

THE HYMN SOCIETY

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Editor: REV. ERIK R. ROUTLEY, M.A., B.D., D.Phil.,
29 Mayfield Terrace, Edinburgh 9.

Hon. Secretary: THE REV. A. S. HOLBROOK,
31 St. John's Road, Knutsford, Cheshire.

Hon. Treasurer: The Rev. D. S. Goodall, M.A.,
Mansfield College, Oxford.

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EDITORIAL

This issue of the Bulletin could be called our 'Conference number' for 1960. It is smaller than usual—but then earlier this year we have dealt generously with our readers, and our printers' bill must not be allowed to expand too far. Mr Holbrook contributes an account of our Cambridge Conference, which was one of the happiest and best-attended that we have had. When we last met at Cambridge, ten years ago, Leslie Christie was still our Treasurer, and Nichol Grieve and Canon Briggs were with us as well. All have left us now. Dr. Boris Ord lectured to us, and he lies grievously ill.

So time moves on, and to our affectionate memories of former friends we were able to add glad recognition of new members of our circle—David Goodall, the Treasurer, Dr. Massey on the Executive, Peter Cutts as organist at the Hymn-singing.

Next year we shall complete our first quarter-century. We shall never, perhaps, be a large circle. But there is vitality in the Society, and in many ways we have never been healthier. If there is one person who deserves our thanks for energetic efficiency and constant loyalty, it is our Secretary, Mr Holbrook, who commands our

admiration increasingly from year to year. It is that kind of faithfulness that will keep us alive, and enable us to serve Him whose praises we sing.

CONFERENCE OF THE HYMN SOCIETY OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND, HELD AT WESTMINSTER
COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, JULY 12th-14th. 1960.

The Annual Conference of The Hymn Society began on Tuesday 12th July at Westminster College, Cambridge, with assembly at Tea. The first act of the Conference was the attendance of the members at Evensong in King's College Chapel, at 5.30; an act of worship in which mind and soul responded at once to the building. There, stone and glass have crystallised to become the pure poetry of the spirit. There, "music dwells lingering and wandering on as loth to die." For fifteen minutes before, and also after Evensong, Mr David Willcocks gave an Organ Recital at the Society's request. This was high honour and a great joy. Especially memorable was his playing of Bach's great G Minor. Afterwards members were welcomed at the console and had certain features of the organ demonstrated.

Dr Erik Routley had been asked to give the first lecture and to follow up his article in the Bulletin, "The Case against Charles Wesley", by speaking on "Whither Hymnody: Forward From Wesley." He said the subject was not his choice, he had dealt with it seven years ago at the Stratford on Avon Conference, and he had written recently upon it in the Bulletin. But as we had asked for it, so be it. As, by unanimous request, the lecture is printed in this *Bulletin*, members will be able to read it there. Owing to the illness of Dr F. Brittain, one of our Vice-Presidents, the Rev. K. L. Parry was the Chairman and gave a fine lead to the discussion which followed and in which a number of members took part. It was generally agreed that real progress during the last fifty years had been in the music rather than in the words of hymns. Post-war young people are sated with music of all kinds: they have a gang mentality and want only that which is easy and common. There is a desperate craving for what is familiar. Finally the question was put: If we are all going to have new translations of The Bible, what will happen to our hymns? Dr. Maurice Frost expressed thanks to the lecturer and capped one or two of his stories with extended versions.

Canon Noel Boston, M.A., F.S.A., R.D., gave the second lecture—"The Accompaniment of Parish Church Singing in the Early 19th Century." This was a fascinating lecture-recital with a demonstration of some old Church instruments used a century or so ago—an 18th century flute, a double flageolet (with two bores, registered in thirds), a clarinet, a bassoon, a serpent, and a two-stop barrel organ. This, a true pipe organ of beautiful tone, plays eight tunes—

