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AN EARLY BYZANTINE KONTAKION

By F. J. E. RABY

(This translation, with the accompanying note, was sent to the Editor by Dr Raby in August, 1966. In November we heard of his death, and an appreciation of his work follows this article. This must be the last contribution to letters made by this very distinguished scholar.)

The treasures of Byzantine hymnody are becoming better known owing to the work of the late Paul Maas, Dr Egon Wellesz and Professor Trypanis. I need only mention the sumptuous edition of the *cantica* of Romanos by Maas and Trypanis, which appeared at Oxford in 1963, and the second edition of Wellesz's *History of Byzantine Music and Hymnody*, Oxford, 1961. It may interest readers of the *Bulletin* to have a translation of what Professor Trypanis describes as 'the most primitive form of a fully developed *Kontakion* extant.'

It belongs to the late fifth century. The first letters of its *oikoi* (stanzas) form the acrostic EIS TON PROTOPLASTON ('On the First Man'); the last four *oikoi* appear to be an addition. The text is in P. Maas, *Frühbyzantinische Kirchenpoesie* (2nd edition, Berlin, 1931), pp. 16 ff, and in C. A. Trypanis, *Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 6 ff. This anonymous poem composer, without rhyme, with metrically identical stanzas and a refrain, shows to the full the poetical and rhetorical skill, and the religious pathos, which mark so many of these compositions.

It will be clear that the hymn is not a mere poetical elaboration on the Biblical story; it is a litany in which the congregation, sharers in Adam's fall and partakers of his misery, implore, as they repeat the refrain, the divine mercy, and share as well the assurance of restitution and of future glory.

These *Kontakia* were sung by a soloist, the choir singing the refrain (Wellesz, *op. cit.*, p. 180).

PARADISE LOST

Guide of wisdom, Leader of understanding, Teacher of those without knowledge, and supreme Protector of the poor, establish, give understanding to my heart, O Lord.

Give me Thy Word, who art the Word of the Father,
For, behold, I will not restrain my lips in crying unto Thee:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

1. Adam then sat and wept over the delights of Paradise, smiting his face with his hands and he said:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

2. Adam seeing the angel who had thrust him forth and had closed the gate of the heavenly garden, bewailed exceedingly and said:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

3. "Share the grief, O Paradise, of thy former possessor, now a beggar, and with the murmuring of thy leaves beseech the Creator that he shut Thee not up.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

4. Bend down thy trees as if they were sentient and supplicate the holder of the keys that so thou mayest remain open to one who cries out:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

5. I scent the fragrance of thy beauty and I melt with longing, remembering how I rejoiced in it from the perfume of the flowers.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

6. Now I have learned what I have suffered, now I have understood what God said to me in Paradise, 'In taking Eve, thou forsakest Me'.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

7. O Paradise, full of all virtue, holiness and blessedness, tilled by Adam, shut by Eve, how shall I lament for thee?

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

8. I have become foul, I am an outcast, I am enslaved to my own servants. For creeping things and beasts which I once subjected by fear make me afraid.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

9. No longer do the flowers bring me pleasure, but the earth brings forth for me thorns and briars, not increase.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

10. My table that once was laden without my toil I have overturned by my own will and henceforth in the sweat of my brow I eat my bread.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

11. My throat which holy streams made sweet is become bitter from the multitude of my lamentations, as I cry:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

12. How fell I? How did I come to this? From a high place I came down to the ground, from holy counsellings to a wretched condition.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

13. For the rest, Satan rejoices to have stripped me of my glory, but he has no pleasure in this, for behold, my God clothes me.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

14. God Himself pitying my nakedness clothes me. By this He shows me that he has regard to me though a transgressor.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

15. My garment is a sign to me of my raising up that is to come. For He that has clothed me now, in a little while bears me up and saves me.

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

16. 'Quickly Adam thou hast known the will of My compassions. Wherefore I do not deprive thee of this thy hope as thou criest:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

17. I do not desire or wish for the death of one whom I have created. Having chastened for a season, I will glorify for ever him who cries:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

18. Now therefore, O Saviour, save me also who seek Thee with longing. I would not seize Thee, but be seized by Thee, and cry to Thee:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

19. Unimaginable One, all holy, all pure, look from heaven as full of pity and save me unworthily crying:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

20. Guide my soul towards praise, raise up one who lies upon his bed, who, O Saviour, cries unworthily to Thee:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

21. Raise up, uphold, O lover of men, one who now stumbles as a profligate in this life. Draw near to me, O Saviour, as I cry:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

22. Unity, Trinity, unseparated, undivided, by the intercessions of the Mother of God, have pity on me and overlook the transgressions of those who cry:

"Merciful One, have mercy on one who has fallen."

