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OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

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EDITORIAL

A NEW DEVELOPMENT IN HYMN TUNE WRITING.

Those who have the opportunity of seeing some part of the enormous output of hymn tunes that comes from contemporary Christians are sometimes moved to comment on a depressing conventionality of style that pervades these compositions nine tenths of the time. The Reverend Geoffrey Beaumont (British Chaplain in Madrid) has recently made a gesture against this conventionality of which anybody interested in the development of the hymn tune ought to take careful notice.

Unhappily, none of Mr. Beaumont's tunes has yet been printed by a music publisher: but listeners to *Sunday Half Hour* on October 14th 1956 were introduced to the first of them, a tune to 'Lord, thy Word abideth', in a programme broadcast from Martock Parish Church. Those who want to see a printed copy of this tune can get one by applying for a copy of the *British*

Weekly for December 27th 1956, on the front page of which the tune appears.[1] In that same issue the reader will find some comments by the present writer on Mr. Beaumont's *Folk Mass,* which is in itself a most interesting and remarkable, not to say controversial, piece of liturgical music[2].

Mr. Beaumont has written several other hymn tunes, which we have not seen; but 'Lord, thy Word abideth' provides ground for some comment here.

Mr. Beaumont's aim is to provide a kind of church music which assimilates itself to the idiom of the music that the non-churchgoing, unevangelized Christian hears in the secular world. He makes war, that is, on ecclesiastical conventionality. In the Folk Mass he employs rhythms that suggest the dance-band : one movement is largely in tango-rhythm, another is broadly speaking a fox-trot. In the hymn tune, he turns not to the dance-band but to the 'musical' of the stage or cinema. He aims at producing the kind of tune that becomes a 'hit' from coast to coast. In our own opinion, he does this, in 'Lord, thy Word abideth', quite superbly. Listening to the original broadcast, in verse 1, one said, 'What in the world is happening?', in verse 2, one began to join in a phrase or two and in verse 3 one was irresistibly compelled to sing it throughout with the unseen congregation. To that extent it is catchy, simple, and persuasive. (The tune, by the way, takes two verses at a time).

Now it is worth our while to examine the two parts of Mr. Beaumont's gesture. We may ask, in the first place, what is the conventionality he is attacking, and what exactly is his solution; thus we may place Mr. Beaumont's work in an historical setting.

We all know what kind of hymn tune Mr. Beaumont regards as depressingly conventional, as expressing that idiom which, in his view, keeps all kinds of people outside the church. It is not the historically archetypal hymn tune, but the Victorian hymn tune that has done this. What he means, let's face it, is the contents of the 1889 *Hymns A and M.* Within his category of stuffy conventionals he would include a good deal that churchgoers like, and a good deal that churchgoers rightly like; that is, not by any means all of what he deprecates is in itself bad music. Indeed, his comment is not a musical comment; it is rather a moral and pastoral comment. He would say of AURELIA, for example, or of DOMINUS REGIT ME, or even of ST. FULBERT that they are 'churchy' in the sense in which he wants tunes to be 'not churchy'; and all those three tunes are, for their own purpose and in their own context, not merely blameless but positively admirable.[3]

[1] *British Weekly,* 11 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.2. Sixpence covers cost and postage.

[2] Weinberger & Co., 33 Crawford Street, W.1., 7s. 6d.

[3] The Editor has changed his mind about AURELIA since *Bulletin II* i p. 3.

No : there is a 'form' of hymn tune, as it were, running through the whole of the upper stratum of Victorian hymnody as exemplified in *Hymns A and M* (1889) from which deviations are scarcely tolerated. You can see it if you compare EISENACH, for example, in the old *A and M* version, (*A.M.S.* 173) with either the Bach version at *A.M.S.* 593 (or, better, *E.H.* 138) or the original version at *Songs of Sion* 60. The elaborate harmony of Bach and the urgent rhythm of Schein are both deviations from the conventional form. The conventional form is an easy-going, mainly stepwise melody, with four part harmony, minim against minim, and without any rhythmic interest beyond the mere metric scheme. This was the form to which 19th century composers of the *A and M* kind bound themselves. A reference back to *Bulletin* II i and ii will remind our readers to what extent S. S. Wesley allowed himself to deviate from it. But S. S. Wesley's best known tunes are in the conventional form, and so are those of Dykes, Gauntlett, Stainer and the rest.