including Mornington's Chant. This tune exercised the skill of members who tried to sing the Psalm while the organ played the tune. The lecturer, who had to use his caravan to transport his instruments, brought with him a large, framed, excellent copy of Webster's famous painting of a Parish Clerk conducting the band and Choir in the gallery of a village Church. This was set up for all to see. Canon Boston gave a vivid description of the Parish Churches of a century or more ago and the form of worship which then obtained. Though they were not the home of the hymn, after the test case in a Church Consistory Court on the illegality of Hymns, in which the case was lost, Parish Churches became more and more the home of the hymn. Previously their hymns had been the metrical psalms, either from the Old Version of Sternhold and Hopkins or, from the beginning of the 19th century, the new one of Tate and Brady. Speaking of the Church Bands which were used to accompany the singing, the lecturer said that records of about two hundred such Bands had been compiled. One had seventeen bassoons! some were 'string', others 'woodwind'; some were 'brass' and others were 'mixed'. In one Church the singing was led by a cornet and a drum! The earliest barrel organ dates back to Pope Sylvester, almost nine hundred years, but this form of instrument is almost exclusively English—a form in which our Organ Builders excelled. The barrel organ was in fairly common use from about 1830 and usually succeeded the village Church Band. The rush towards organ building after the Restoration hardly affected village churches. A list of two hundred tunes known to have been played on these organs has been compiled. Dr Bernard Massey proved an efficient Chairman for the lecture. In expressing thanks to the lecturer, the Rev. C. E. Pocknee read the relevant passage from Hardy's 'Under the Greenwood Tree' which describes the Mellstock village Church Band.

A worthy climax to a successful Conference was An Act of Praise in Emmanuel Congregational Church. Dr Routley had chosen the ten hymns and tunes on the broadsheet each of which, with the exception of Wesley's "Eternal beam of love divine", to Lampe's KENT (INVITATION), had associations with Cambridge or commemorated a centenary. Each was chosen to fit into the pattern of Collect, Epistle, Gospel, etc. but, this year, that form was not followed. The Rev. Jack Newport, Minister of Emmanuel, gave a welcome to the Society and led the devotions. The commentary on the hymns, a model of excellence, was by the Rev. L. H. Bunn, B.A., Editor of the *Julian* Revision. The singing was led by a Choir chosen and prepared by Peter Cutts, student of Clare College, a member of the Society who, as Organist, directed the singing at the console. The Congregation joined in the singing of all fifty verses on the hymnsheet—five, to DEUS TUORUM MILITUM, and four, to WYLDE GREEN, being in unison. We judged the singing to be good, as we shared it, and the tape-recorder agreed. One feature of the

Act of Praise was the three hymns by recent hymnwriters—Canon Briggs' "God is the King", Elvet Lewis's "The days that were", and Henry Carter's (former Minister of Emmanuel) "Give me O Christ, the strength that is in Thee". In addition, Peter Cutts's WYLDE GREEN, sung to Monsell's "God is love, by Him upholden", was worth going to Cambridge for. Music editors of new hymn books should certainly consider this tune.

The usual business meetings of the Society were held but the time-schedule willed that two of them should be held late at night. As the Annual General Meeting was the first since the death of Canon Briggs, members stood in tribute to his memory. Welcome was given to the Treasurer as he presented his first Balance Sheet. Financially this was one of the best years of the Society: the accounts were approved as satisfactory. Thanks were recorded for the grants of the Trustees of Hymns A. and M., and the Ecclesiastical Music Trust of the English Hymnal towards the work of the Julian Revision. Special thanks were accorded to Dr Routley for his excellent services to the Society through the Bulletin. Officers of the Society were thanked and re-appointed, but the Rev. K. L. Parry asked that another Chairman be found to take his place in 1961. Mr K. G. Finlay's resignation from the Executive was accepted (Mr R. F. Newton taking his place) but, in view of his services to the Society, and to hymnody, he was elected a Vice-President. Proposals for the 1961 Conference, in London, were considered. The third or fourth week in September, or the second week in July are working dates. It is hoped to begin with Evensong at Westminster Abbey, and the Conference will be devoted to the Centenary of Hymns Ancient and Modern.

WHITHER HYMNODY?*

by Erik Routley

This is not the first time on which I have ventured to address the Society on this subject. The former occasion was seven years ago, when I was asked to speak and chose the subject. This time the subject has been chosen for me. And I rather suspect it has been so chosen in order that members of this audience may have the opportunity to remonstrate with me concerning what I wrote in a recent *Bulletin* about Charles Wesley.

I shall therefore begin by moralizing about the Hymn Society. I think that the Society has been in existence for 24 years. I have been a member of it myself since the year 1942. A very large number of our founders have now been taken from us; and with the passing of Canon Briggs on December 30 of last year I think

*An address delivered to the Conference of the Hymn Society at Cambridge, 12 July, 1960.

we all felt a weighty tradition had now been finally handed over to a new generation.