FREDERIC JAMES EDWARD RABY, C.B., LITT.D., F.B.A.

1888—1966

Dr Frederic Raby, a vice-president of our Society, who died in his sleep on October 30th, was one of the most learned men in the English-speaking world, and enjoyed a world-wide reputation as a scholar of the first rank.

After three undergraduate years at Trinity College, Cambridge, he entered the Civil Service and was posted to what is now the Ministry of Public Building and Works, where he laboured for 37 years. He was happy there, especially as he was put in charge of ancient monuments; but he was above all things a scholar. His *History of Christian Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* and *Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, totalling about 1,300 quarto pages, were the outcome of a vast amount of reading and a most retentive memory. They opened a new world to his readers, and there has been nothing like them since. Written in clear, sober language, they have none of the romantic nonsense of some previous writers about medieval Latin literature.

In 1941 he was elected to an honorary Fellowship at Jesus College, Cambridge, and in 1948, when he retired from the Civil Service, he went into residence at the College as a Fellow, thus happily returning to the university which he ought never to have been allowed to leave.

He was most successful as a teacher, and his pupils were devoted to him. On the other hand, he was far too nervous ever to lecture. He was once persuaded to read a paper to a small audience of undergraduates, but was so overcome by nervousness that it is most improbable that he ever read another paper to any gathering.

Few men can have read so widely as he, or remembered so much of what they read. He could talk with detailed and accurate knowledge on hymnody, Dante, architecture, liturgies, patristics, the Greek and Latin classics, church history, English literature, theology, French literature, and philosophy.

Brought up a Methodist, he became a firm and ardent Anglican before he reached middle age, but never lost his affection or respect for Methodism. He knew many of Charles Wesley's hymns by heart, and frequently quoted from them, as he did also from the hymns of John Mason Neale and many other writers.

His knowledge of hymnody, modern no less than medieval, was most extensive, and some of the fruits of his learning were contributed from time to time to the Hymn Society's Bulletin.

A pillar of his college chapel, he took the Sacrament there every Sunday. His pet aversions in church services were Edmeston's 'Lead us, heavenly father, lead us', Chesterton's 'O God of earth and altar', and the New English Bible.

Frederic Raby was a man who was greatly loved wherever he went. Little children were devoted to him and treated him as their contemporary.

Cuius animæ propitiatur Deus.

FREDERICK BRITAIN.

TWO REVIEWS

By ERIK ROUTLEY

THE METHODIST HYMNAL (USA), 1966

In July, 1966, the first copies of the new *Methodist Hymnal*, whose preparation has occupied six years, appeared from the Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, Tennessee*. It replaces the *Methodist Hymnal* of 1935, and will probably command the largest circulation of any single hymnal in the United States. The great publishing house at Nashville is, I am told, the largest of its kind in the USA, and since among Methodists in that country there is a greater degree of unity than among the other denominations of comparable or larger membership, the Abingdon Press (another name for the same institution) has already established itself as one of the most significant publishing houses of the world. The *Hymnal* has been produced in prodigious quantities on equipment of astonishing and almost alarming modernity. And it is, we must say at once, a very handsome book. It is bound in an unidentifiable but entertaining colour that suggests blackcurrant fool—certainly a new colour among hymn books—and it is beautifully printed, provided you can accept the convention of printing all texts within the music-staves.

The 1935 book contained 564 hymns: this one has 552. According to the compilers' report of 1964, 173 hymns and 197 tunes in the old book have been removed, and only 233 hymns have been retained unchanged, with the 1935 tunes. (The figures may need adjustment, since the report allowed for 539 hymns in the new book, but they give a good enough guide.)

As many as twenty-six hymns in this book have never been published before, and fifteen tunes.

This then is a thoroughgoing revision, made with certain definite concerns in mind. The most important of these was to include more hymns by the Wesleys. In 1935 there were 56 by Charles and seven by John: in the new book the figures are 75 and seven (plus three in the section of material for worship with which we are not dealing here).

A measure of conservatism has been forced on the editors by the very great size and diversity of the denomination which they serve. The wide umbrella must include those who still wish for Gospel Hymns; these are beyond criticism. We know why they are included, and no purpose whatever is served by making judgments on the editors for letting them in. It is unlikely, on the face of it, that editors who were looking for material like Lloyd Pfautch's new tune to 'Christian dost thou see them' (238) would positively delight

in 'The Old Rugged Cross', or in a curious piece called 'How Great Thou Art' (17), which sounds to me like the Horst Wessel Song in striped pants. They had their reasons for believing it to be their duty to include these things, and those reasons we need not discuss here.

