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Musical Forms in the Chrisitian Church from Apostolic Times to the Gregorian Age

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MUSICAL FORMS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

FROM

APOSTOLIC TIMES TO THE GREGORIAN AGE.

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of

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IN MEMORIAM

Walter H. Kipp, Jr.

August 17, 1913 - April 1, 1937.

Christian, student, soldier.

Departed from this life in the service of his God and country.

Modern ecclesiastical as well as secular music has as its humble but important basis the music of the early Christian era traced through the Middle Ages. Throughout this time there are two influences which have guided the development of music in general. The one is the folk song - the music of the people which was sung by the wandering minstrels. The other is the music of the church itself which was assembled and written by the clergy, for the most part monks. However, it is the latter that bears more weight and significance, for it was the church that made most progress in the development of music. There is nothing strange in this fact if we remember that in the Middle Ages all education and culture were under the guidance and dictates of the Church. These two types, the chant of the Church and the song of the minnesinger, were distinct in style and rhythm until the 12th century, when they began reacting upon each other. (1)

All music, including the music of the Church, really begins with the dawn of the Christian era. (2). This in no way detracts from the importance of Greek and Hebrew influences which were keenly felt in the early development of Church music. Yet the Christians of the first century had to begin a new development in music. This is due in part to the inadequacy of Hebrew music which was not developed or advanced to any great degree; Greek music, though more developed was also inadequate because of its

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1. Outline of Music History - Hamilton - p. 28.

tendency toward the lewd and sensual. (1)

Although Christianity was directly opposed in doctrine and life to much of the philosophy that surrounded it, nevertheless it absorbed much of the culture and learning of the Romans, Greeks, and Jews, but chiefly the Greeks. (2). It was only natural for the Jewish Christians to continue using the Hebrew chants which they had formerly used in their synagogues, but with the ever increasing number of Gentile converts entering the Church this practice became more and more difficult to maintain. As the flow of Gentile converts increased the flow of pagan music likewise increased in the church - and this pagan music was for the most part Greek in style and origin. (3). Thus we find that the early Christians soon adopted the Greek song method - the Lyrodes, or songs with the lyre. (4).

The Lyrodes were popular and attractive to the people of that age. So attractive in fact, that we are not surprised when, later on, the heretic Arius, it is said, used the songs of a notorious Ionian poet, Sotades, in order to attract the people to himself and his cause and in order to combat this, the bishops of his day wrote hymns in Syriac to the same melodies composed by Sotades. (5)

To be sure, the early Christians had a tremendous task in trying to establish a song method for their cul-

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1. Fillmore - op. cit. - p. 10.
2. The Art of Music - Vol. 1 - Nat. Mus. Society - p. 128
3. The History of Music - Pratt - p. 64.
4. The Story of Notation - Williams - p. 42.
5. Ibid. - p. 42

tus, especially when we consider the fact that the ranks of the early believers contained a great mass of the humble and uncultured - many poor freed men and slaves. With many of these music and art was an indifferent matter. Another matter that retarded the musical development of the early church was the fact that their services had to be kept as secret and as quiet as possible for fear of detection and persecution. (1). But the greatest hindrance of them all was the continued presence of an element in the Church which viewed music with the utmost abhorrence and suspicion. As late as the fourth century there are found records of monks who urged their people "that they should approach God with sighs and tears, with reverence and humility, and not with song." (2). Thus if any acceptable form of music existed in the early church, the fear of persecution led the Christians to cover up their tracks so well that the earliest records of music at this period are very meagre. (3).

Since the Hebrew influence is more closely related to Christianity it is quite right that it be considered first. Doubtlessly the first bit of hymnody in the Church must have been the Psalms, for St. Paul has numerous references in his writings with respect to the singing of the Psalms or related devotional songs. (4). That it was not confined to Psalms alone we learn from his statements in Eph. 5,

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1. Nat. Mus. Soc. - Op. cit. - p. 133-134
2. Pratt - Op. cit. - p. 129.
3. Hamilton - Op. cit. pp. 28-29
4. The Study of the History of Music - E. Dickinson p. 16

19 and in Col. 3, 16 where we find that he urges and encourages the Christians in those congregations to the use of "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." That this may apply to public worship is perhaps best expressed in Edward Dickinson's own words. He says: "To be sure he is not specifically alluding to public worship in these exhortations (in the first instance 'speaking to yourselves' and 'singing and making melody in your hearts,' in the second 'teaching and admonishing one another'), but it is hardly to be supposed that the spiritual exercise of which he speaks would be excluded from the religious services which at that time were of daily observance." (1).

In the passages just mentioned St. Paul uses three distinct terms when he speaks of sacred songs: ψαλμοί, ὕμνοι, and ᾠδαὶ πνευματικαί. This seems to indicate that there were three distinct types of songs in the Apostolic Church: first, the Psalms themselves; second, Old Testament hymns other than the psalms as the song of Moses, the thanksgiving of Hannah, the vision of Habakkuk et al.; and third, original compositions of the early believers. (2)

Just what form these original compositions of the Apostolic Christians took is hard to say, but it can hardly be possible to assume, as Mr. Dickinson does, that they were in the mind of St. Paul when he speaks of the glossalalia or "gift of tongues"*. It is highly improbable that St. Paul was directing his warning against sacred song when he gave definite instructions concerning those that

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1. Music in the History of the Western Church - E. Dickinson - p. 43.
2. Ibid. - pp. 43-44.

A clue to this lack of information may be had in work of Clement of Alexandria. In his second work, a book on the daily life of the Christian, there is appended a hymn, . It is regarded by some as being of earlier origin. Whether it is of earlier origin, or whether it is the work of Clement, makes no difference, for through it we know that there were original compositions from the pens of the early Christians - the so-called "spiritual songs." This hymn begins with the words and is the earliest known Christian hymn, translated by Dr. H. M. Dexter as "Shepherd of tender youth." (1)

Antiphonal psalmody is said to have been introduced into the church by Ignatius of Antioch. According to a legend it is said that he was inspired to this type of singing after having seen angels doing it. (2). But since antiphonal singing was nothing strange to the early Christians, especially the Jewish Christians this is rather doubtful.

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1. A Dictionary of Hymnology - John Julian - p. 239
2. Dickinson - Western Church - op. cit. - p. 48.

would "speak with tongues"; nor are we to regard the true "glossalia" as "broken, incoherent, unintelligible ejaculations, probably in cadenced, half-rhythmic tone, expressive of rapture and mystical illumination." (1). If we are to look for proof of original composition among the Apostolic believers, we are to seek elsewhere and not make blessed St. Paul refer to something which is not even remotely connected with the art of singing.

The Psalms were rendered antiphonally by the Apostolic Christians just as they have been down through the ages even up to the present time. (2). Pliny the Younger makes reference to this practice in one of his letters to the emperor Trajan at a time when he was puzzled as to just how he should deal with the Christians; he says: "they sing to Christ, as to a god, an antiphonal hymn." (3). This practice was merely carrying out and continuing the ancient practice of the Jewish Christians which they had always observed in their synagogues - the singing of simple chants in unison and antiphonally. (4).

Yet these early Christians, burning in their zeal for their faith, could not have been entirely satisfied with the Psalms, inspiring and edifying as they were, for they dealt with the truths of Christianity only in a figurative or prophetic way. Songs with a direct bearing on the life and work of Christ had to be found; and

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1. Dickinson - Western Church - op. cit. p. 44.
2. 3. The History of Music in Twelve Lectures - Wilhelm Langhans - p. 15.
4. Hamilton - op. cit. p. 29.

it is generally supposed that the Christian folk-song of the post-Apostolic period made their appearance now. It is thought by some scholars that fragments of these early hymns are to be found in the writings of Paul and the Revelation of St. John. (1). That is not unlikely when we examine some of the passages suggested. In Ephesians 6, 14 we find a beautiful passage which could very likely have been taken from an early Christian hymn: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Another fine passage is 2 Timothy 2, 11: "For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." A fine possibility also is Revelation 5, 9-13: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof:for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast make us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

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1. Dickinson - Western Church - op. cit. p. 46.

Another possibility is Revelation 15, 3 and 4: "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for thou only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Other passages suggested as being taken from early Christian hymns are: 1 Timothy 3, 16, Revelation 4, 11 and Revelation 11, 15-18.

The method of single word responses now in use both in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Protestant Church can be traced through this period to Hebrew origin. Some of these responses, for example, are the "Amen", the "Hallelujah", and the "Hosanna." With the ancient Hebrews it was customary to interrupt the leader or preacher with these words as a sort of outburst of religious fervor. Now, however, they have been set to music, and occur at regular intervals in the liturgy of the Church. (1).

As to the possible existence of a system of scales at this time, we have no certain knowledge, although Claudius Ptolemy, who lived in the 2nd century, was one of the last to use the Greek system of notation which was rapidly falling into disuse. (2)

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1. A History of Music - Charles Stanford & Cecil Forsyth - p. 91
2. History of Music - W. J. Baltzell - p. 64-65.

