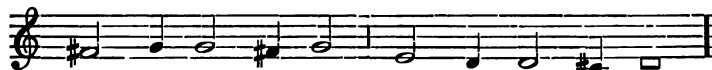
Now it is eve-ning: time to rest from la - bour;



Fa - ther, ac - cord - ing to thy will and plea - sure,



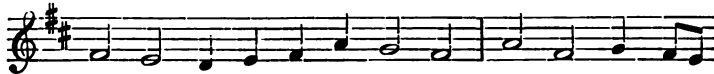
Through the night-sea - son, have thy faith - ful peo - ple



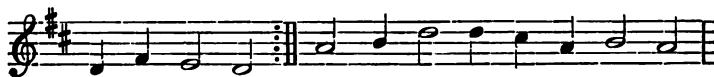
Safe in thy keep - ing, Safe in thy keep - ing.

Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele.

J. CRÜGER, 1649.



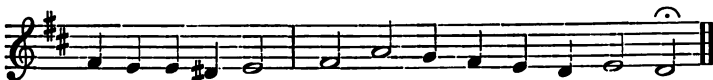
Deck thee, O my soul, with glad-ness, Quit thy haunts of
Like the dy - ing thief for - giv - en, And with sin - ful



sin and sad - ness; } Thou must go, as saith the Psal - ter,
Ma - ry shri - ven, }



To thy God and to his Al - tar: Heed the word by



Je - sus spo - ken, "Take and eat my Bo - dy bro - ken."

Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten.

GEORG NEUMARK, 1657.



Praise ye the Lord! in glad - some cho - rus, *Te De - um,*
Thanks be to God: with voice ca - no - rous; Ho! ev - 'ry



all ye peo - ple sing: } From age to age, from
na - tion, bless your King: }



coast to coast, Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

INFLUENCE AND POPULARITY OF THE GERMAN CHORÄLE.

As in France the cause of the Huguenots and the spread of Calvin's unenviable tenets were undoubtedly furthered by Marot and Beza's metrical versions of the Psalter, set to popular chansons and original melodies and settings by Louis Bourgeois and Claud Goudimel, as in Ireland the downfall of our unhappy King James the second was helped by the singing of a popular air with the refrain *Lillibullero-bullen-a-lá*, and as the *Marseillaise* played an important part in the French Revolution, so the German Choral, especially "*Ein feste Burg*," proved a mighty lever in the history of the Reformation in Germany. Here again the ballads and lyrics of the people produced more effect than all your laws and articles of religion put together. Music in times of revolution, political or religious movements, has more influence than all the orations and eloquence of your Ciceros, and all the philippics of Demosthenes himself.

Luther was shrewd enough to supplant the unmetrical words hitherto sung by clergy and quire in a language not understood of the people, wherein only the educated few

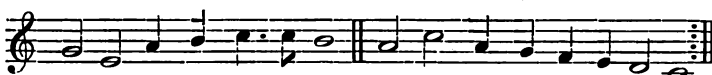
might join, by metrical hymns in the vernacular, wedded to some already familiar strain, and in his wisdom made the common folk feel that they were taking an intelligent part in public worship, appealing thereby, and not in vain, to his fellow-countrymen's inborn love of music and poetry.

The following short anecdotes will testify to the influence and popularity of the German Choral:—A Roman Catholic priest was sent from Magdeburg to counteract the growth of Lutheranism at Brunswick. To him the people gave audience, until a certain Brunswicker started the tune of the Choral "Ach Gott vom Himmel." The whole congregation picked it up at once, and the preacher had no alternative but to descend from the pulpit, his sermon unfinished.

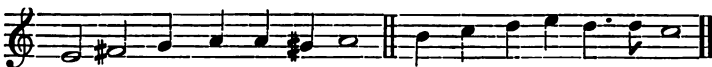
Another instance. After the disastrous battle of Jena, a Prussian trumpeter found himself cut off from his squadron and hotly pursued by some French cuirassiers. His only chance was to jump from a rocky height and swim across the rapid river Saale. A cry of admiration and astonishment rose from his pursuers when they saw horse and rider take this terrible leap. The brave Prussian arrived safely on the opposite bank, but his horse was drowned. His first act on the opposite shore was to fall on his knees and thank God. For this purpose he drew and winded his trumpet, and struck up the Choral "Jesus meine Zuversicht." But while so engaged a bullet from the enemy released the soul of this Christian soldier, and he passed to God, dying in his country's service, his lips in the act of breathing his Redeemer's praise:—

Jesus meine Zuversicht.