The only point in mentioning this at all is to indicate that these editors had to swim against a fairly strong stream when they wished to introduce material of real distinction into their book. That is evident. Moreover, it is not proper in an English critic to be too hard on certain American hymnological customs which come strangely to our ears, such as the persistent setting of 'When I survey' to the tune BOSTON, or that tawdry-sounding tune which seems to be sung very widely there to 'O for a thousand tongues'. I suppose we must even look kindly, if we can, on the almost universal custom of setting 'Now the day is over' to Barnby's disastrous tune called MERRIAL. These things are not really relevant to an assessment of the work the editors have done within their terms of reference. What they have done is to introduce more Wesley to American Methodists, to make large use of the American folk-hymn tunes of the period 1780—1820, and to bring the ethos of the book up to date.

They show themselves good Methodists at the outset by (for the first time in the USA for generations) putting 'O for a thousand tongues' as number One. At number Two they at once exemplify a certain pawky inventiveness which here and there will disconcert the English reader. For number Two is 'Angel voices', set to Sullivan's tune, but in duple time arranged by Austin Lovelace. It reminds one of Walford Davies's two-time arrangement of PENTECOST ('Fight the good Fight') in his *Students' Hymnal*. There was in the days of the puritans a doctrine that triple time was not religious and duple time was: but I doubt if there are any examples of three-time tunes being improved by the process I am tempted to call 'two-timing'. There are one or two other examples of making do and mending which some will find controversial, such as CHRISTUS DER IST MEIN LEBEN adapted as a C.M., Greiter's PSALM 68 adapted once for twice 888 and once for twice 886, and 'Men of Harlech' (551) arranged in CM with an initial up-beat added and the last note of each phrase transferred to the beginning of the next.

The divergence between general habits in the USA and Britain may be judged from the fact that of the 169 hymns in that section which the *English Hymnal* calls 'General', fifty-six appear in this new book: and among those which are omitted are 'City of God', 'Come let us join our cheerful songs', 'Hark, my soul, it is the Lord', 'Lead us, heavenly Father', 'Lord of our life', 'Lord, thy word abideth', 'My God, how wonderful thou art', 'O God of Bethel', 'O God of truth', 'O happy band of pilgrims', 'Praise to the Holiest', 'There is a book', 'There is a land of pure delight', 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow', 'Thy kingdom come!', 'We love the place', and

*Methodist Publishing House, 201 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville, Tenn., 37203, U.S.A.

'Ye holy angels, bright'. Only three of these appeared in the 1935 book. The discerning reader will notice that Isaac Watts, who is not the *English Hymnal's* favourite author, is represented twice in that short list, and the suspicion dawns that he is not a favourite with the American Methodists either. This turns out to be right: they print 18 of his hymns in the new book—there were 17 in the old one.

Quite a number of hymns very widely known in England, and among English Methodists, are outside the American canon, and what we should regard as recent discoveries that have found their place in English hymnody, such as notably Robert Bridges's hymns, do not commend themselves much to these editors: they have two by Bridges, of which one was there in 1935.

It is in their respect for Wesley, and there alone, that they join hands with British Methodists. Even their selection of 'Gospel Hymns' is very different from that in the British book.

Their Table of Contents is unremarkable. There are four big sections; the first (291 hymns) is compendiously marked 'The Gospel and Christian Experience', sub-heads being printed at the bottom of each right-hand page. So that is a complete hymn book in itself. The other three are 'The Church' (61 hymns), 'The Christian Year' (134) and 'Times, Seasons, and Occasions' (66). This separation of the Christian Year from the 'Gospel' means that 'Come down, O love divine' is 466 ('Pentecost') while 'Breathe on me, Breath of God' is 133 ('The Holy Spirit')—a decision which would have been equally sound if taken the other way round. However, there is a massive topical index which should keep the minister on the rails if he uses it intelligently.

All that is much less important than the real distinctions of the book, of which there are plenty. Here are some examples:

60. 'All creatures': how few American editors dare to print all seven verses! (It is usually the printer who can't find room for them between his beastly staves, of course.)

62. Peter Cutts's tune WYLDE GREEN makes its first appearance in a hymn book, to 'God is love'. Most welcome!

71—3. 'All hail the power' is printed three times, with CORONATION, DIADEM and MILES LANE. Sumptuous!

77. A hymn known to the Scots—one of the very few offerings of Scottish Congregationalism, incidentally—is much improved by reading 'Come, Christians, join to sing', for 'Come, children . . .' (see CH 177).

80. 'How beauteous were the marks divine'—a sound hymn by Bishop Coxé (cf EH 108), to that very fine 'old American' tune, WINDHAM.

142. Tune PISGAH, sometimes called COVENANTERS, from Kentucky Harmony, 1817: this really ought to be given a run in Britain. It got into the first edition of *Songs of Praise* and into the MHB Appendix. It's a splendid tune for a good modern hymn (of which this isn't an example).