Thus from the foregoing we see that the music of the early church was purely vocal. It was spiritual and elevated in character. It differed greatly from the music of the Greeks which was accompanied by stringed instruments, while the early Christians sang "a capella". Of course, too, it must not be forgotten that their music was far more dignified than that of the Greeks.(1). In the chanting of their Psalms too, they also differed from the Jews, who rather spoke than chanted the psalms in somewhat of a wailing tone. Realizing the necessity of preserving order and dignity in the worship already at these early times, the leaders of the church saw the advantage and great need of establishing a set system of tones adaptable to the type of texts in use. Just what they were we are only able to approximate from what we know of the later period and they will be taken up later. (2).

As we reach the post-Apostolic period and the council of Nicea information is somewhat less fragmentary and we are able to get a better idea of the devotional music of the early Christian church. By the time that we reach the Edict of Milan (313 A. D.) the Church was quite solidly established, and there was a great influx of the more wealthy and the more cultured whose patronage was bound to foster a greater appreciation of musical values in the service of worship. But on the other hand with the

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1. The Study of the History of Music - Dickinson - p.26.
2. A History of Music - Vol. III- John F. Rowbotham - p. 95

coming of Constantine the Second and the First Edict of Milan, there came also complete toleration for the Christians, and that presented a grave problem to the music of the Church. Those Gentile converts that came in great numbers brought with them their pagan traditions of worship, art and music. It was impossible to eradicate their tendency toward their former practices; the influence of many years' environment cannot be stamped out over night. It was only natural therefore, that the granting of the imperial edict of toleration made way for many abuses in the worship and music of the Church. These abuses had to be checked and corrected. Out of this necessity for correction came a long line of musical systems which, as the years went by, formed the musical canon of the Western Church. (1).

The influence of the Hebrew cultus on the music of the early Church has already been indicated. It has also been noted that a far greater influence was exerted by Greek art, and since this came through the Eastern or-Byzantine Church, the time will be taken now to examine the weighty contribution of Eastern Christendom.

THE MUSIC OF THE EARLY BYZANTINE CHURCH.

Again in the case of the Eastern Church the early accounts of music are quite meagre and we are forced to be guided by later history in establishing the early methods. This lack of information in no way mitigates the statement just made above in regard to the strong influence which Greek music had on early and Medieval Church Music.

1. Nat. Mus. Soc. - op. cit. - p. 134

This may be maintained for two very definite reasons. In the first place, Greek music was predominant throughout the Roman empire, since the West had adopted the Grecian music theory. This being the case it can hardly be supposed that the Church could exclude itself from this influence. Secondly, the Gregorian Modes, which we shall study later, were not only patterned after the Greek modes, but were also called by their original Greek names (Ionic, Doric, etc.). (1). Of course, these tonal modes were received into the early church in a more popular and simpler form and even at that, the early hymn-tunes must have been handed down by oral tradition since "the Greek musical notation was mainly the property of professional musicians." (2).

The chief contribution of the Greek Church lies in the field of Modes and notation. The musicians and hymnodists made use of four chief modes, ἦχος κύριος, with a plagal mode for each authentic mode, ἦχος πλάγιος, beginning a fifth lower. (3). For the first mode we have the scale: d, e, f, g, a, b, c', d'. Each succeeding mode began a tone higher: 2nd mode: e-e'; 3rd mode: f-f'; 4th mode: g-g'. (4). Melodies based on these modes were often not strictly carried out according to the modes themselves, for in the case of the plagal modes (remembering

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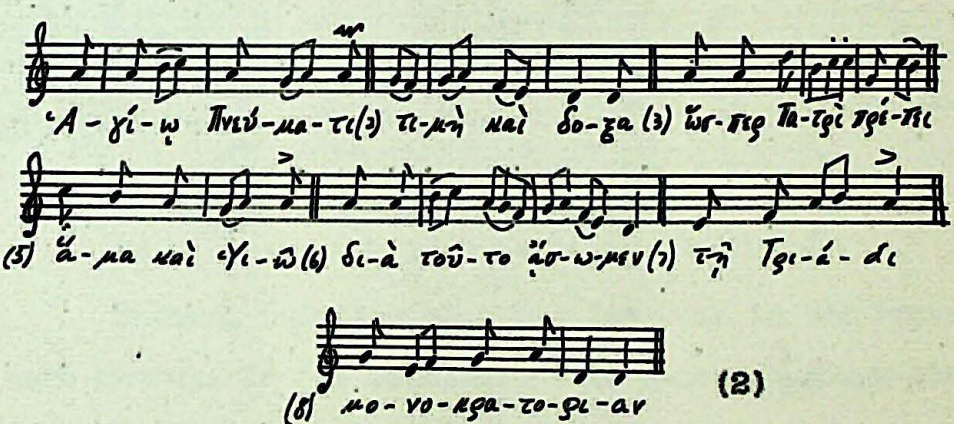
1. Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians - Third Edition - Vol. I - pp. 514-515.
2. Ibid. - p. 514.
3. Stanford and Forsyth - op. cit. p. 91.
4. Grove's Dic. - op. cit. Vol. I. - p. 515.

that they began a fifth lower than their corresponding chief modes) they began too low in range for many singers, and in the case of the authentic modes the higher notes of the scale were too high for the average singer - at any rate this was true of the 3rd and 4th authentic mode. These were then modified or even transposed. (1). Melodies written in any of the authentic modes were not bound too severely by hard and fast rules. The melody could, for instance, go beyond the octave of the scale. Perhaps the only rigid rule observed was with respect to the beginning and end, and the usual procedure was to have the proper Finalis at the middle of the scale and the closing note at the bottom. Thus you will notice that the example now quoted, taken from Mode I, begins at the middle of the scale and ends at the bottom of the scale. You will notice also that there is pretty wide range of melody throughout.



(2)

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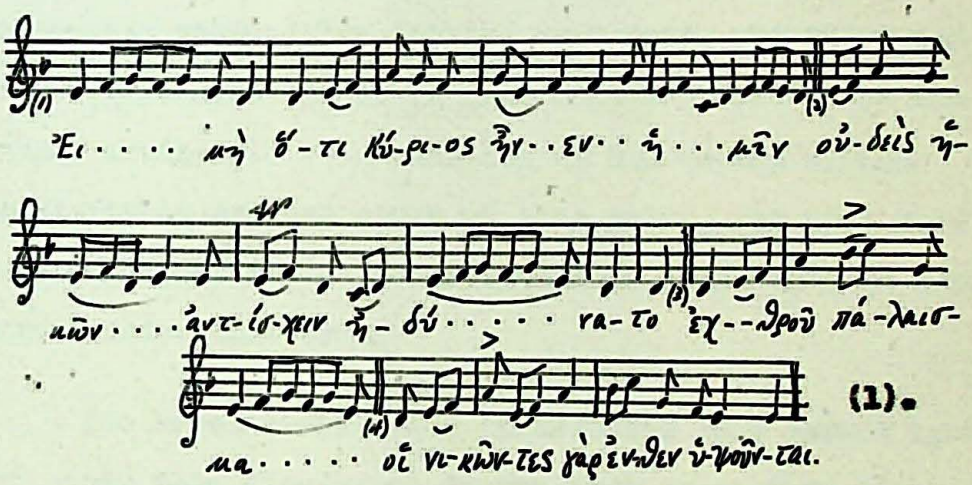
1. Groves Dic. - op. cit. vol. I - p. 515-516.
2. Ibid. - p. 516-517 - a versicle from the Octoechus in the Athos MS. Vatopedi 288 f. 367b.

As a matter of convenience, the lowest note of the octave was quite often used, especially in the case of the third and fourth chief modes in order to avoid frequent high notes.

There is a somewhat different arrangement when we come to the Plagal modes. The central note was usually used as Finalis in the first and second plagal mode (those being d and e), the third used low b-flat (sometimes its middle - f), the fourth used either c or g. The following example of a plagal mode is taken also from the MS. Vatopedi, and you will note according to what has just been said above that the Finalis is e. This is plagal Mode II:



(1).

Musical notation also had its root in the Byzantine Church. In its development it passed through three stages. In the earliest stage, use was made of a system of marks over the words of a text in a sort of rectangular shape. According to Grove's this was "a system of recitation-marks, chiefly applied to lessons from the Gospels, but

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1. Groves Dic. Op. cit. - p. 518, vol. I.

also to other parts of the Bible." (1)(2). These ecphonetic signs can hardly be regarded as being much more than accent marks although some of them unquestionably were used to designate pauses and even some others were used as neumes to designate inflections in the singing voice. (3).

The second class of notation consisted of a mixed system of rectangular and curved neumes similar in character to the western neumes used in the Church by Guido of Arezzo. These neumes were hard to classify since they varied according to the different manuscripts in which they were found. The third class, by the time we come to the Middle Ages was a rival of the second. Its essential difference from the second was in shape - the second system was rectangular for the most part, the third was curved in character. It is generally referred to as the "round notation." (4). Examples of the neumes of the Greek church are not given at this point, for they were more developed in Gregorian notation, which will be discussed under that head.

The Greek church also contributed many devout hymns, but since this discussion is confined to a study of musical forms and notation time cannot be taken to go into any of these hymns.

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1. Stanford & Forsyth - op. cit. - p. 101.
2. Groves Dic. - Vol. I - op. cit. - p. 520.
3. Stanford & Forsyth - op. cit. - p. 101.
4. Grove's Dic. - Vol. I - op. cit. - p. 520.