Now I have never lost an opportunity of telling this Society that it ought to be constantly and ruthlessly self-critical. There is no society so learned, so august, so rich, so celebrated, that it can afford not to ask year by year, 'If we went out of business, who would miss us?' I trust that we ask that question of ourselves often enough. Our primary purpose is the production of the new *Julian*, and it is well that we have so formidable and enormous a task to perform; because at least we have in that a real risk, and a compelling demand that we not only continue but also prosper.

But surely—and this is what I really had in mind when I wrote that contentious article, not a word of which would I retract—if there is one thing that will kill a society stone dead, it is allowing habits of uncritical thought to form themselves. So long as we allow any question to be thought too profane to ask, any assumption to be too sacred to be challenged, we contain within us the seeds of our own destruction.

It isn't that I think Charles Wesley a bad hymn writer. Of the half dozen hymns which I personally value the most, two are by Charles Wesley; and of the hundred which everybody values the most, twenty are by him. It is that I believe that the greatest hymn writer (or the greatest anything else) can be a bad influence.

For one thing—if a man be too great in a superficial way, too much admired, too elevated in personal power, he is, as we say, 'difficult to follow'. How many institutions can we think of, secular and religious, whose future has suddenly darkened at the death or removal of their founding and guiding spirits? And in every case was it not because that founder was in his lifetime made to be too indispensable? Was it not that too many people allowed themselves to say, 'There's nobody like him. We shall not look upon his like again.'? This is sometimes the founder's fault. Distinguished protestant preachers are in special danger of it. But often it is as much the fault of his worshippers. And when it comes to the effect of a man's literary work, or of something else that he has left behind that cannot be altered but only received, then it cannot be his fault and is always the fault of his followers if his influence turns out to be a bad one.

I shall not again rehearse what I thought to be the bad influences of Wesley. It will be enough to remind you that I regard Wesley as one of those geniuses whom it is dangerous to imitate and undesirable to idolize. I regard Wesley's hymns as a very special kind of Christian utterance which only he could successfully make—and which very often he made quite unsuccessfully. I believe his influence has tended to make us honour too much the psychological hymn (which his imitators attempt usually without his theological grasp), and to make us take a Gregorian

attitude towards the classics of our literature, Hymn writing was given its greatest impetus by the divines of Protestant puritanism and Methodism; but I hardly doubt that it was for this reason that the masters of literature in succeeding generations gave so little attention (Bridges apart) to the art of hymn writing. Since so much hymnody was Wesley, and Wesley's style was so far from their own (Watts must be bracketed with him, of course), the poets of the 19th century just felt that their kind of writing was not required. Right they were—in the evangelical churches of the 19th century their kind of writing would have been regarded as profane. Perhaps the nineteenth century romantics are no great loss—though Browning could have written an interesting hymn or two containing a good compendium of heresies—but the loss of the twentieth century poets is much more grievous. It's perhaps rather the fault of the Scottish Psalter and the subsequent Scottish reaction in favour of sentimentality than the fault of Wesley, but I must say I wish Edwin Muir had written a hymn. And I am pretty sure that I know why he didn't write any.

Well—that is enough about that. My chief contention is that an uncritical adulation of Wesley, or Watts, or anybody else, is the kind of mental error that is death to any intelligent society. You must always consider the case against your favourite hymn writer, or your favourite anything else. Even if the *advocatus diaboli* doesn't win, he must be heard. That's the essence of the Gospel. If you grant that, you will develop taste and judgement; if you neglect it, you'll develop nothing better than a fad: and you'll be as ridiculous as you deserve to be in the eyes of the people you try to serve.

But now, whither hymnody? There are certain evidences just now that people are asking that question with some truculence. We will first remind ourselves of what has been done in the first half of this century. Who, after Bridges (1899) has written a good hymn?

Chesterton wrote 'O God of earth and altar' which first came out in 1906. Perhaps the finest modern piece after that in E.H. was Gabriel Gillett's 'It is finished'.

Songs of Praise, apart from poems brought into use as hymns from this and other centuries, gave us, 'Lord Christ, when first thou cam'st to men'.

Congregational Praise gave us Henry Carter's 'Give me, O Christ, the strength'.

Revised A & M gave us Edward Morgan's 'Thee, living Christ'.

The *BBC* book gave us Timothy Rees's 'God of love and truth and beauty', taken from the *Mirfield Mission Hymn Book*.

These, I should have thought, stand in the front line, and with them or just behind them several others. Well back from them, a good deal of the utility stuff that if happily married with a good tune makes serviceable hymnody.