147. Believe it or not, an unknown and singable Toplady! It was in the 1935 book which admits (as the 1966 one does not) that it is partly by other hands; its two middle verses and most of its fourth are from 'Your harps, ye trembling saints', but the opening verse is an excellent piece of pastiche, whoever did it. The four verses make a very good hymn, and it is good to see the admirable tune VENICE now associated with it.

157. 'Immortal love' to Kenneth Finlay's AYRSHIRE — very happily.

186. Wesley's 'Servant of all' (M 575), pleasantly set to a tune called SHADDICK by Bates G. Burt (d. 1948).

211. Tune WEDLOCK, from *The Sacred Harp*, 1817, for 'God is my strong salvation'—worth anybody's notice.

214. A charming paraphrase of Psalm 1 from Thailand with an indigenous tune.

238, 280. Two tunes by Dr Lloyd Pfautsch of Southern Methodist University, Dallas, one of the USA's brightest and most intelligent musicians. There is more in both than meets the eye at first glance.

240. The one example in the whole book of a tune so adventurous as to make you gasp: it is for 'Fight the good fight' and the composer is Graham George (whose tune to 'Ride on!' has made some headway in recent books over here).

314. A very simple and pleasant Communion hymn by Louis Benson, 'For the Bread which thou hast broken' to a tune by V. Earle Copes, who appears several times, always most acceptably.

355. 'Lord Christ, when first thou cam'st', to LINDEMAN, as CP 172.

362. 'Lo, he comes', to BRYN CALFARIA—very bold, but good history. HELMSLEY does not get a good press in the USA.

387. A Methodist chuckle here — 'Hark the herald' to the EASTER HYMN: but, of course, this, too, is good history.

422. 'So lowly doth the Saviour ride'—a really good simple hymn by A. T. Pennewell, with another good tune by Copes. A 'must' for future editors.

432. Another very moving tune from *Southern Harmony*, 1835.

460. One of two hymns by Canon Briggs—'God hath spoken', to EBENEZER. The other is 408, 'Christ is the world's true light'.

463. A very useful new hymn paraphrasing in simple language the Christian's credal belief, beginning 'We believe in one true God': it turns out to be by Catherine Winkworth—which just shows how much one can overlook!

468. Echoes of the *Church Hymnary*—'The Lord will come' to OLD 107th.

469. Ditto, at least of present Scottish custom—'Father eternal' to OLD 124th.

481. 'O Holy City'—Russell Bowie's other grand hymn, set, as elsewhere in the USA, to MORNING SONG (1813).

485. A very fine tune indeed, by Katherine K. Davis (b. 1892) to 'From thee all skill and science flow', called MASSACHUSETTS. Another scoop for future editors.

487. The book's second real surprise: a hymn and tune from Nigeria, with accompaniment for drums. Not easy but good exercise!

511. A new tune which arouses the comment that I wish there were some tunes (editors apart) by composers who are younger than I am. This one, I think the second youngest represented, is a year older. It's a fine tune, called somewhat surprisingly HIGH POPPLES, composed by Samuel Walter for a good new harvest hymn, 'As men of old their first-fruits brought'. The rest of the hymn is less cacophonous than its opening line.

527. 'And can it be': the tune is ascribed to Jeremiah Ingalls, early 19th century, and is most moving, I think. A really good working alternative to SAGINA, anyhow.

Perhaps all that won't mean much to a reader who has not already bought the book. But it may indicate that there is plenty here to give any new editor pause.

There are, inevitably, some horrors. The Passiontide section is musically impoverished to a depressing degree; it makes one feel that the Methodist doctrine of the Atonement wants overhauling in the USA. One can't rejoice at any reprinting of tunes like BULLINGER, or Sullivan's ST EDMUND. There is a depressing tendency to keep CANONBURY alive—that tune made out of a Schumann Nachtstücke for piano—it is here set to 'Lord, speak to me', and 'Forth in thy name'. We may overlook one printing of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' with the words 'Joyful, joyful we adore thee', which is still a fairly lively favourite in the States, but two more printings of the same butchered tune are hard to defend. Can the use of Goss's tune called ARTHUR'S SEAT (243) for 'March on, my soul, with strength' be defended in a book which does not print CHRIST CHURCH anywhere?

The worst musical miscalculation, to my own mind, is giving ARFON in 8787.D in the major key — and calling it ARFON MAJOR! Somebody perpetrated a joke of this kind on LLANGOEDMOR in *Emynau'r Eglwys*, 1951, but this is much, much worse. One trembles to think what the musical editors of *Hymns for Church and School* will say!