This conventional form is strictly undemonstrative—or at its best it is that. The techniques of demonstrativeness which it allows are always defacements of the form. Chromatic harmony, derived from the drawing room part-song; melodic rising sixths, derived from the drawing-room solo ballad, and monotony in the treble part suspending melodic under-parts, derived from instrumental music : these, together with key-changes and a litter of expression marks, are the vocabulary of emotion in the Victorian scheme. And it is a most significant point that these are, as we have said, defacements of the form. The best Victorian hymn tunes are those which decisively reject all these techniques : plain melodies, plain harmonies, broad general effects and no fuss : that is the real Victorian character in hymnody, and we know perfectly well that nine tenths of what is actually sung in our churches is nothing but that.

We know, too, that a very large proportion of the contents of *E.H.* is a determined deviation from that principle. *E.H.* introduced, or recalled, rhythmic interest, whether in new tunes like DOWN AMPNEY or in restoring what Dr. Vaughan Williams doesn't like us to call long initials (but what we continue to call long initials). It introduced again the principle of unison singing —but of course this was unison singing plus accompaniment, not unison singing in the ancient psalmodic or chorale style. It brought in Bach's arrangements of chorales. On nearly every page there is an eloquent protest against the very same thing that Mr. Beaumont is protesting against.

But *E.H.* is no good to Mr. Beaumont : at any rate, Mr. Beaumont's style is not *E.H.* style. For *E.H.* remains ecclesiastical. The restoration of original, or near-original versions of tunes at once enlarged the vocabulary of the singing congregation (if the

congregation was prepared to submit); but it enlarged it by recalling primitive styles. And the primitive style of the hymn tune, whether plainsong, Genevan or Lutheran, is strictly vocal, and not at all instrumental. The archetypal hymn tune stands on its own feet without accompaniment. It was the establishment of accompaniment that really disposed of the native genius of the chorale: you cannot sing EIN' FESTE BURG in its original version accompanied; it is just a plain, straight tune in its own right, complete in itself, rhythm and melody, no more. So is plainsong. Of the Genevan tunes we may say that their less exuberant rhythmical structure admits accompaniment (or polyphony) more easily, but it remains true that they *lose* nothing by that monodic treatment on which Calvin himself insisited.

Now Mr. Beaumont seems to be saying that this is all very fine for the historically minded: but what your unchurched mass-man hears is music instrumentally accompanied, or music sung in harmony. His vocabulary is the vocabulary of *Oklahoma.* Therefore it is up to the modern composer to construct a hymn tune which shall stand absolutely foursquare within *that* tradition. It is up to him to find, not a tune to which polyphony or accompaniment are secondary, but a tune which is really incomplete without any of the appurtenances of modern popular music.

Since your mass-man in England is more addicted to a straight unison tune instrumentally accompanied than to vocal polyphony, the style he chooses is unison melody accompanied on the piano. An orchestra would do, but the organ will not do, for the accompaniment. When 'Lord, thy Word abideth' was sung from Martock the organ gave out the introductory two bars, and the piano came in with the voices, and we take it that this was the composer's intention. Given that, Mr. Beaumont constructs a melody of wide compass (low B flat to high E flat, in the key of E flat), employing a moderate but exceedingly effective form of syncopation. The essence here is not the very short phrase characteristic of jazz music and of the Folk Mass, but a really long tune covering 16 bars, sweeping the congregation along with it in a manner somewhat comparable to Parry's REPTON.

Now let us ask—has anybody else ever attepted this before? We are not sure that Mr. Beaumont's work is absolutely *sui generis* or unique, even though we cheerfully admit that it goes much farther, and succeeds more resoundingly, than anything else of the kind we know. But there are adumbrations of the technique to be found in other places during the past fifty years.

For example: the Public School Style (on which we recall Mr. Blake's admirable article, *Bulletin* II xii 180) introduced to hymn-singing congregations the broad and spacious melody essentially unison, with accompaniment designed for a large organ. Mr. Blake reminded us that REPTON is itself a good example of

the style; so is WOLVERCOTE. But this style deals only in broad melody: not in rhythmic urgency. Again, *Songs of Praise,* a book compiled with more than half an eye on the School Assembly, where the instrument is virtually always a piano, introduced the piano-accompanied unison song of the lighter kind, such as Martin Shaw's ALL WATERS (SP 327) and the arrangement of Holst's THAXTED. But when you are writing for children, you are entitled to educate, and education is the last thing Mr. Beaumont is after—that is, musical education: the music is to be a friendly background for evangelical education. On the whole, both the Public School style and the School Assembly style are as much originators as receivers of styles; and in the background of both there is the 'School song', that expression of hearty, slightly sentimental 'unity' which can to some extent be baptised into a doctrine of the church.