There is a good deal of decent writing in words, and a large quantity of excellent music to be found in modern books, quite apart from the fine hymns that have been made of 16th and 17th century poems, and that came so freshly to our modern ears, like 'Lord, when the wise men came from far' and 'Draw nigh to thy Jerusalem.' The main road still has a reasonable stream of traffic on it.

But what of the Dissents? Well, since 1953 a good deal has happened. We have the corybantic escapade of Billy Graham with its horrible song book. We have had Geoffrey Beaumont and the Twentieth Century Light Music Group. We have had some remarkable developments in America in new tonalities for hymn tunes. We have had Gelineau's psalmody, which is a gesture in gongregational psalmody in the Roman Catholic Church. We have had good news and bad news. Is any of it helpful?*

Now we shall answer this question best if we allow ourselves to reconsider the purpose of hymns. Hymns are not written that the Hymn Society may continue in existence and hold conferences and ask people to lecture about them. Hymns are there to serve the main purpose of worship. We shall next year be celebrating the centenary of the publication of *Hymns A & M*, and I suppose that the appearance of that book was the event which ushered in the era of English church history in which hymns became a settled part of all non-Roman Catholic English worship. *Hymns A & M* settled finally the question whether hymns are respectable. *Hymns A & M* vindicated the place of the hymn in the worship of the Church of England. Up to 1861, although praiseworthy efforts had been made by such people as Neale and Littledale, Blew and Chope, to make hymnody acceptable to those who were not of the more emphatically evangelical way, hymns were regarded as primarily a mark of enthusiastic worship. Noting the contents of the tune-books of the period 1800-50 who can be surprised at that? But now we are all hymn-singers, and we have *A & M* to thank for it.

But *A & M*, as Mr Osbert Lancaster has so unforgettably pointed out, in its anxiety to rescue hymnody from an over-enthusiastic style, made fashionable a certain kind of dry and and spiritless writing both in words and music. *A & M* knew the case against Charles Wesley well enough. And I need not remind my present audience of how some forty years later a young composer named Vaughan Williams and a young priest named Percy Dearmer caused a fresh wind to blow through the church of England, riffling the pages of the now dusty volumes of *A & M* to good purpose. Those two, whatever may have been their excesses

*Here followed some musical illustrations, among which were a tune by a member of the Light Music Group, one by Vincent Persichetti, and the canticle of Veneration of the Word (music by Jean Langlais) from the Vigils of the Bible and Liturgy Conference (Strasbourg, 1957).

and eccentricities, registered a dissent against the stiff and ecclesiastical style of *A & M*: and be it noted, they were men who stood in that same High Church tradition which had inspired the *A & M* editors of 1861. For them, the second-rate was unfit for worship: but so was that which was inhibited, dull and conventional. This is ancient history and I must not detain you by rehearsing what you cannot be a member of this Society without knowing. But that was in 1906. Have we now anything to add in 1960—noting that a longer period has now passed since the appearance of *E.H.* than elapsed between its appearance and the first edition of *A & M*?

We can observe one or two things that have happened during that period. One is the extraordinary upsurge of dissent against poor standards in music which is to be seen in nonconformity. That part of the English church which led the way in the writing of hymns had for a long time rested on its achievements, and been content with a music that combined the worst aspects of enthusiastic spiritual self-indulgence with the worst aspects of middle-class musical respectability. During the first half of this century, we of Dissent have all made our protests. That has meant cutting many pages out of the *English Hymnal* to make our own books. It cannot yet be said that we have influenced the music of the Church of England to any considerable degree: but on the whole it is better for the soul to be taught than to teach, and better for a man or a church to be obliged to render gratitude than to be tempted to demand it.

That is one thing that has happened,—a sort of ecumenical consent to good hymnody. The other important thing that has happened is the prodigious increase in the popularity of hymn singing as an activity in its own right. The Hymn Society is not the only institution to have Acts of Praise through hymn singing. The BBC dare not miss out on 'Sunday Half Hour'. Everybody seems to like singing hymns nowadays. Where in the old days families gathered round the piano of a Sunday night to sing hymns, now (because the neighbours the other side of the paper wall will have cause to complain) people do it in churches, at Butlin's camps, in town halls, at conference centres and goodness knows where.