J. CRÜGER (1658).



Je-sus lives! Thy ter-rors now Can, O Death, no more ap-pal me: }
 Je-sus lives! By that I know From the grave he can re-call me: }



Brighter scenes at death commence; This shall be my con-fidence.

Another example. A certain aged Kapellmeister had heard tell of the fame of the young Johann Sebastian Bach. Anxious that justice should be done to his favourite Choral, after his departure from this life, the old man sent for Bach, to test the latter's capabilities. He requested him to sit down on the organ stool and harmonize him "An Wasserflüssen Babylon." Quite satisfied with Bach's performance, the old organist exclaimed "Nunc dimittis, Domine."

How the Germans loved their best Choräle may be proved by the headings and titles written over their favourites. One Choral is labelled as "Ein überaus schön Gesang," another is "Ein Englisch Gesang," a third "Ein gar alt frölich und andächtig Weyhenachtliedlein," and so forth.

CAUSES OF DECLINE (from *circa* 1660).

In "The Chorale Book for England," Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, an honoured member of the Musical Association, writes as follows:—

"Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, music enters into a new phase. Until then its sole purpose was to serve the Church, through the medium of the human voice and the organ. But now instrumental music, though at first subordinate, begins to make its appearance. Secular cantatas, forerunners of the opera, are produced on festive occasions at the Courts, particularly of Italy; and German musicians, like those of other countries, who had gone to Italy for study or other purposes, on their return spread the influence which they had themselves received.

"In Protestant Germany, church music gradually became less an object of ambition to composers; fewer tunes, and most of them inferior in quality and vigour to those of the first century after the Reformation, sprung up; nor did the nation at large any longer set its seal upon them by adopting or rejecting them, as before. In the hymn books of the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century we also find some of the best old tunes omitted, others deprived of the triple time ($\frac{3}{2}$) peculiar to them, others again without their distinct rhythm, all levelled to a general standard of lifeless uniformity."

Although the later German Choral generally falls below the high level of the earlier ones, such as "Es ist das Heil," "Mit Fried' und Freud," or "Aus tiefer Not," yet the following three examples prove that the art of writing good melodies had not died out at the latter end of the seventeenth century:—

(a) *Lobet den Herren aller Herren.* Seelenharpf, Oholzbach, 1664.



Praise, O my soul, the Lord of glo-ry, Him will I
Yea, he shall be my theme and sto-ry, While I have



wor-ship, to . . . the death; } Morning and eve-ning by
be-ing, life . . . and breath: }



heart and tongue, God and his prais-es shall be sung :

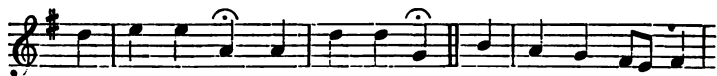


Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.

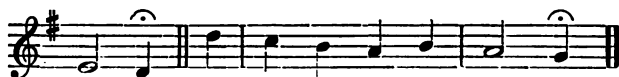
(b) *Was Gott thut das ist wohl gethan.* Gesangbuch, Nürnberg, 1690.



O let your loins be girt a-gen, And see your lights be burn-ing, }
And ye yourselves like un - to men, Who wait their lord's re - turn-ing: }

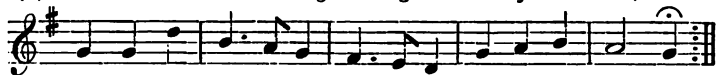


That they may hear his knock full clear (He stand-ing in the



gate - way), And o - pen to him straight-way.

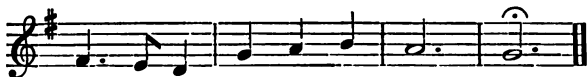
(c) *Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König.* After J. NEANDER, 1680.