Before taking leave of the Eastern Church it must be said in summary that, though it has made many fine contributions in the scientific side of the art, its styles had a great tendency toward the oriental with which it had close relationship chiefly from environment. The music of the Orthodox Church down to this very day has that oriental stamp. The real development of modern Church music as we know it to-day actually comes through the Western Church and the Latin Chant. (1).

THE COUNCIL OF LAODICEA. (367 A. D.)

We come now again to the Western Church and examine the events which would help crystalize an adequate musical system for the Church.

There is definite record that Sylvester (314-335) established a school of singing. (2). He, as did Hilary later on, fully realized the need of suitable music for worship - for the service itself, for the various seasons, and the increasing number of Holy Days. The clergy as such had cared but little about these matters; their interests had been confined to defining questions of doctrine and life. It is to the credit of these two men therefore that they were progressive enough to establish schools for the purpose of bettering liturgical music.

Unquestionably much benefit was derived from these schools, but they were also responsible for putting congre-

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1. Hamilton - op. cit. - p. 30.
2. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 12.

gational singing in the background. The establishment of these schools led directly to the abolishment and prohibition of congregational singing, as provided by the decrees of the Council of Laodicea held in 367 A. D. (1).

This transferred most of the singing from the congregation to the clergy and choir. A clear distinction must be made in the parts of the decree of the Council of Laodicea. The decree refers only to that part of the singing which concerns the eucharistic service - the liturgy. Other songs or hymns were sung by the congregation even as they are to-day in the Church of Rome, but only the clerics took part in singing the offices of the mass. After this, there was not much for the people to do in the service. They became silent observers and worshippers, for the most part, entirely ignorant of what was going on. "The participation of the people was eventually confined to brief responses and ejaculations."(2)

Ambrose of Milan (340-397) was one of the most outstanding men of this period who opposed directly the decree of Laodicea. He championed the cause of congregational singing as did perhaps no one else. It has been reported by contemporaries that he very often used hymns for double chorus - for choir and congregation during the service. (3).

There is a tendency among present day music authori-

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1. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 13.
2. Dickinson - Music History - Op. cit. - p. 16.
3. The Story of Music - Bekker, Paul - pp. 30-40.

ties to discredit the work of Ambrose simply because the contemporary records are so confusing that it is difficult at times to piece fragments of information which may be found. Edward Dickinson, for example, discredits the theory that the four authentic scales were established by Ambrose, and he also states that the Antiphonal, which will be discussed presently, was introduced by Celestine I and not by Ambrose.

Contrary to this opinion, some of the best authorities are quite positive in giving Ambrose credit for using and developing the Greek tetrachord (beginning with d, e, f, and g). These he later divided into the various forms of the authentic modes. (1). These modes he used to the exclusion of all others. (2). Actual samples of the chants based on the modes are lacking, but we do know from contemporary sources that the chant of the church of Milan was more highly esteemed than that of the Roman Church and that it was "solemn","extremely sweet", and "metrical". (3)

Chiefly is he known to us however, as the one who introduced antiphonal chanting from the east, and as a hymn writer. (4). We are certain that at least six hymns came from his pen, though the Benedictine Editors have set the number at twelve. These six are: "Deus Creator Omnium," "Aeternæa rerum Conditor," "Veni Redemptor Gentium," "Illuxit Orbi jam Dies," "Bis Ternas Horas Explicans." (5).

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1. Langhans - Op. cit. - p. 20-21.
2. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 13.
3. Langhans - Op. cit. - p. 22.
4. Grove's Dix. - Vol. I - op. cit. - p. 80.
5. Nat. Mus. Soc. - Op. cit. p. 136.

At this time we find a number of writers who occupied themselves in writing hymns and songs to combat heresy. Ambrose belonged to this group and was by far the most outstanding writer. There are four more hymns ascribed to hymn, but there seems to be doubt in the minds of some as to whether he actually wrote them. These are: "O Lux Beata Trinitas," "Aeterna Christi munera," "Splendor Paternae Gloriae", "Hic est Dies Verus Dei." (1). Another noteworthy hymn writer of this group was Prudentius, who, it is claimed, wrote charming little hymn-tunes for home singing. (2).

The hymns of Ambrose were decidedly Greek and Roman in character. They were based on the ancient Dorian/and Ionian or Aeolian modes. Those of the Dorian mode greatly resembled in structure the pagan hymns to Helios and in some parts also resembled the song to the Muses. It is perhaps for this reason that later pontiffs were overzealous in trying to exterminate them. (3). As regards rhythm, they were composed in Iambic Dimeters, found chiefly in the ancient classics. Ambrose is not to be condemned and discredited for the use of such classical patterns, for as late as the 6th century we find that hymnodists introduced meters which were definitely founded upon ancient classical rules. (4). No, it is rather to his credit that he maintained such a progressive attitude in adopting and

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1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 43.
2. Ibid. - p. 50.
3. Nat. Mus. Soc. - Op. cit. - p. 136.
4. Ibid. - p. 137.

adapting the existing forms at his disposal, pagan though they may have been, to a good and profitable use. In this he differed greatly from Gregory who, it is said, fought against pagan art in every form - even to the extent of destroying the Palatine Library. (1).

The Ambrosian influence was keenly felt in northern Italy among the Lombards, who were particularly fond of Ambrose and his music. They were, for the most part, Arian Christians and, later on, greatly hindered the progress of Gregorian music by their tenacity to the Ambrosian forms. They held to these forms even as late as the time of Charlemagne. After his conquest of the Lombards, Charlemagne was commissioned by Hadrian I (772-795), at a synod in Rome attended by all high officials of the Church, to exterminate Ambrosian music by drastic means. Rowbotham quotes a contemporary history on this point which says: " - edoctus itaque Carolus Imperator ut per totam linguam profiscoretur Latinam, et quic-quid diversum in cantu et mysterio divino invenoret a Romano totum deleret." (Landulphi Senioris Mediolanensis Historia II, cap. 10.)(2). Thus the system of Ambrose seems to have been wiped out. There was only one copy of a Missal preserved - it had been concealed by a priest and appeared later in the possession of St. Eugenie.

Before leaving Ambrose it is necessary to call attention to the Antiphony which was probably instituted

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1. Rowbotham - Vol. III. - op. cit. - p. 171
2. Ibid. - p. 156.

in his day. It had originally been sung by the choirs alternately, but as time went on it was restricted to the priest and answered by the choir (as it is to-day in our own service - see German hymnal). St. Benedict explains that the reason for the change was to enable the priest at the altar to give the pitch and melody to the choristers. The Antiphon or Antiphonarium contains the responses, anthems and hymns of constant use during the offices of the canonical hours, while the Gradual contained the various musical parts of the mass, i. e. the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. (1).

The term "Ambrosian" has, for many years, been used very loosely. It is used quite frequently to designate any Latin hymn sung at the Hours. It is also used to designate the hymns generally attributed to his pen. The term was also used to set apart the practices and form of worship of the Church of Milan. Finally, the term also refers to the "Te Deum" which, according to a legend, was originally sung by Ambrose with St. Augustine at the latter's baptism. (2).

In closing we point to Newbotham's statement which very aptly sums up the importance of Ambrose in the field of Church music: "Priority is given to the Ambrosian hymns, not because they are the most influenced

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1. Nat. Mus. Soc. - Op. cit. - p. 148.
2. Grove's Dic. - Vol. I - p. 80.

of the liturgical chant, but because they form the most easily demarcable point of transition from Graeco-Roman music to Christian ecclesiastical music." (1)

THE GREGORIAN AGE.

St. Gregory the Great (530-604).

Of the exact origin of the so-called Gregorian Chant there is nothing definitely known. The earliest manuscripts of these chants date only as far back as the 12th century, but it is quite evident from the correspondence of Paul I (757-767) to Pepin, that the chant existed earlier. The only reliable source that we have on Gregory and the early Gregorian chant is John the Deacon who, perhaps because of zeal and admiration, ascribes to Gregory the collection of liturgical chants and the establishment of regulated modes. Yet, in his own works, Gregory makes no reference at all to the chant, nor does he give any statement that would lead us to believe that he has done anything toward the establishment of modes. (2).

On the contrary, it appears from several sources, though not contemporary, that Gregory was hostile to music. He thought that too much time was taken up by the clergy for music. He urged "that the singers who were priests were not to occupy themselves only with singing which merely delighted the people, while it irritated God; but were to lead a life of edification, to confine the use of their

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1. Nat. Mus. Soc. - Op. cit. - p. 148.
2. Ibid. - p. 145.

voices to the recitation of the Gospel, and to leave the singing to the sub-deacons and inferior clergy." (1). It is uncertain just to what singing this refers. By the term singing Gregory may have had in mind the pagan hymns which were prevalent at that time, but if he had been anxious to do away with this type of singing, he would have gone further and would have forbidden even the lower clergy to use these hymns. Dickinson shares the opinion of Gaevert in claiming that Gregory assumed an attitude of hostility to all music. Viewing this attitude they come to the conclusion that "the tradition that makes St. Gregory the legislator of the liturgic chant and the compiler of the melodies of the Antiphonarium has no historic basis." They are of the opinion that this great work of assemblage is to be accredited properly to the Hellenic popes who lived during the 7th and 8th centuries. (2). Waldo Selden Pratt shares a modified form of this opinion too. He declares that it is the opinion of many scholars that the practical completion of the system attributed to Gregory came no earlier than the 8th century, perhaps under Gregory II or Gregory III and that the name "Gregory" either came from them or was the result of the mistaken zeal of those who wanted to glorify Gregory I. (3)

If Gregory has done anything at all for the advancement of Church music (and since the whole system bears

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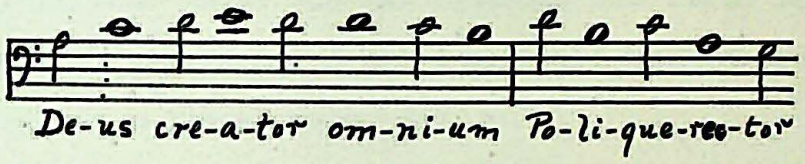
1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 45.
2. Dickinson - Mus. History - Op. cit. - p. 25.
3. Pratt - op. cit. - p. 65.