You will surely have noted that this great increase in the popularity of hymn singing has not accompanied a great increase in the number of hymns people know. Not at all. All it has done is to introduce masses of half-evangelised people to a new way of escaping from the demands of the Christian pilgrimage. I would not put it less strongly than that. It's a disease with some people. If you would test that assertion, next time you are asked by the BBC to organise a Sunday Half Hour in your church, choose the finest hymns you know, the most interesting, the most musically alert and theologically vital, without any regard to whether they

are in the common man's canon, and see what sort of a post you get during the following week.

People are clamouring (and not only on economic grounds) for shorter hymn books. People are assuming, and the assumption gains strength year by year, that there are only about a hundred hymns that anybody need know. Well, what we have got to say to this generation is this: that the cult of the closed canon of hymns is an abuse and a scandal. Once again, it leads people into settled habits the divorce from which grows more painful and provokes more resentment the more settled they are. If you ask 'Whither hymnody?', I would give as part of my answer not the necessity for writing a number of new hymns, but an all-out theological crusade against the barbarous and heathen assumption that a man is entitled to sing what he knows and to resent what he doesn't.

This is important. I will (to the best of my ability) explain. The enjoyment you get out of singing a hymn that you know through and through is an enjoyment of the familiar. You sing it by heart, you know the bass part without looking at the book. You sing with vigor and everybody else does. Now what does this do to you?

First it stirs up in you that response to massed action which is never far below the surface in any man, and which can, if it be unguarded, take sinister and wicked forms. Massed action that silences the critical, dissenting faculty, is neither healthy nor Christian. Second: it stirs up in you that artificial resentment against what is new which is a special mark of the man who has emerged from the Gospel grace of childlikeness. You should not dislike a new hymn or tune. You should welcome it. It is a serious matter of you don't. And I do not say this to keep the poets and musicians in business. I say it because it is, quite literally, the Gospel truth. The Scriptures always urge us to live as pilgrims who seek, but have not achieved, a country. The one cardinal error is to dig in and say 'This is as far as I will go.' They were always doing this in the Exodus, and look what it cost Moses. There is nothing 'natural' or holy about liking only what you know.

This, I insist, is a spiritual matter, not a professional one. I am myself astonished and often appalled at the way in which hymns are chosen, not in services of worship, but on large public occasions where many people expect to be gathered. Anything from an ecumenical rally to a university sermon will do as an example. Almost always the hymns are, though blameless, chosen from what the organisers believe to be the common repertory, which means the ones they know and think everybody else knows. They are 'breaks for music', without any reference to their place in the service or the matter which is the primary concern of the congregation. You remember the Bishop who said that at every confirmation he could count on cold chicken and 'The Church's

One Foundation'. You'll have met the missionaries on furlough who cannot bear to hear 'Jesus shall reign' even once more, because everybody puts it on when they preach. There are two of the greatest hymns in the literature, worn out by over-use and casual use and *habitual* use. People who choose hymns do so hoping to please the congregation. But somebody has got to tell the congregation that this is not a pleasure that they may claim as of right.

The reason why it is not a pleasure that they may grasp at is that it precludes a greater pleasure. That is, I think, the New Testament way of arguing. I do not think Christians ought ever to give the impression that pleasure is evil. We must always say that seizing *this* pleasure is wrong because it loses you your chance of accepting *that* much greater and more lasting pleasure. Seize the pleasure of unchastity and you have lost the true joy of marriage. Seize the passing pleasure of rebellion and you have lost the timeless joys of the Kingdom. Well, in this small but important field it is just the same. We are called to repentance and to take our journey; we are not permitted to dwell long in the mount or to hoard up the manna.

Then, of course, we need a hymn society. That must now be obvious. We need people who know the literature well and can think objectively about it. We need people not so much to instruct the congregations of the churches as to needle them and exasperate them and jest them into the pilgrimage. Therefore it is for the Hymn Society to pursue scholarship, to vindicate high standards not only of taste but also of truth. And it is especially for us to persuade the more obstinate of the clergy that we are preaching the same Gospel that they are, or ought to be, preaching.

This will take some doing. They think we are a lot of cranks. Well, except we be constantly in touch with the teaching of the church and of Scripture, that is what we shall become. But nobody who knows the pure pleasure of singing a really familiar and great hymn like 'The church's one foundation' after not singing it for two years will want to deny that the pleasure of which we are robbed by habitual and careless attitudes to the whole subject is a precious pleasure. After all, we are saying no more than that by the grace of Christ, heaven is man's by right, but the pleasures of the lower world are not.