Praise to the Lord, the om - ni - po-tent Sov-ran be giv - en: }
Blend we our voi - ces in cho - rus with An-gels in hea - ven: }



Wake, harp and lute, Psal - te - ry, dul - ci - mer, flute;



Praise him from morn-ing till e - - ven.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

In conclusion, please do not imagine that this lecture is delivered from an antiquarian point of view, or inspired by a spirit of æstheticism; nor think that the German Choräle are to be admired as so many curious pieces of old Dresden china, Gobelín tapestry or Mechlin lace. It is desired that they should become better known in England, and appreciated

for their solid worth. A certain number of these words and tunes have been introduced into our modern hymnals, some in their original form, others more or less mutilated. Some of these exotics have already become favourites in England. But a great number still remain unknown to the average English churchman. The question is, how are these to be popularized? Only by providing words in the original metres. There have been praiseworthy attempts to supply this need, and in this connexion we may mention the names of J. C. Jacobi, A. T. Russell, Miss Catherine Winkworth, Miss Frances E. Cox, and to come down to the present day, Mr. Robert Bridges, Editor of "The Yattendon Hymn Book." In "Songs of Syon," I have myself endeavoured to provide suitable English words for many of the most dignified old German melodies, and it is from this collection that most of the illustrations, which you have heard this afternoon, have been taken. Here allow me to enter a strong protest against the immoderate size of our English hymn books. We want *not* to multiply the quantity, but to improve the quality of the words and music sung.

It seems desirable that these German hymn melodies should be better known, if only that organ players may be the better enabled to appreciate and interpret those works of Bach, Brahms and others which are based upon some German Choral or other. If this paper be printed, I hope to subjoin a list of books which may be found useful to any of my hearers or readers who desire to make further study of this interesting subject.

LIST OF WORKS LIKELY TO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS
OF GERMAN HYMNODY.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Geystliche gesangk Buch-
leyn. Wittenberg, 1524.
Eyn Enchriond oder Hand-
buchlein. Erfurd, mdxxiiij.
Ein Neu Gesengbuchlen.
Michael Weisse. 1531.
Genevan Psalter. 1559.
Joh. Leisentrits Gesangbuch.
1567, 1573, 1584.
Piae Cantiones, Ecclesiasticæ
et Scholasticæ
veterum Episcoporum.
Opera Theodorici Petri
Nylandensis, Gryphis-
waldiæ. 1582.</p> | <p>Musæ Sioniae. By Michael
Praetorius. 1605 — 1610.
(Nine parts, containing
1244 settings.)
371 Vierstimmige Choral-
gesänge. Joh. Seb. Bach.
Breitkopf und Härtel,
Leipzig, 1831.
Thesaurus Hymnologicus.
Herm. Adalbert Daniel.
Halis. mdcccxli. 5 vols.
Der evangelische Kirchen-
gesang. Carl von Winter-
feld. Breitkopf und Härtel,
Leipzig, 1847.</p> |
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- Geschichte des Kirchenlieds und Kirchengesangs. Stuttgart, 1847. 2 vols.
- Hymni Latini Medii Aevi. Franc. Jos. Mone. Friburgi Brigoviae. Herder, 1853. 3 vols.
- Kern des deutschen Kirchengesangs von Dr. Fridrich Layriz. Noerdlingen, 1854. 4 vols.
- Die Melodien des deutschen Evangelischen Kirchengesangbücher. Stuttgart, 1854.
- Johann Scheffler's (Angelus Silesius) Sämmtliche poetische Werke. G. J. Manz, Regensburg, 1862.
- The Chorale Book for England. By W. S. Bennett and Otto Goldschmidt. Longmans, London, 1863.
- Medieval Hymns and Sequences. John Mason Neale. 2nd edn. Masters, London, mdccclxiii.
- Das deutsche Kirchenlied von der ältesten Zeit bis zu Anfang des xvii Jahr hunderts. von Philipp Wackernagel. Leipzig, 1864. 5 vols.
- Choral Kunde. G. Dörings. Danzig, 1865.
- Evangelischer Liederschatz. von M. Albert Knapp. Stuttgart, 1865. (Said to contain 3130 German Hymns.)
- Geistliche Volkslieder aus alter und neuerer Zeit mit ihren Singweisen. Friderich Hommel. Leipzig, 1871.
- Clément Marot et Le Psautier Huguenot. O. Douen. À l'imprimerie nationale. Paris, 1878. 2 vols.
- Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Sir George Grove. Macmillan, 1879. See Revised Edition, by J. A. Fuller Maitland.
- Hauschoralbuch. Alte und neue Choralgesänge. Gütersloh, 1887. C. Bertelsmann.
- Die Melodien der deutschen evangelischen Kirchenlieder. Johann Zahn. Gütersloh, 1889. 6 vols. (containing 8806 Choräle, with much information).
- Hymns from the German. Translated by Frances Elizabeth Cox. S.P.C.K., London, 1890.
- Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi. By G. M. Dreves, S.J. O. R. Reisland, Leipzig, 1892. (Many volumes already in print.)
- A Dictionary of Hymnology. By John Julian. John Murray, London, 1892.
- Kleines Kirchenmusikalisches Handbuch. Ambrosius Kienle, O.S.B. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1893.
- Paul Gerhardt's Geistliche Lieder (131). P. Reclam, Jun., Leipzig.
- Magnificat. Katholisches Gebet- und Gesangbuch für die Erz-diöcese Freiburg. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1896.
- Yattendon Hymns. Robert Bridges. Oxford University Press, 1895—1899. (In 4 parts.)
- The Cowley Carol Book. G. R. Woodward. Mowbray, London, 1902.
- Songs of Syon. G. R. Woodward. Schott, London, 1904.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am sure you will all wish to join me in thanking Mr. Woodward for the very interesting and instructive paper he has read, not forgetting the small but excellent choir he has brought with him. In the presence of so many church musicians it does not become me to say much. What I know about the subject I have picked up from a long course of church-going. It appears to me that the mass of hymns is so enormous that few of us can give the necessary time to studying them. Many of us will know Dr. Julian's "Dictionary of Hymnology"; the index of that collection is a vast work. In an unguarded moment I began to take in a book of sequences by a member of the Society of Jesus, M. Drèves. The book has been going on for I do not know how many years; I think I possess about forty-seven or fifty volumes, and it shows no signs of coming to an end. Then there are Baumker and Winterfeld and many other writers of German hymnody who have made enormous collections. There is one point I should like to note, and that is, these hymns are not confined to the Protestant Church in Germany. If you go into a Roman Catholic church you may frequently hear the people singing with great delight what I suppose are the very same hymns.