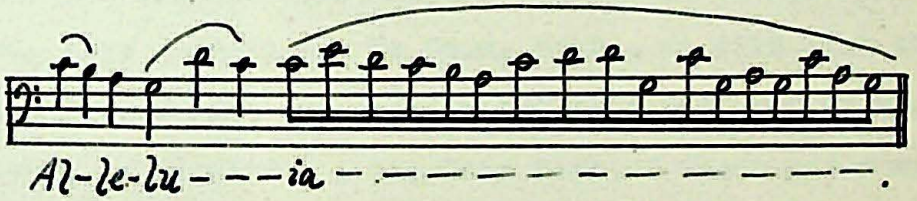
his name, we may suppose that he did), he did it for the sole purpose of unifying the Church. Of what better service could music serve in a period of confusion and darkness? It was necessary for prescribed forms to be established in order to celebrate the mass and other services with intelligence. (1).

The Gregorian chant, according to Gaevert, developed in two epochs and he adds that the entirety of Gregorian music was composed between 425 and 700 A. D. The first epoch was that of the simple or syllabic chant. This chant makes use of one note to each syllable of a word as follows:



(2).

The second period is the period of the Florid Chant which began, again according to Gaevert, about 555 A. D. during the supremacy of the Byzantine emperors of the Roman empire. This style, you will note from the following example, was arranged in such a way that important syllables were given extravagant melodies or were held:



(3)

1. Bekker - Op. cit. - p. 50-55.
2. Syllabic Style - Aeolian Mode - Hamilton op. cit. p. 51
3. Florid Style - Alleluia - Ibid.

The scales upon which the Gregorian chant is based are known as the Gregorian Modes. Originally there were only four such modes, taken from the ancient Greek scales. They were: the Dorian, the Phrygian, the Lydian, and the mixo-Lydian modes - the authentic modes. In addition to these authentic modes, in order to give them greater compass, were devised also the plagal modes. They were intoned each one fifth below the corresponding authentic mode, and each was named likewise from its authentic mode by prefixing the word "hypo" to the name of the authentic mode. For example, the mode with the scale D E F G A B C D is known as the Dorian Mode and is an authentic mode while the one starting one fifth lower, having the scale A B C D E F G A, is the hypo-Dorian Mode and is a plagal mode. (1)

It is to be noted too, that these various modes had another function besides giving greater compass for melodies. Each mode expressed a definite emotion. For example, the Dorian mode was grave and the hypo-Dorian mode was mournful; hence both were used in the Dies Irae in the Requiem Mass. On the other hand, the Phrygian mode was exultant and the hypo-Phrygian mode was harmonious; hence both were used in the Te Deum. Again, we find that the mixo-Lydian mode was angelic and thus was used in the Gloria in Excelsis. A complete list of these modes with their various emotions would read as follows:

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1. Hamilton - Op. cit. - pp. 31-32.

Dorian - grave.

hypo-Dorian - mournful.

Phrygian - exulting.

hypo-Phrygian - harmonious.

Lydian - gladdening.

hypo-Lydian - devout.

Mixo-Lydian - angelic.

hypo-Mixo-Lydian - sweet. (1).

It can be seen that these various modes in their very tonality would tend to give a particular effect. The pitches varied in accordance to the demand of a particular text, so that the natural effect produced by the voice would give the emotion desired. (2).

These Gregorian Modes are still the basis for all liturgical music in the Roman Church. (3). This is due in part to the effort of some recent popes in urging that a closer adherence to the modes be maintained. (4).

It is important at this point to note the difference between chanting and measured music. The designation "Plain-Song", often applied to Gregorian music, emphasizes its lack of fixed rhythm in contrast with measured music or counter-point. (5). The Gregorian or plain-chant is in no way sung according to our modern measured music, i. e. it does not have set tempi such as 4/4, 3/4, etc., but its tempo is entirely dependent upon the

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1. Hamilton - Op. cit. - p. 33.
2. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - Vol. III - pp. 134-136.
3. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 14.
4. Pius IX, Leo XII, and Pius X all issued encyclicals urging the use of the Gregorian chant to the exclusion of all other ritual music.
5. Pratt - Op. cit. - p. 66

words of the text.

The greatness of the chant lies in the fact that it takes into consideration what all language does that is, quantity and accent. Observance of these two factors is the basis of all true chanting as they are of good poetry. Investigation has shown that the principle of ancient poetry was the use of quantity in its verse, while modern poetry makes the use of accent. The tendency at the time of Gregory was to go from the old to the new type. Thus it was necessary for a definite system of quantity and accent to be formulated for the Latin psalms. Stanford calls this new type of rhythmic articulation "a sort of free recitative." It was arranged in such a manner that unimportant syllables were intoned on the same note, while the important syllables experienced a change in tone - higher or lower as the importance of the text indicated. (1)

By the time the 12th century was reached many had departed from the set Gregorian modes. This innovation was started, it is believed, by a Carthusian monk by the name of Denis Lewis of Liege. His melodies often exceeded an octave and he also introduced accidentals (sharps and flats) for the purpose of raising or lowering the tones. This too had its effect on the later Gregorian melodies. (2).

The distinct merit and beauty of the Gregorian chant may best be exhibited in comparing it with other

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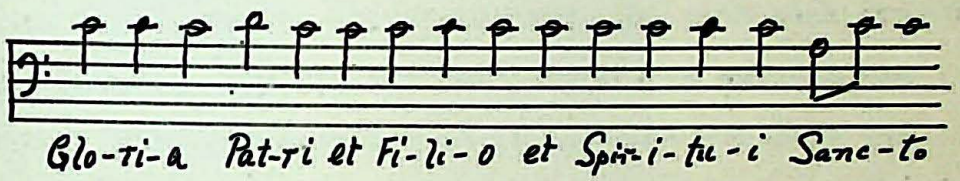
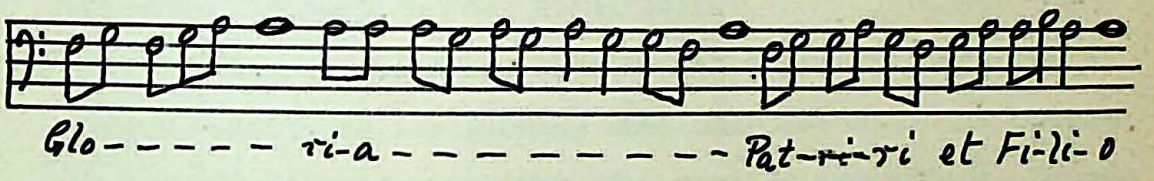
1. Stanford & Forsyth - Op. cit. - pp. 81-82.
2. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 75.

existing chants of the age, particularly the Gallican chant. In the early Christian era, long before the Gregorian Antiphonary came into being, and long after it had been firmly established in other parts of the world, the French Church used an ugly system of recitations on monotones for their liturgy. It was known as the Gallican Liturgy and greatly resembled the music used in the Spanish Church, the Mosarabic or Gothic Liturgy. The following two examples will serve to show the striking contrast. The first is from the Gallical Liturgy and the second is taken from the Gregorian Antiphonarium. Note particularly the beautiful flowing melody of the second.





(1).

St. Augustine of Canterbury, while passing through France on his way to England, had tried to establish the liturgy of Gregory in that country, but his efforts proved fruitless because he could not remain in France long enough

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1. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - p. 266.

to guide it. He continued his journey and went to England to work among the Angles in compliance with Gregory's commission. It is said that he entered the city of King Ethelbert and made use of the Gregorian Antiphonary, chanting while he and his followers were marching. The story goes on to say that the people were so awed by their strange music and beautiful vestments that the king had them established in Canterbury - away from the capital. (1).

Charlemagne, seeing the inadequacy and uninspiring quality of the Gallican chant asked Hadrian I to send teachers to France to instruct the clergy in the Gregorian chant. At first this pope sent incompetent teachers who disagreed and left matters more confused, but later, upon Charlemagne's second request, the pope sent Theodore and Benmet, possibly the best singers in Rome at the time. They were established at Soissons and Metz and all clergy and singers were commanded by the emperor to receive instruction from them. (2).