The book is rather short of good modern hymns. It is a little dispiriting to see hymns by living authors that contain lines like 'Fulfill our hopes in this high hour' (irreverent comment: how do you measure the height of an hour? What is a low hour?), or 'The day is slowly wending Toward its silent ending' (what about O'Hare airport, Chicago?). As with the tunes, one or two examples by younger people might well have lightened the pudding.

Now for two real plums. The first is the Most Surprising Desecularization of the Year: 'Come, O thou Traveller' to the tune of 'Ye banks and braes'—with the last two lines of each verse repeated (529). Well? Can you bear it or not? I am not yet sure.

The second is the Most Unexpected Encounter of the Year: John Arlott's harvest hymn, 'God whose farm is all creation', to a tune by—guess whom—Ira D. Sankey. And a jolly good tune, too. I do hope the editors appreciated the rich humour of this.

Well, it is a brave piece of work, and the editors can rest content with it for the brief period which the USA allows for the life of a hymnal. If I had to live with it I should be little worse off than I am with the book I have to use here. But when a small committee has to get a hymn book through a conference representing a denomination as widespread in culture and tradition as American Methodism it is lucky if it gets agreement on anything from its constituency, let alone producing a book with so much constructive and distinguished material in it as this one.

Hymns Unbidden, by Martha Winburn England and John Sparrow, published by the New York Public Library, 1966. \$5.

This is an extraordinary book, consisting of four essays, one by the Warden of All Souls, and three by Professor England, contributed to the *Bulletin* of the New York Library, and all concerned with hymns, hymn writers, and curious speculations concerning both.

Mr Sparrow's essay is on 'George Herbert and John Donne among the Moravians', and is a very pleasing piece of leisurely scholarship, valuable to hymnologists chiefly for drawing their attention to the quite remarkable work of John Gambold in editing the Moravian *Collection of Hymns* in 1754. The remarkable thing about Gambold is the extent to which he drew on the writings of those pre-Watts poets—such as Herbert and Donne who are particularly in view here—whose contributions to our own hymnody we usually ascribe to the reconciling work of such editors as Dearmer and Horder. Gam-

bold used them with far more freedom than *Songs of Praise* ever essayed: and to those who are not especially well read in Moravian hymnody the 'enthusiasm' of the literature which Gambold prescribed for singing, whether taken direct from the great writers of a century earlier or, what proved to be far worse, taken by imitation, is something of an eye-opener. Mr Sparrow has examined this collection with a dispassionate and scholarly eye; he has given examples of how Herbert found his way into Wesley's hymnody and also into that of the Moravians, and of how Donne influenced the Moravians; he has identified the writers of (or of the originals of) many of the hitherto inscrutable things in Gambold; and in sum, he has opened up the whole field of enquiry into the true origins of a good deal of hymnody not only Moravian but also Wesleyan.

Professor England is a rather different proposition. She writes three essays: 'The First Wesley Hymn Book', 'Blake and the Hymns of Charles Wesley', and 'Emily Dickinson and Isaac Watts'. She writes with an impatient and hectoring enthusiasm; fairly often you have to read a sentence several times, and only then make up your mind whether it is meant literally, ironically, allusively, or in some other origenistic sense. The first essay is slight, and sober, compared with the second, which covers a hundred pages and is divided into four chapters. This is a piece of major research which is hardly easier to read than Blake himself: but if you can tolerate the typically go-to-blazes attitude of a scholar who refers to snippets of Blake by pages in Dr Erdman's edition, omitting the names of the works from which they come, and who is quite sure (and mistakenly sure) how to spell 'apostasy' and 'myopia' (pp. 122, 129 in the concluding essay), there is any amount of rich stuff here.

Professor England has beyond doubt shown a common source for the more far-flung fantasies of Charles Wesley and the imaginings of Blake: I do not think she has shown us what the source is, and that would be a most interesting discovery. But that Wesleyan notes keep sounding in Blake is clearly proved by reference to the kind of Wesley literature which only a very devout Methodist, or a painstaking scholar, now knows. It is not a matter of quotation, of verbal reminiscence (like Charles Wesley's versifications of Matthew Henry), but rather of a consonance, or a collision, in principles of Biblical interpretation. To understand all that Professor England says you have to know more Blake by heart, and more Wesley, than your present reviewer does (for when it comes to details, the Professor is impatient of direct references). But the parallels and cross-allusions, even when as yet unintelligible, are promising, and the objectivity of the study is quite beyond doubt.