No; if one wants a parallel to Mr. Beaumont, one must look for a composer who is (like Mr. Beaumont) a really successful 'music hall' composer: one who has the gift of the broad and catchy vocal melody. This is different from the gift for catching the ecclesiastical atmosphere; and it is different from the gift for writing jazz music (which second gift Mr. Beaumont also has). In a word, one goes straight to Sullivan, and asks whether he ever attempted anything of the kind. On the tragedy of Sullivan we have already delivered ourselves at some length (*Bulletin* II vii 103). Sullivan kept Savoy well away from church. Only in 'Onward, Christian soldiers' did he write something which foretold (in 1871) his coming achievements as a composer of great popular music. Sullivan could have done it: but he would not do it, and we think that Mr. Beaumont would have very full sympathy with the awful story of Sullivan. There was something in the church as he knew it that stifled the sense of the popular, and it is the same thing that Mr. Beaumont says is keeping men and women away from the church to-day.

There is only one composer, as we think, who comes near to the Beaumont technique; and he did not do what he did with anything like Mr. Beaumont's intentions. Those intentions, indeed, he would have loathed like poison, for he was a very conventional churchman. The composer is unhappily far more obscure than he ought to be, or than in another age he would have been. He is Alexander Brent Smith (1889-1950), and the hymn tune on which we base this judgement is called LANCING, composed about 1925, and first printed posthumously in *Congregational Praise* (No. 193).

BrentSmith (on whom see *Bulletin* II xiii 195) wrote a great deal of music, only a very small part of which ever found publication. His idiom was Schubertian, and at some points even Sullivanesque. His greatest pleasure, however, was the composition

of music for light operas of his own authorship, some of which were performed at the school where he was a housemaster and Director of Music, and others of which have been performed by the Gloucester Music Society. None of it ever went into print, but there are many who would unofficially testify to the genius for 'music-hall' of the best kind that lay within it.

Now *C.P.* 193 comes from that stream. It is a tune of very special texture. It is difficult to bring off on an organ, but with a fairly freely improvised piano accompaniment and a large body of voices it is enormously effective. It leaves syncopation to Mr. Beaumont, but its rhythmic drive is beyond any doubt, and its wide compass builds up to an irresistible climax. Like 'Lord, thy word abideth', it sets two verses at a time, and like 'Lord, thy Word abideth', it is about as far from the conventional tune to its words ('When morning gilds the skies') as could well be imagined.

The same composer's other tune, 'Come, O thou Traveller' (CP 496 ii, written for 495) has something of the same character, but perhaps a little less lightness and more dignity. There are no more of his like this. Two others, to George Herbert's 'Let all the world' and 'Come, my Way', were published years ago, but copies are now untraceable, and they are pieces of great depth and piety, but not 'music hall' in any way.

Now Mr. Beaumont's experiment must be taken seriously. On the wider implications of it we have written in the *British Weekly,* and we will not repeat here what we said there. Mr. Beaumont has thrown himself into the context, and assimilated the vocabulary, of the 'musical', and had produced hymn tunes to conform to that. Of the rest of his tunes, we know only this at present, that none is set to words of very deep devotional content. There are many hymns which can be sung not unsuitably to this kind of music; the best suited for it are, of course, those which are more religious songs than hymns of dogmatic devotion. 'City of God', 'Thy kingdom come, on bended knee', 'Children of the heavenly King', 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow',—these are the kind of words that are by no means defaced by such treatment. Of 'When I survey', on the other hand, we should want to say that Mr. Beaumont must educate his newly evangelised people to the point where they can make something of the words, and that when that is done they will not mind singing them to ROCKINGHAM or LLEF.

We have made no mention of Sankey. Sankey, of course, assimilated the music-hall and popular song of his day. But it was his day, and nothing nowadays is more dated, nor is anything more religiously tendentious, than Sankey. Sankey would not help Mr. Beaumont's kind of person at all. It is possible that three generations on, Mr. Beaumont's music, if it achieves a popularity

comparable with Sankey's, will be no less firmly dated or religiously tendentious. But first and last we say this; that in our judgment what Mr. Beaumont has done is done exceedingly well, with musical integrity and religious conviction; and it is to be hoped that his hymn tunes find their way into print. Until they do, we can say no more than is said here.