These two teachers also taught organ playing. The organ, though in its infancy when compared with the modern organ, was already somewhat of a complicated affair. Organs had been in use already during the time of the pagan Nero. Its origin is said to have been the bag-pipe and the Pan's pipe and at the time of Nero were hydraulically operated. According to John the Deacon, the organ was first used in the Church under Vitalian (657-672). When more developed,

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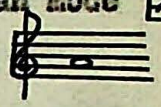
1. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - p. 252
2. Ibid. - p. 259.

the organ had fifteen pipes so as to conform with the extremes in pitch of the Gregorian modes. There were others, which varied in the number of pipes, having as few as eight, but generally never more than fifteen. (1)(2). The extremes in the pitches of the Gregorian modes to which the lowest and highest pipes of the fifteen pipe organ were made to conform were the lowest note of the hypo-Dorian mode  and the highest note of the Mixo-Lydian mode: 

For the most part these organs were built by monks. By the time of the 10th century, we find that organs had reached considerable sizes such as the one in Winchester, consisting of 400 pipes, two keyboards, thus requiring two players. (3).

For the purpose of spreading the set and organized forms of the liturgical chants, it is said that Gregory had sent two song missionaries to all parts of the northern Christian world. Langhans declares that the lists of songs they were to teach were prepared by Gregory himself. The two musicians supposedly sent by Gregory were Petrus and Romanus. (4).

The advent of the organ into the service of the church was one of the chief factors that caused the development of notation in the church, and this shall form the next section of this discussion.

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1. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - Vol. III - p. 263.
2. Nat. Mus. Soc. - op. cit. - p. 157.
3. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - p. 259.
4. Langhans - Op. cit. - p. 24.

Development of Notation.

It has been seen that one of the Greek systems of notation was a letter system which was likewise adopted in the early Western Church. The method itself had been used by the ancient Greeks to designate the several strings of the lyre. There was nothing elaborate about it - the letters were simply written over the words of the text. The first ten letters of the Greek alphabet were used and were repeated after each tetrachord. It will be noted that this system bore some similarity to our own letter notation, with the exception that we repeat the letters at the beginning of each octave. (1).

Teachers of the Gregorian chant also made use of the Greek accents in developing notation. The accents used were exactly the same ones employed to indicate the stress in Greek reading, but in music they had a different connotation:

The acute (´) indicated a rise in voice.

The grave (`) indicated a fall in voice.

The circumflex (^) indicated a fall on a single syllable.

These accents had really nothing to do with the melody or tune, but were properly expression marks somewhat as we use the signs "f" for forte, "mf" for mezzo-forte, etc., and might properly be termed "memoriae technici." (2).

Somewhat later on a different system of expression signs were devised by Romanus, a monk at St. Gall, (probably

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1. Williams - Op. cit. - pp. 50-51.
2. Ibid. - p. 52.

the same man mentioned before as one of those two singing teachers sent out by Gregory). These expression marks were abbreviated and were used as follows:

l - levatur - higher.

is - issum - lower

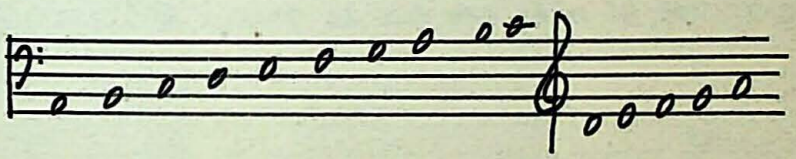
c - celeriter - quickly

b. t. - bene tene - the modern tenuto. (1).

The Neumes:

The system of notation that proved to be most satisfactory, however, is the system known as the Neumes, from which our present notes and staff were developed. Before taking it up in detail further examination of other systems will be useful.

One of the methods of music writing that preceded the Neumes was that invented by Boethius a Roman philosopher. His notation was used extensively in the church and was also a letter system. As the following example shows, it made use of the first 15 letters of the Latin alphabet and hence was an adaptation of the earlier Greek system.



A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P (2)

This method, devised by Boethius, was superseded during the time of Gregory the Great by a system which is

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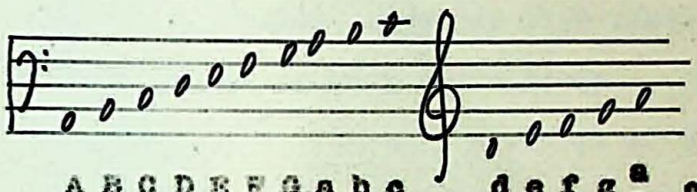
1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 56.
2. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 64 (Solution, of course, is given in modern notation.)

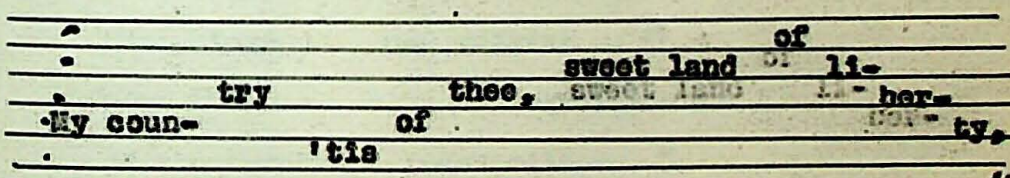
more akin to ours. Whose work it was we do not know, although many have credited Gregory himself with its invention. It differed from the scale notation of Boethus in that it made use only of the first seven letters of the Latin alphabet. Note that for the lowest octave capital letters were used, then for the next octave small letters and double letters for the third octave.



A B C D E F G a b c d e f g $\frac{a}{a}$ etc. (1)

It is generally supposed now that this system of letter writing was used by Guido d'Arezzo, the Benedictine monk whose great work in the science of music will be shown presently. This seems to discredit the zealous claims of many that it was the work of Gregory. (2).

Another quaint way of writing music in this age, was that of writing the syllables between a series of parallel lines, each parallel designating a different pitch. Were the system in use now this is how it might appear:



(3).

1. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 65
2. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 62
3. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 66

By the time of the 8th Century we find that all these systems were displaced by the Neumes, which were placed over the words of a text to indicate the trend of the melody. They bear some similarity to the Greek round notation referred to some time back, chiefly in as much as they were used for the same purpose and were placed over the words. (1).

The common Neumes, together with their respective names and designations were as follows:

The Virga / Rising inflection of the voice.

The Punctum \ Downward inflection of the voice.

The Podatus ✓ Down, then up.

The Clivis ⌒ Up, then down.

The Torculus ✓↑ Down, up, down.

The Porrectus ⩘ Up, down, up.

The Scandicus =/ Up three tones.

The Climacus /= Down three tones. (2).

They were written in various forms differeing somewhat from those just indicated. They went through a series of developments during the Middle Ages until they were more fully developed for use on the staff, assuming a square form as follows:

The Virga / was written ▪

The Punctum \ was written ■

The Podatus ✓ was written ▪▪

etc., etc. (3).

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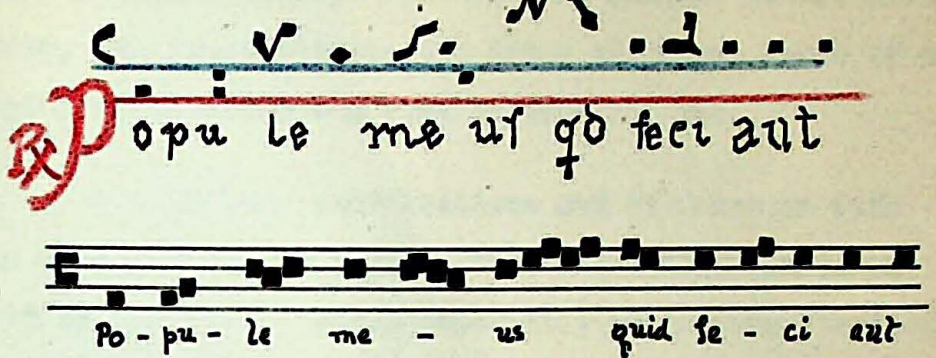
1. Hamilton - Op. cit. - p. 33.
2. Ibid. - p. 37.
3. Ibid. - p. 34

The following is an example of the Neume notation of perhaps the 11th century with the solution given immediately below.(1)



In addition to the Neumes or Neuma as they should be called, there is found also an accent called Pneuma, which should not be confused with the Neuma since it is entirely different. In earlier music it was used as a breathing sign, and it found its way into the notation of the Neumes with a different significance - "in neumatic notation the pneuma means a long florid passage, sung on one syllable, or even with no syllable at all; an outcome of religious fervor so intense that it could no longer express itself by words, but by melody alone." (2). Thus the "ite missa est" of many of the masses might be considered as making use of the Pneuma; it is perhaps the most florid passage in the entire eucharist.

Together with the neumes mentioned above, the following signs were also used - all of them indicated repeated sounds:

The Apostropha ’

The Distropha ’’

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1. The History of Music - Emil Nauman - Vol. I p. 200.
2. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 54.

The Tristropha ??? (1).

The Strophicus, Oriscus, and Pressus were similar to the three just mentioned. The quilisma, similar to the modern shake, was found between the lower and upper tones of a rising minor third - a type of tremolo. (2).