The closing essay on Emily Dickinson and Isaac Watts, which again proclaims itself as thoroughly in-group stuff by opening with the prescription that a copy of Emily Dickinson's complete poems must be at the reader's elbow, gives us some entertaining and startling

suggestions about this peculiar and prolific American poet—according to at least one work of reference, America's greatest. The illustrations of her parodies, reminiscences, plagiarisms and allusions which a hymn-conscious reader will find in Emily Dickinson's poetry will be chiefly of interest to those who know that work well. They will temper any false reverence that a reader may have for this Miss Dickinson—who seems to use material from every hymn writer except Wesley that had lived early enough to be of use to her. Emily Dickinson was an agnostic, a romantic rejecter of religion, and, by the account given here, her combination of naïve deism with the practice of quarrying from hymns is astonishing only to those who forget that hymns are the literary underground of the Church. (Only Father Brown among detectives talks theology: but you'll find hymns embedded even in the prose of Agatha Christie.)

One lays the book down with a gasp. But one puts it on a handy shelf for reference. There is a good deal more here than the brash style of the second author leads you to suspect.

VENI IMMANUEL

In the *Musical Times* for September, 1966, an important note on VENI IMMANUEL appeared, contributed by Mother Thomas More, who had found the original of this mysterious tune.

Briefly the history of criticism of this tune has been as follows:

FRERE, *Hymns A & M, Historical Edition* (1909), at no. 47:

The tune appeared set to a translation of this Latin hymn in the second part of *The Hymnal Noted*, 1854. It was there said to have been taken from a French Missal in the National Library, Lisbon; but all efforts to trace it have failed. It seems to be an adaptation of a plainsong Kyrie.

Frede is simply quoting the ascription over Hymn 65 in *The Hymnal Noted*, which reads: 'From a French Missal in the National Library, Lisbon. Harmonized by the Rev. S. S. Greatheed'.

MILLAR PATRICK, in the musical note at no. 149 in the *Handbook to the Church Hymnary* (1935) wrote as follows:

... These Missals (sc. in the National Library, Lisbon), have all been examined by the Rev. W. Hilton, of the English College, Lisbon, but this melody is not to be found in them. In all probability it is not a genuine medieval melody but has been made up of a number of plain-song phrases, most of these being found in settings of the Kyrie. The tune in its present form cannot be traced to an earlier source than *The Hymnal Noted*, and the likelihood is therefore that the adaptation was made for that book to suit Dr Neale's translation.

In the *Supplementary Notes* (1935), Dr Patrick added nothing to this opinion.

LIGHTWOOD in *The Music of the Methodist Hymn Book* (1935) dismissed the Edinburgh thesis, but offered nothing in its place:

It is said to have been copied from a French Missal in the National Library at Lisbon, but who copied it is not known, nor has the missal ever again been seen. The suggestion that it is 'composed' of a selection of fragments of plain-song is scarcely plausible.

In his supplement to Lightwood, Dr WESTBROOK does not comment on this opinion, although he has a note on the modality of the tune (257).

FROST, at 49 in the *Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient & Modern* (1961) picks up a reference that Frere had missed. After repeating Frere's note, he writes:

According to Helmore in an article on Plainsong (*Dictionary of Musical Terms*, Stainer & Barrett, 1881), the tune was 'copied by the late J. M. Neale from a French Missal'. See *Musical Times*, November, 1959.

Frost then quotes a tune from Bäumker, dated 1836, as the earliest tune to the words 'Veni Immanuel'.

THE HYMNAL (1940) COMPANION of the USA, an unusually scholarly work, puts it thus (2):

VENI IMMANUEL . . . appears to be a cento of several *Kyrie* melodies made by Thomas Helmore to accompany Neale's text in the musical edition of *The Hymnal Noted**. (The asterisk means, as always in that book, that the text named has been consulted directly.)

Mother Thomas More broke the story wide open by consulting the manuscripts in the National Library of Paris: and there was VENI IMMANUEL, set to these words:

Bone Jesu dulcis cunctis
aeterni Patris Filius,
te precamus pro defunctis,
assis eis propitius,
vulnera pande citius
Patri pro tuo famulo
ut fruatur uberius
tui perenni gaudio.

Eight lines, requiring the first long phrase to be repeated: but otherwise the tune is exactly as we know it. The long notes at 'Rejoice,

rejoice' are given as notes of the same length as all the others; but the double-length note on the first syllable of 'exile' in verse 1 appears as two notes of the same pitch followed by the note below, all three slurred as are the three notes of the corresponding phrase in all the other lines. The tune is given in two parts, written as for equal voices, note against note, the compass of the second part being exactly one fifth—D to A (keynote D); the melody line therefore goes both above and below it, reaching from low C to high C. There is no key-signature, but a flat is added over the B in the melisma each time it occurs.

The publication of the story in the *Musical Times* for September drew from Mr Nicholas Temperley, who wrote from Yale, a letter attributing the original story to your present editor. Your editor, most vulnerable of critics, had put it thus in *The Music of Christian Hymnody*—

'It seems that Helmore actually composed a quasi-plainsong tune. . . . Mr Temperley had been unwise enough to quote that, and was understandably indignant at being the target of criticism implied in Mother Thomas's findings. 'Why', he wrote (to your editor's quiet pleasure), 'does she choose to attack a mere agent, when the master criminal is to hand?'