CHRISTIAN HYMNODY AND THE DRAMA

by C. E. Pocknee

When the Early Church, in abhorrence of the immoral stage of Imperial Rome, set its face against the theatre altogether, it reckoned without two very powerful forces: first the mimetic instinct, the passion for pretending to be someone else, which is

implanted in the human breast; and secondly, the essentially dramatic nature of the Christian story and of Christian worship. An obvious instance of the use of drama was the Palm Sunday procession representing the entry into Jerusalem, which by the fourth century of our era was being performed by Christians over the actual route traversed by Christ and his disciples. The recitation of the Holy Week Gospels by different readers impersonating the chief actors in the story is another example of Christian liturgical drama. These are but two examples of the readiness with which Christian worship lent itself to dramatic uses.

But the actual germ of the liturgical drama has been found in the antiphonal singing of the psalms, canticles and hymns in the primitive Church. Versicle and response soon found a place in Christian worship, a line being sung by half the choir, and answered by the other half. It is from this method of singing that the most famous of all Christian dramas developed; and by implication the whole of modern drama. From this method of antiphonal singing there developed the dramatizing of the story of the Lord's Resurrection in the *Quem queritis*. In its earliest form it runs thus in a translated version:

"Whom seek ye in the sepulchre, ye followers of Christ?"

"Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified, O heavenly ones"

"He is not here: He is risen, as he said;

Go tell the news that he is risen from the sepulchre".

This is obviously based on the Gospel account of the holy women at the tomb. At first it was probably sung in unison by the whole choir; but the words naturally lent themselves to antiphonal singing in the form of question and answer. Later the dialogue came to be sung by individuals in the choir representing the three Maries and the angel. Our earliest evidence for this innovation is to be found in two MSS of the tenth century written at Winchester, and known as the *Regularis Concordia* and the *Benedictional of Ethelwold*. A translation of the Latin of these documents gives us the following: "While the third lesson is being chanted let four brethren vest themselves. Let one of these, vested in an albe, approach the sepulchre without attracting attention, and sit there quietly. While the third respond is chanted, let the remaining three follow, and stepping delicately as those seeking something let them approach the sepulchre. When therefore he who sits there beholds the three approaching like folk lost, let him begin to sing in a medium pitch *Quem queritis*. And when he has sung to the end let the three reply in unison, "Jesus of Nazareth". So he, "He is not here, etc" At this word of bidding let those three turn to the choir and sing, "Alleluya, the Lord is risen". This said, let the one still sitting here say the anthem, "Come see the place". And saying this let him rise, and lift the veil . . . And when they have seen this, let them take the cloth, and hold it up to demonstrate that the Lord has risen . . . let them sing the anthem "The Lord

is risen". When this is done let the Prior begin *Te Deum Laudamus*.

How this drama of Easter was developed may be seen from a study of the later texts of the *Quem queritis*. The version just given shows the women announcing the Resurrection to the choir. From this it was an easy step to allow two chanters to stand out from the rest as representing the Apostles Peter and John. A dialogue with the women beginning.

"Speak Mary, tell us what thou sawest on the way"

was then followed by the two Apostles running to the tomb. This part of the drama was later incorporated into the Eucharist in the form of the Easter Sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*. An English translation with the proper music is given in E.H. 130 and AMR 138. The dramatic version may be summarised as follows: The women return from the tomb singing, "Christians to the Paschal Victim, etc" . . . reigns immortal." They are met by two Apostles who question them, "Speak Mary etc". The first Mary replies; "I saw the tomb of Christ living, the glory of Jesu's Resurrection". Second Mary, "Bright Angels attesting etc". Third Mary, "Yea, Christ my hope is arisen . . . before you". The Apostles act their scene of running to the tomb, and then turning to the choir sing, "Happy they who hear the witness . . . Victor King, ever-reigning". Finally having got Mary Magdalene to the tomb the later versions naturally make her encounter the risen Lord there.

From this dramatizing of the Easter hymn *Victimae paschali* there later developed the miracle and mystery plays of the late middle ages, which moved from the Church itself into the square before the Cathedral and parish Church; and in turn Elizabethan drama sprang from the mystery plays. It is not too much to claim therefore, that modern drama is indebted to the Church and Christian hymnody for its incipient forms. An interesting comment on the church origins of the modern stage is to be found in the fact that until the Restoration period under Charles II, only male players were permitted on the stage, an obvious relic of the male choirs who first dramatised the Easter story. The reader may conveniently turn to the *New Oxford History of Music*, Vol II and Karl Young: *The Drama of the Medieval Church*. (1933) for more detailed information.