We find many modifications and differences with the neumatic system itself. This makes it quite difficult to read them today, especially as regards starting pitch. For example, some writers used a sign called the Epiphonus, which was nothing more than a shortened Podatus; likewise the Cephalicus was a shortened Clivis. The two signs together were called "liquescents". Again the Virga or Podatus was often written with a rounded stem and was called a "pes Cormutus". These different names in themselves would create no difficulty. The difficulty lies in going from one manuscript to the other and finding almost as many varied forms of the neumes as there were writers. (3)

To be sure, there were too many "loop-holes" in the neumes. They did not actually give the melody of a chant, but were merely guides to one who had previously learned the tunes by ear. The function of the neumes was to serve merely as an indication of a rise or fall in pitch, but no

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1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 60
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

indication of the starting pitch could be given through them. Stanford has stated the function of the neumes by a very fine analogy: "The Neumes are difficult to read. Unless we have the early church-transcriptions before us to act as a guide, they are often quite unintelligible. . . . A modern chorus singer might reconstitute these conditions for himself if, before an oratorio performance, he found that programme-books were to be substituted for vocal-scores and that he had an hour or two in which to make a dot and dash mnemonic in his copy." (1).

Rowbotham, on the other hand, feels that it was not a loss that the pitch in the Neumes was not indicated, for it may have resulted in the spreading of the chant by word of mouth. The fact that no such pitch indications were given led to a more careful instruction on the part of those sent out by the Church. (2).

The inadequacy of the neumes was soon recognized by the writers of that day, and it was not long before they began to use various lines upon which to place the neumes. The lines were of various colors and, once placed on them, the neumes began to assume a square shape. A red line, for example, was used to indicate that the initial pitch was F; likewise a yellow or a green line was used to indicate that the initial pitch was C. (3). In addition to this, they very often placed a letter at the beginning of

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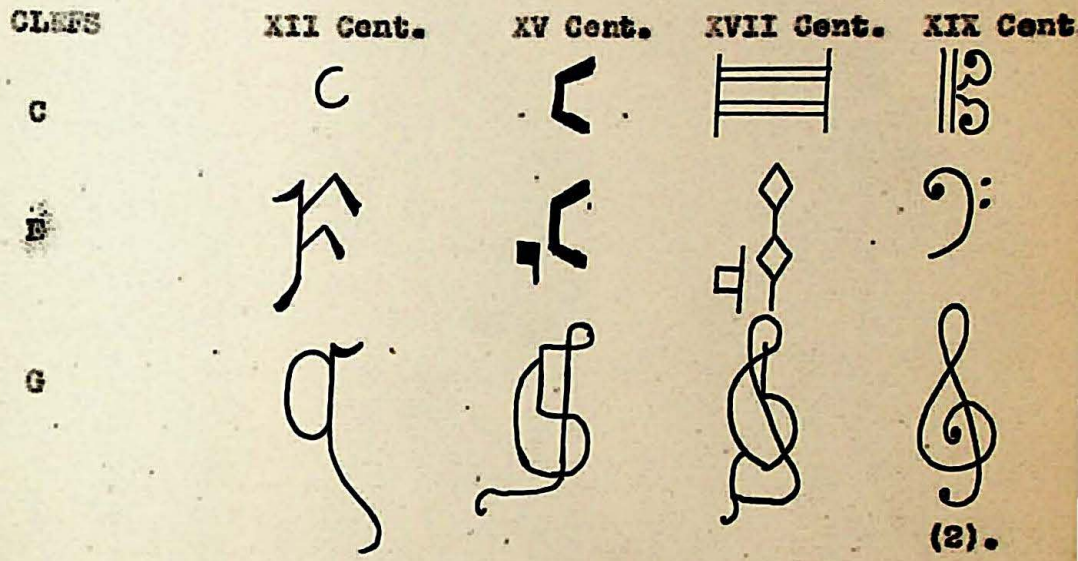
1. Stanford & Forsyth - Op. cit. - p. 102.
2. Rowbotham - Op. cit. - p. 251 Vol. III.
3. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 66.

the line to indicate the starting pitch. These letters developed into the clefs which are now in use. It is most interesting to trace the various steps through which our modern clefs passed - from simple letters originally placed at the beginning of a chant to indicate the starting pitch to the present elaborately designed symbols placed on the staff. (1).



(2).

Guido d'Arezzo (c. 990).

Without a doubt the greatest musician of the Gregorian age was Guido d'Arezzo, a Benedictine monk. He had many jealous enemies because of his zeal for the cause of pure music in the church. They eventually caused his banishment from the monastery. Williams attributes the spread of his wonderful system, particularly in notation, to the fact that he was driven from his monastery

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1. Hamilton - Op. cit. - p. 34.
2. Ibid. - p. 38.

and was forced to wander from place to place. He was "an ardent reformer, a man of great genius, and a good fighter in the causes that he had at heart." (1). Before his banishment, he did his work at the monastery of Pomposa in Ravena. His banishment was the result, in part, of the scathing criticism he used in trying to bring about a reform in the music of the church. While his contemporaries were held in high regard in the church, Guido himself regarded them with contempt for their ignorance in the subject matter of music and for their inability to distinguish the pitch of tones. In his critical works on contemporary music, Guido is bitter against the methods employed. Williams quotes him as saying: "It often sounds during the Mass, not as if we were singing the praises of God, but as if we were quarelling among ourselves. . . . . The way of the philosophers is not my way; I concern myself only with what is useful to the Church and can bring our youngsters on." (2).

For the purpose of teaching singers proper articulation and tone production as well as breathing, Guido made use of a system of sound exercises much like those which we use to-day. This, of course, was not anything exacly new at his time, since Greek syllables had been used for singing exercises in Rome during the period of the Empire. The syllables τω, τα, τε, τη, were used

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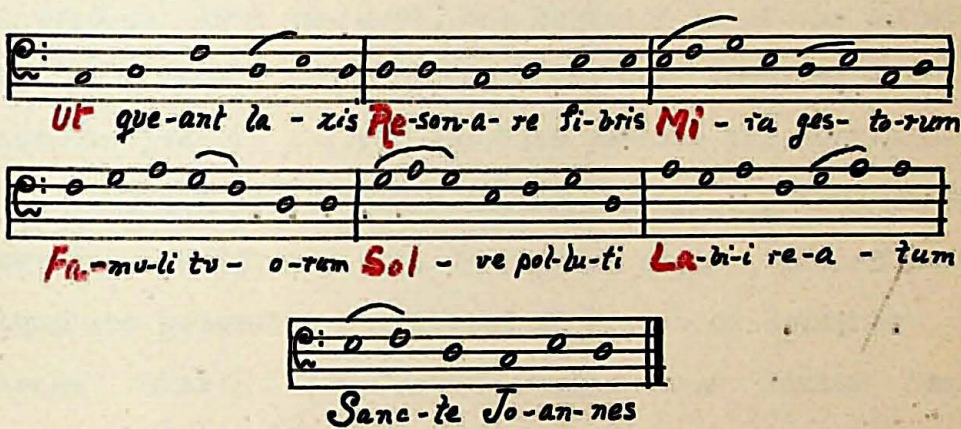
1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 60
2. Ibid. - pp. 73-75.

in various exercises - scales, arpeggios, etc. (1).

Another crowning achievement of Guido was his invention of the modern solmisteation system by which the notes of the hexachord are named with syllables. These syllables are still used in the European method of teaching solfeggio, chiefly in Italy. He adopted these syllables from the first stanza of an old Latin hymn to St. John the Baptist when he noticed that each line began with the succeeding pitches of the hexachord starting with C and ending on A. The following statement will at once make it clear:



(2).

Another noteworthy contribution which Guido made to the music student is known as the Guidonian Hand. He aided musicians in distinguishing each syllable of the Hexachord by having each joint of the fingers represent a certain syllable of the hexachord. (3).

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1. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 78.
2. Naumann - Op. cit. - p. 210 - Vol. I.
3. Hamilton - Op. cit. - p. 35.

But while Guido's contributions had aided in forming the proper guide for fixing pitches, it was still necessary for a system to be developed whereby the duration of tones could be determined. (1). The method employed bears a little resemblance to our own holds and fermatas, but there were as yet no such tempi as 4/4, 3/4, 6/8, etc., whereby the music student could laboriously stamp his foot on the floor and count his rhythm aloud. The duration of a tone was dependent entirely upon the text.

It is believed that a system to indicate the duration of tones was introduced and invented by Franco of Cologne (12th century), but Saltzell is of the opinion that both he and Guido d'Arezzo are only named as representatives of their respective periods and even hints that each did not actually invent the systems with which they are accredited. (2). Be that as it may, the following signs are generally attributed to Franco of Cologne:

Longa Brevis Semibrevis Duplex Longa or Maxima Minima Semi-minima

(3).

This list is not given exactly as Franco is said to have used it, but they were used shortly after his time and since there is doubt as to whether he introduced them, they

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1. Saltzell - op. cit. - p. 67-68.
2. Ibid. - p. 70
3. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 20.

have been listed all at the same time. Actually, however, Franco is supposed to have used only the Longa and the Brevis. By using them together he developed a sort of triple time, the trochee and the iambus. At best, the entire system was confusing, since only an approximate value was thereby given to the notes. The values were neither constant nor uniform, for the length of the notes depended upon their position in relation to each other. This confusion could only be avoided by the use of lines or bars to separate each unit. This was not done till many years after Franco's death. (1).

Guido d'Arezzo really was the first man to use a system which bears any resemblance to ours. He made use of a staff of four lines. He used the lines as well as the spaces - an improvement over Hucbald's method which only made use of the spaces. (2). Hucbald, who shall appear again in the discussion of early polyphonics, is really more famous for his contribution to the development of notation and not so much for the work he did in polyphonics. An example of his system was given before (see p. 31) and it was improved by Guido.