This, with a transcript of what Mother Thomas found, appeared in the *MT* for November, 1966 (page 968). Your Editor hurriedly wrote to the *MT* withdrawing his congratulations to Helmore on writing such a good tune, and was moved to write to Mr Temperley a letter signed 'Yours assuredly, A. Capone' (but did not).

No news in hymnology could well be pleasanter than the discovery that this tune has at least an authentic French source. (What, after all, could be better in these days when the Common Market is so much with us?). All the same, plenty of questions remain open. What we do know is that we need no longer trouble the librarian at Lisbon, that the words associated with the French source are not a *Kyrie* but a devotional hymn of prayer for the dead, and that the instincts of those who edited the *English Hymnal* in 1906 were right when they reduced the tune ('Rejoice!' apart) to equal notes.

In the light of the discovery of this text it is worth while to go back over the editions which have appeared in various hymnals. *The Hymnal Noted* made a good effort, but tried to be too clever. Its harmony, by the egregious Greatheed, is terrifying. But the melody shows a characteristic effort to interpret a simple syllable tune in terms of 19th-century antiquarian scholarship. It begins as we know it: at 'Immanuel' in the first line there is a two-beat note on the last syllable—a conventional representation, one supposes, of the plainsong pause at the end of a phrase. When we get to 'Israel', however, the three-note *melisma* on the first syllable comes out as a minim and two crotchets. The next two lines are as we know them. At 'Rejoice!', we have three minims and a semibreve—equal notes,

that is, plus a one-beat pause; and at 'Immanuel' in the same line the three-note phrase is now not like 'Immanuel' in the first line, but like 'Israel' in the second — a minim and two crotchets: why this variation who can tell? In the final line goodness knows exactly what is supposed to happen: the first three notes are set to 'Nascetur' in the Latin and 'Shall be born for' in the English; the plainsong square notes run along equally, but in the accompaniment the extra syllable is provided for by a repetition of the first chord in dotted rhythm. 'Israel' at the end is like 'Israel' in line 2.

Hymns A & M then took up the tale in 1861 (no. 36). There were no bar-lines in Helmore's book; but *A & M* did not feel that its constituency could be properly served without them: and so the three-beat note at the end of line 1 appeared. But *not* the three-beat note at the end of line 5. 'Rejoice, rejoice!' appears now in its dramatic iambic rhythm, but overlapping the end of line 5 and the beginning of line 6 is a two-beat bar. 'Immanuel shall come to thee' without delay. It was the editors of that dreadful revision of 1875 who held up Immanuel at this point. People are still singing that version with amazing complacency.

Gauntlett's version in the 1876 *Wesleyan Hymn Book* (Lightwood calls it that, but some copies have the title *Wesley's Hymns with Supplement*) is a nice study in 19th-century romanticism. It preserves four-beat bars all through, and therefore the pauses at the ends of both lines 1 and 5: but it introduces a D sharp at the 'Israel' cadence both times. As if to compensate for this modernism, it opens with double-length notes, like a psalm-tune, and has the same 'gathering note' effect at the beginning of line 3.

Congregationalists were singing the hymn by 1874, in the 'O come, O come' version (Neale originally wrote 'Draw nigh, draw nigh'); they are in the 1874 Supplement to the *New Congregational Hymn Book*, at no. 1032, there marked for use on Palm Sunday. The *Bristol Tune Book* carried the tune in its third edition (undated) at no. 848, in a reasonably clean version, with pause at the end of line 1 but not line 5, and a few dominant sevenths in the harmony: D sharp and C sharp appear in the harmony only in line 3. The 'Immanuel' bar in line 6 is a six-beat bar. The last edition of the *Congregational Psalmist* (1886) has the hymn and tune; Gauntlett edited the first two editions, but had died by 1886, and Monk had taken over. The version of the tune given here (187), however, is not the same as those which appear in *A & M*; although it omits Gauntlett's gathering notes and sharpened cadences, it keeps his harmonic conventions: no pause at line 5. In Barrett's *Congregational Church Hymnal* (1887) the pause at line 5 appears: harmonies are cleaned up to some extent, but Hopkins, the editor, was content to leave a 6/4 chord at 'Israel' both times.

It is interesting to note that the Congregationalists were singing this hymn and tune long before it gained anything like unanimous

acceptance among the Anglicans. The *Hymnal Companion* never used it: nor did Sullivan's book. Clearly it had a 'high church' association which the competitors of *A & M* were interested in excluding from their books. Even Harwood kept it out of the *Oxford Hymnal* (1908).