Sir FREDERICK BRIDGE.—I was attracted to this lecture because of the great importance that I attach to this question, and also because it has fallen to my lot in the last year or two to have to do with a very large hymn-book for the Wesleyan Methodists. I have had occasion therefore to consider many of these points, and to know many of the difficulties that beset editors when they try to get at the real original form of some of these tunes. Therefore I think the Paper is one of extreme value, not only very interesting to listen to, but with the effect enhanced by the admirable way in which these illustrations have been sung. You do not hear that sort of thing in an ordinary church. You have to face all these points; but there is no doubt that the question of hymnology ought to be most carefully considered. Of course it is a question that has been talked about, and much has been done. Quite lately a great effort has been made in connection with that great hymn-book, almost the authorised hymn-book of our Church—"Hymns Ancient and Modern." An effort has been made by men of learning and instruction in the matter to put before the English Church what they consider the ideal, with the result that nobody will buy the new edition. I do not say whether this neglect is deserved or not. I had nothing to do with the revision—fortunately for me. I am sure the revisers were actuated by the best

intentions, but the task was a very difficult one. If the people love a tune, we cannot insist on their giving it up. We are in a somewhat different position in these days from that of old times. Then the psalmody was to many people the only opportunity for musical performance. There was not the attraction of other kinds of music outside the church to compete with this; so they had to learn it, or else there was very little for them. In the Abbey or St. Paul's when a fine old tune is selected, I am sure it is a delight to hear the people give tongue to it. Where we so often fail is in the indecent haste with which the hymns are sung, and sometimes too much refinement on the part of the choir with the idea of stopping the people from singing. I always enjoy playing a tune; and I believe the organist has it in his power to incite the people to sing, or even to make them sing softly—I know I can do it to a certain extent, if I can get hold of a good tune, and particularly if I can get hold of a good hymn. Unfortunately, composers had to set tunes to hymns in which no two verses agreed. You cannot make the same music fit them. We are surrounded by difficulties of this sort. I do not think that with the march of modern music, and people accustomed to something more than diatonic harmonies, you will ever get the people to swallow these old diatonic tunes and nothing else. You must give way a little to their love of modern tonality. I am not sure they will always stand finishing a tune with the third. But it is a great relief to mix a little of these old things with the modern. I can only say I have been much edified by the Paper, and I shall, I am sure, hope to read it in the Proceedings of this Association. It will be extremely valuable for reference, and I daresay it will guide many of us in the right direction.