However, it was not until the introduction of polyphony or part singing that actual notation became necessary. The neumes, as we have seen, were very humble marks of notation and might well be termed as "musi-

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1. Fillmore - Op. cit. - p. 20.
2. Hucbald, c. 840 - 930 - monk at St. Amand.

stenography." (1).

EARLY POLYPHONY.

We find traces of polyphonic music in the Church as early as the 9th century. (1). At this time also, it is known that the Saxons in England had some primitive form of part singing which, since it was not guided with rules of any sort, was as barbaric as their religion was heathen. (2). To be sure, the early attempts at part singing were meagre and very unmusical. The second voice would sing exactly the same melody as the first voice a fifth lower.

Of other forms of this part singing, little known except that it was called Organum. It derives its name from that instrument, i. e., the organ, for it was the only instrument on which it was possible to play several notes at the same time. (3) Without a doubt the organum does not appeal to our ears since it moved in parallel fifths. Not that it was discordant in any way, but it is extremely monotonous and dull. (4). Strict forms of the organum permitted only the use of fifths and fourths, although looser styles admitted the use of thirds and sixth which, by the way, were reggrded as dissonants. (5).

Again we find a contribution of Guido d'Arezzo also in this field. He aided the development of polypho-

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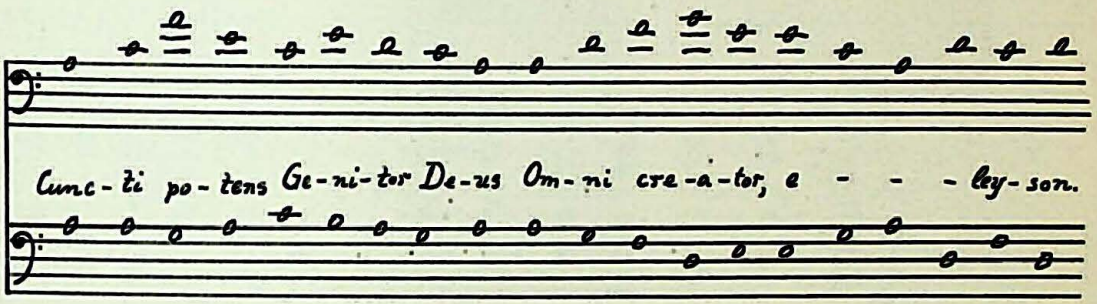
1. Bekker - Op. cit. - p. 78
2. Baltzell - Op. cit. - p. 72
3. Pratt - Op. cit. - p. 80
4. Williams - Op. cit. - p. 65.
5. Dickinson - Mus. Hist. - op. cit. - p. 31

nics and brought about a change in the use of the organum. He departed from the use of fifths in parallel sequence. His method of organum ran in contrary directions, that is, when the melody went up in pitch, the lower voice descended and vice versa. This is possibly one of the earliest examples that can be found of contrary motion in harmony. At the present time contrary motion is considered the best type of harmony in composition. Perhaps the best way that we can explain what Guido did in organum is by the following example:



(1)

And now let us make a comparison of this example with an example of Hucbald's organum. The monotonous effect of the parallel fourths in the higher and lower voices become at once apparent. This example will also serve to show the confusing character of Hucbald's notation which, as was mentioned before, made use of the spaces between the parallel lines.

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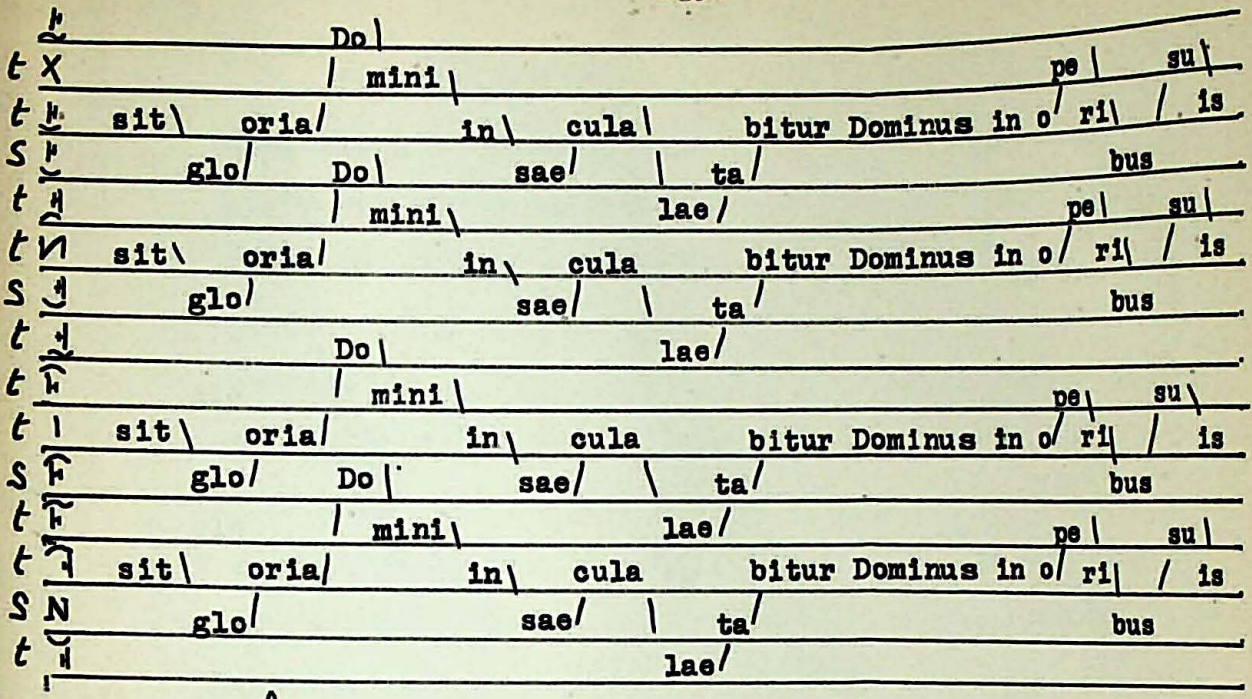
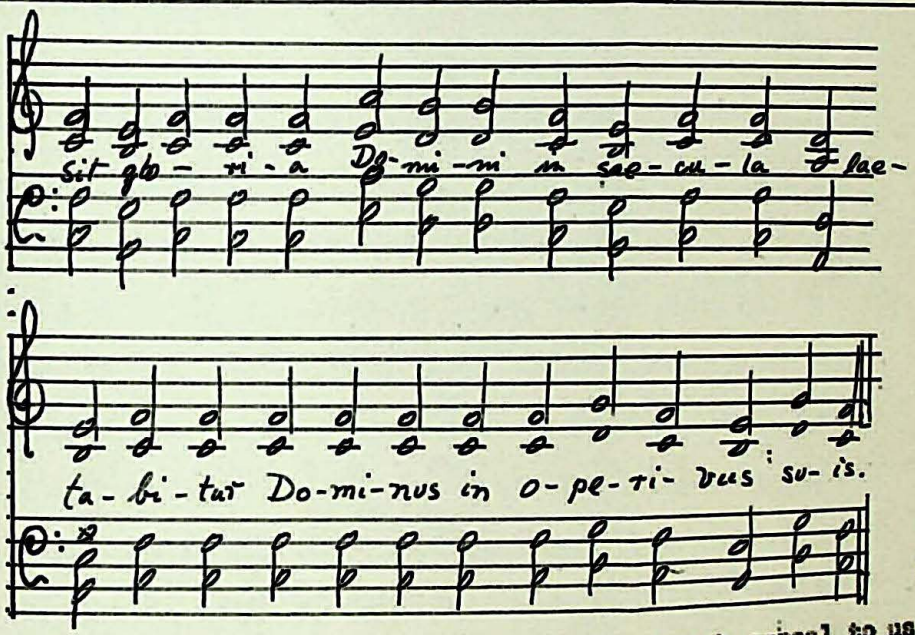
1. Stanford & Forsyth - Op. cit. p. 124





(1)

The organum, as much as it does not appeal to us with the possible exception of Guido's, really forms the background of polyphonic music, which received no real development until the Renaissance, when the art of counterpoint was more fully developed.(2(3).

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1. Naumann - Vol. I - op. cit. - p. 206
2. Waltzell - Op. cit. - p. 96.
3. Dickinson - Mus. Hist. - Op. cit. - p. 54

The greatest progress in polyphonic music at this time seems to have been made in secular or folk music, since the Church insisted on the firm and unchanging establishment of its liturgy. (1). Yet, in spite of this noble purpose of the Church authorities, the church suffered from bad music between the 11th and 13th centuries. Musicians everywhere departed from the Gregorian tones, and made hideous melodies which could not even be classed as barbarically secular, to say nothing of churchly. Stanford describes the conditions with a striking modern analogy, " - he (the reader) may imagine one of our church composers taking for his bass an Anglican chant and spreading it out so that each note takes three or four bars; then for his treble using 'Take a pair of sparkling eyes' and for his alto part fitting in as much as he could of 'Tipperary' or 'Onward Christian Soldiers' or both." (2). This is no exaggeration. Churchmen were very free about the use of the parallel organum. They were either untrained or careless and the situation seems to have become worse as time went on, for as late as the time of John XXII (1316-1334) we read of his bitter complaint against the antics of church musicians. He tried to put a stop to these abuses by a decree, declaring that the old chants found in the Gregorian Antiphonarium were

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1. Dickinson - Mu. His. - op. cit. - p. 34.
2. Stanford & Forsyth - op. cit. - p. 139.

the only ones to be used. He said: "The old tunes are the best. Don't try to write new. Also don't hide the old with hocketting and discanting. Go back to the plain-song. For great occasions you may add consecutive fourths, fifths, and octaves, but the plain-song must be heard if it is to do good to the singers and congregation." (1).