And of course we must note that when the words were used they were not always sung to VENI IMMANUEL. Dykes wrote a tune for it, and *The Hymnary*, edited by Barnby, has two tunes at no. 103, one by Gauntlett, and one by Gounod, both of which are worth preserving in anybody's chamber of horrors.

Twentieth-century editors have not left VENI IMMANUEL alone, of course. V-W in *EH* (8) cleaned it up in 1906, cutting both pauses at lines 1 and 5, but leaving the notation in minims. J. H. Arnold took it over in 1933 and reduced the notation to quavers, and substituted characteristically withdrawn harmonies. After *EH* (1906), editors tended to accept the more flowing version—that is, to return to something much more like Mother Thomas's manuscript, but they have generally kept the rhythmic 'Rejoice!' motive. *Hymns A & M*, however, has shown a hectic anxiety to atone for the disastrous influences of 1875 and '89. In 1904 Selby produced a very standoffish version, written in minims but joining the *melismata* with tails (producing a marvellously archaic effect in an irrational sort of way). Pauses at lines 1 and 5 were omitted, but so was any kind of pause at the end of all other lines: and 'Rejoice!' became a triple-line iambus, not a four-line one: minim-semibreve, not minim-dotted semibreve. About the version in the revised edition of 1950 it is difficult to write temperately. Somebody (was it Nicholson, or was it some august authority who still has time for repentance and amendment of life?) introduced a rhetorical 'O come, O come' in crotchet-minim rhythm, a two-beat pause at the end of line 1, a three-beat pause at the end of line 2: two beats at line 3, three at line 4. Thereafter there are no further traps for unwary congregations, and the one-beat rest after each 'Rejoice!' (following *EH* 1906 and '33) is excellent. But who on earth could think it either authentic or expedient to sing

O come
Thou Day
spring come and cheer

passes comprehension.

Well, we now have some kind of an authentic source: but Mother Thomas has given us no date for it. And this is something we must take care about. There is no evidence yet that this is in any sense an old melody. All this '12th century' romanticism that the enthusiasts of the 19th century put into their ascriptions is still entirely in doubt. The original is an eight-line tune which in melodic form looks more like a Welsh tune than anything else: A—A—B—A':

A' being a small variant on A. The Master Criminal does not venture any suggestion that it is Welsh—though he would not be surprised to hear that it was Breton. However—all this repetition and this touch of melodic development does not suggest antiquity at all. 'Plainsong' surely is quite out of the question.

And this means that there is no compulsion on modern editors to do any more with it than make it practicable for singing, and harmonize it in a manner conformable with its melodic character. D sharps are out: it is modal, whatever its period. The keynote is (say) E, the dominant B, the melodic range D—D. In our six-line form it is a marvellous tune. But there is, for example, no reason on earth why it should not be occasionally sung in harmony (as the *University Carol Book*, edited by Capone, ventures to suggest). Nobody need feel obliged to try to make a noise like a 19th-century monk when singing it. Personally, I am quite happy with either *UCB*, or Arnold, or Capone in *CP*, but Capone's minims in *CP* are a major error.

'VERNA CANTO'

'VERNA CANTO' is a new experiment in Roman Catholic liturgical music, promoted by the Gregorian Institute of America (2132 Jefferson Avenue, Toledo, Ohio, 43601). Its name means 'vernacular plainsong', and it is an attempt to devise a very simple congregational song which has the flexibility of plainsong, but is adapted to the singing of the liturgy in English. The underlying thesis is that the plainsong that we have inherited from the Middle Ages must always be in some sense a 'translation'; its proper and ancient associations are with Latin. This is like plainsong, but has grown out of an English text.

At present the following issues of this music are available: Mass for Christian Charity: Mass for the Dead: Psalm 22 (23), and Psalm 150. More publications are expected, and enquirers are best advised to write for an up-to-date brochure from the Gregorian Institute. There is an explanatory LP record in which examples are sung, expounded in a spoken commentary.

The music is designedly simple. It is noted in quavers, with various simple signs added, and the performance copies include a useful note which shows how such plainsong conventions as the *pressus*, the *unicus liquescent* (if that is a plainsong convention) and the traditional pause are to be interpreted in the new style of singing. It runs lightly and effortlessly. The harmonies provided are entirely conventional: there is none of the haunting diatonic dissonance of Gelineau. The music is modal, but in the very limited sense of apparently sticking either to C major or to the minor key without melodic or harmonic accidentals (i.e. more or less the Aeolian mode). Psalm 150 shows the most adventurous harmonic devices—as is appropriate.

Without extensive music examples it is not possible to give any more detailed commentary. But those who are interested in contemporary liturgical developments should get in touch with the Gregorian Institute and find out for themselves about 'Verna Canto', from which all of us may find that we have something to learn.