Mr. R. R. TERRY.—I do not know whether I am rising rather late, but after the distinguished speaker who has just sat down it would not become me to say much. Not long ago we had to consider the question whether clergymen should criticise the Bible, and now it seems to be the question whether musicians should criticise hymn-books. Some people seem to think they are the last who should be allowed to have a voice in the matter. There are one or two points I have noted. It seems to me that the superiority of the ancient tunes rests on one or two main grounds. First of all, as the hymn is to be sung by a congregation, you must allow for the fact that the congregation is liable to drag or hurry according to the temperature or the weather. As a rule there is a dead stop at the end of the third line. The Angels' Song, by Orlando Gibbons, as it appears in the hymn-book is in triple time. The original will, I think, be found in Sir Frederick Ouseley's volume of Gibbons' works, and there

you find a distinct pause, just as we find in the tunes in the German books. That gives the organist an opportunity to start again with the congregation. If there are, perhaps, three chords accompanying the last syllable, the congregation get behind, and cannot join fairly in the next line. The next point is one which I have learnt to appreciate very much more since we have had plain-song accompanied every day. In a modern piece of music we find the tendency of the singer is to look at his notes first and to let the words follow as they can. The average choirman reads the notes first, and if he can get the words in so much the better, but they come second. I think you will find in the ancient tune the words lead and the tune follows them. There I think we have another strong point in favour of the old tunes, and one which it has always appeared to me makes for their general popularity wherever they are used and sung intelligently. The third thing seems to me that by these rests the phrases are made shorter than we often have them in a modern tune of to-day, and the consequence is that the phrases are easily memorised and intelligently sung when the time comes. There was one point that I think the Chairman mentioned with regard to the unison singing in the Catholic churches of Germany, and he concluded the tunes of the one division of the church were much the same as those of the other. I think in that respect he is perfectly right. I rather take a pleasure in looking into old-fashioned churches outside the ordinary tourist routes. One often finds there books of modern tunes, written apparently by the organist, containing some very old material. I am speaking of the Catholic churches.

Mr. FULLER MAITLAND.—I can only add my testimony to the great pleasure I have felt in listening to the lecture and the chorales. I quite agree with the feeling that these freer rhythms make for extreme beauty, even though they may be impossible for a modern congregation. I do not know how they can be introduced into practical worship-music, as these rhythms correspond to no regular scheme as we understand it now; and yet this is one of the great beauties of the old chorales. I suppose the ordinary hymn-book maker could hardly refrain from cutting them up into lengths in the regrettable fashion with which we are now familiar. It would be interesting to see if any compromise could be made, such as to have some verses with the original rhythm and some with the adapted rhythm; but even this could be managed only by much pre-arrangement. You will remember the Old Hundredth tune, which we are now accustomed to hear with notes of different lengths. You will notice that when the version is used with notes of equal length some of the people will show a tendency to delay on what should be the longer

notes. We may hope improvements of this kind may be made generally.

Mr. W. H. THELWALL.—I think we have had a sort of undercurrent of comparison between the German chorale and the modern English hymn-tune. I do not think they are altogether comparable. In the days of my youth I used generally to go on Sunday morning to the Temple Church and in the evening to St. Sepulchre's. At the Temple Church they always had one, at least, of the fine old English Psalm-tunes, which are very different from the modern English hymn-tunes. At St. Sepulchre's they used Mercer's collection, which consisted very largely of German chorales. My impression is that the old English psalm-tune was very much the finer. I do not know whether musicians will agree with me; but certainly, in my opinion, the old English Psalm-tunes were far grander than the dull, dry chorales which they generally played at St. Sepulchre's. I do not say there are no exceptions; many of them are admirable; but many of them have well been committed to oblivion.

The Rev. G. R. WOODWARD.—The reason why the last speaker found the German chorales so dull is that the editors had destroyed the old rhythm; the German chorale had not a fair chance. If you will see how they are hacked into shape in that collection, I think you will admit that that is the reason. I have only to say I came here in great fear and trembling, and I have to thank the audience for their very kind patience and indulgence. I am very grateful indeed to the choir, who have had only a week to practise; but they have acquitted themselves, I consider, most honourably, and I thank them one and all.