Musicians felt that the organum of three parts was too somber and here a new element enters in. They devised a plan in which the lowest voice, the bass, was sung an octave higher by the tenor. This is the origin of the Faburden, which signifies the change made - namely, "a false bass" (Fr: Faux-bourdon; Ital: Falsobordone). Probably at the same time the Cymel was also adopted which bears close resemblance to the Faburden in construction with the difference that it was applied only to two part singing:

> Shift of lowest voice an octave higher in three part singing - FALSOBORDONE.
>
> Shift of lowest voice an octave higher in two part singing - CYMEL.(2)

The following is an example of the Faburden, first giving the original harmonization then the so-called Faburden:

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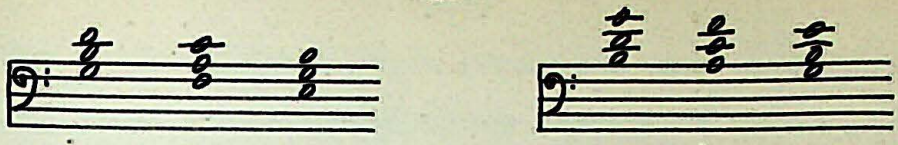
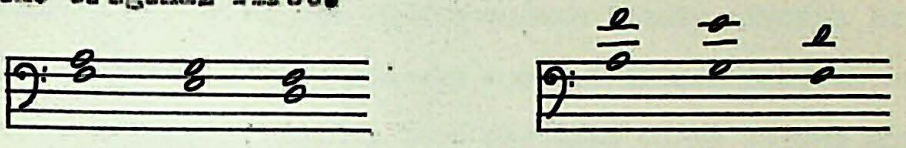
1. Stanford and Forsyth - op. cit. - p. 139.
2. Probably meant "couple" - Stanford.



Original Faburden

(1)

The following is an example of the Gymel, also giving the original first:



Original Gymel

(2)

It is believed by German authorities that the Faburden existed in England long before it was taken up by church musicians. Though it was claimed at the time that it added brilliancy to the plain-song, it would sound barbaric and discordant to our ears. The faburden is used to this day in plain-chant, but it is not even remotely similar to the primitive form indicated above. The idea of a false bass has been retained, but the parallel motion of the harmonies has been dropped and a more natural sequence is permitted, guided by the best tastes of contrary motion - thirds, fourths, fifths, and sixths, as the case may be. The faburden is employed mostly in the antiphonal rendition of the psalms, Magnificat, and the Improperia. The usual procedure is as follows: the cantors intone the first line (or verse) in plain-chant, and

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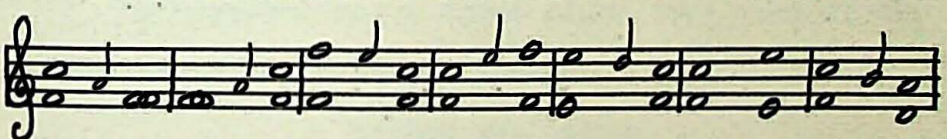
1. Stanford & Forsyth - pp. 139-140
2. Ibid.

the choir continues with the second verse in faburden, and so on in alternate verses throughout the Magnificat or psalm (usually the entire "Gloria patri" at the end is done in faburden).

Another form of part singing was the discant (descant). The word was used somewhat freely already in the 12th century. Thus loosely applied it referred to any type of part singing. In a stricter sense it was applied only to part singing in mensurable music. Franco of Cologne is chiefly responsible for devising rules and systems for the proper method of discanting. Before that time the practice had consisted merely of singing an ex tempore accompaniment to the cantus firmus (melody). Before organised by Franco the system allowed quite freely the use of many dissonants - in fact the only dissonant not permitted was the minor second. (1). As said before, the strict meaning of the word is: singing in two voices, but since this was only possible when there was a certain set rhythm or tempo in the form of regular accents, we commonly associate the term to rhythm or tempo. (2).

The accompanying few bars will serve to show Franco's conception and pattern for the discant:



(3)

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1. Maltzell - Op. cit. -
2. Pratt - Op. cit. - p. 80
3. Grove's - Vol. II. - p. 51.

To aid further in the use of the discant he laid down the following classification of chords.

1. Perfect Concords - the unison and octave.
2. Less Perfect Concords - the perfect fourth and fifth.
3. Imperfect Concords, the major and minor third.
4. Imperfect Discords, the whole tone, major sixth, and minor seventh.
5. Perfect Discords - the semitone, augmented fourth, diminished fifth, minor sixth and major seventh.

(1).

He too, as Guido before him, urged the use of contrary motion, though at times similar motion may be better in order to permit a beautiful melody to stand out.

Thus about the 12th century measured music began to come into its own in the church. And with the introduction of such forms as the discant new signs for designating tempi were gradually developed. It is probable that at this time the four accompanying signs were used with other designations for varied tempi. Tempo at this date was already regarded much as we do. All our tempi are regarded as being multiples of two and three. Triple time was known in this period as "tempus perfectum" and double time as "tempus imperfectum.

In measured music these signs were used at the beginning to indicate the tempo:

O tempus perfectum.

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1. Grove's - Vol. II - p. 51.

C - tempus imperfectum.

⊙ - tempus perfectum - minor mood

C - tempus imperfectum - minor mood. (1)

The final step in measured music was the motet, but that takesus way out of the Gregorian age and well into the Renaissance. (2).

Papal decreed at various times prevented the musicians of the Gregorian period from doing extensive composing. Thus they turned their attention to writing books on music theory, chiefly on the theory of the plain-song, but also on notation and measured music. The composer, if any can be accurately identified and that is highly problematic, was no figurehead. People wanted to hear singing and naturally gave all credit to those who sang. That the actual writers are not known is not to be regretted, for that fact adds to the objectivity of early ecclesiastic music, a fact which is often sadly lacking in modern church music.

All the rules which have been handed down to us, written by learned monks, are not rules pertaining to the composition of music, but are rules guiding the execution of the same. Their patterns, therefore, must be studied from the guides that we can construct ourselves, and not from their point of view, for they have left us nothing of their ideas of composition.

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1. Pratt - Op. cit. - p. 79.

Upon the conclusion of this study there are several considerations that become quite apparent. In the first place, the entire musical development of the early Christian Church and of the medioval Church centers around the plain-song of the Gregorian age. All the ritual music of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Church; all the contributions of the EasternChurch both in the establishment of modes and in the science of notation; all the cloud-surrounded genius of Ambrose and his Milanese Church; the decrees of Laodicea; the establishment of singing schools; all these figures culminated in what is to-day called the Gregorian plain-song.

The second point is a hypothesis. What would have been the course of music if Laodicea had not stifled the voice of the laity? What would have come from the ranks of the people had they been permitted to develop through personal participation in the service? One solution to this question may be found in folk and secular music. Thus stifled, the people turned their attention to music of their own, apart from the services of the Church. But that is highly inadequate - for most of the folk-music of the early middle ages reverted back to paganism and to pagan lore. We are forced to conclude that the steps taken by the council of Laodicea did much to retard the progress of musical development in the Church. Had not this council interfered, there might have been, perhaps, an earlier and more service-

able development of polyphonics; there might have been a greater abundance of devotional songs; there might have been less opposition on the part of narrow pontiffs overagainst the efforts of those who tried to progress. These things have all been realized when first the Renaissance began its effect on musical forms in the Church. But the greatest influence on democratic ecclesiastic music is the direct work of the Reformation; then only, were the ideals of Ambrose realized.

The third point will serve to bring out the unity of the entire Gregorian system. The entire Gregorian system centers upon and was inspired by the ever increasing importance of the Mass. A few words on the Mass itself will bring this out. There are various types of masses, but the Gregorian plain-song is to be identified with the more important ones. (1). According to medieval concept, the Mass was to be celebrated with pure objectivity - especially in its musical setting. The importance of the text of the Mass over the music that went with it was the thought sought after by the compilers of plain-song. Complete domination of words over melody would make for a high degree of objectiveness. That is exactly what is found in the Gregorian plain-song, and that is the

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1. Musical settings are only used for: high masses, solemn high masses, requiem masses, and nuptial masses.

reason why the plain-song finds disfavor in modern ears. The modern conception of vocal music is one in which text and melody are of equal importance or, more often than not, in which the melody obscures the text.

Finally, no one, whatever objections he may have against the Gregorian system as such, can fail to recognize the value and importance of the contributions which it has made to all modern music in general and to modern church music in particular. All modern music is based on developed forms of the Gregorian modes. All music is written with improved Gregorian notation. Many of the responses used in our churches were taken directly from the Gregorian Antiphonarium or were adapted from it for our own purposes.

This is not glorifying something that is antiquated; not giving honor to a style that has been placed in the background by more beautiful forms, but is merely giving due credit to a system which has definitely influenced music of the present day.

CONTENTS:

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