A LINK WITH LOYS BOURGEOIS

by John Wilson

Many who use or study the Genevan psalm-melodies will welcome the chance of a closer acquaintance with the personality of Loys Bourgeois, who, as the hymn-books say, 'composed or arranged' a great number of them. Such acquaintance has been made possible by the recent appearance in facsimile of his very scarce little treatise *Le Droict Chemin de Musique,* published at Geneva in 1550 while the great work on the Psalter was still in progress. The facsimile has been issued by Bärenreiter-Verlag of Kassel[1] in their series of *Documenta Musicologica* and is on the whole well produced. Some over-inking and distortion of print are occasionally found, but these are relatively small blemishes. For the few shillings that it costs, the booklet is a valuable acquisition, and the ordinary reader can browse in its 64 small pages until the old French spelling and typography no longer stand between him and the author.

Loys Bourgeois was born in Paris, perhaps about 1510, and we may think of him as the contemporary of Tallis and Marbeck. A few of his secular songs appeared in a collection of 1538, and it was in or about 1541 that he went to Geneva. Once there, he was soon at work under Calvin on the psalm-tunes, and he seems to have established himself rapidly, for by 1545 he had become 'chantre' at the church of St-Pierre, with responsibility both for the psalm-singing and for the instruction of the young. Two years later (as M. Gaillard mentions in an editorial note to the present facsimile) he was granted his rights of citizenship at Geneva 'parce qu'il est homme de bien et qu'il sert volontiers pour apprendre les enfants'. *Le Droict Chemin,* which obviously embodies much of his teaching method, is a primer of musical rudiments for would-be singers. Some of its technicalities go well beyond the needs of psalmody, but the title-page consoles the beginner with a promise of 'la manière de chanter les Pseaumes par usage ou ruse', which is to be illustrated by a setting of Psalm 34 ('nouveau mis en chant') and by the Song of Simeon.

In a prefatory letter 'à tous bons Chrestiens Amateurs de Musique' Bourgeois announces a principal feature of his 'droict chemin'. This is the abolition of the time-honoured method of

1 The British agents are Messrs. Novello & Co. Ltd., 160 Wardour St., London, W.1.

THE HYMN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December, 1956.

1. General Fund Receipts and Payments Account.

PAYMENTS:

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Printing and Despatching Copies of 4 Bulletins		96 19 6	
Printing Index to Volume II & III of the Bulletins		13 18 6	
Printing Subscription Notices, Prospectus and Letterheads ...		8 12 1	
		119 10 1	
Secretary's Postages		1 8 5	
Treasurer's Postages & Stationery		3 15 6	
Foreign Cheque Collection Expenses		3 5	
Annual Conference Expenses:			
Printing Hymn Sheets ...	15 10 6		
Other Expenses	4 12 5	20 2 11	145 0 4

LESS RECEIPTS:

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Members' Subscriptions:			
1 Life Member		5 5 0	
194 Subs. for 1956 at 7/6 ...		72 15 0	
16 Subs. for 1957 at 10/6 ...		8 8 0	
3 Subs. for arrears at 7/6 ...		1 2 6	
		87 10 6	
Donations:			
The Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions ...	3 3 0		
Barrow Cadbury Fund Ltd ...	1 14 6		
Joseph Alexander's Trust ...	1 0 0	5 17 6	
Sale of Literature:			
Extra copies of the Bulletin ...		12 11 7	
Surplus Library Books ...		1 2 6	
Investment Interest:			
£500 3½% Defence Bonds ...	17 10 0		
Deposit Account Interest ...	4 18 5	22 8 5	129 10 6
EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS:			15 9 10
Balances at 31st December, 1955:			
Current Account	24 3 8		
Deposit Account	185 18 3		210 1 11
LESS EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS:			15 9 10

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance at 31st December, 1956:		
Current Account:	3 15 5	
Deposit Account:	190 16 8	194 12 1

2. Julian's Dictionary Receipts and Payments Account

PAYMENTS:

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Editor's Out of Pocket Expenses:			
Year to 31st December, 1955		50 0 0	
Half Year to 30th June, 1956		25 0 0	
		75 0 0	

LESS RECEIPTS:

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Donation from the Proprietors of Hymns Ancient and Modern	50 0 0		
Donations from Members ...	3 14 0		
Interest on Deposit Account ...	4 7 8	58 1 8	
EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS:		16 18 4	
Deposit Account Balance at 31st December, 1955 ...			130 10 4
Less Excess of Payments over Receipts			16 18 4
Deposit Account Balance at 31st December, 1956 ...			113 12 0

MEMBERSHIP FOR 1956.

Ordinary Members:		
Received in 1956	194	
Received in 1957	6	
Received in advance Prior to 1st January 1956	11	
Total:	211	
Life Members:		
As at 31st Dec. 1955	13	
New in 1956	1	
	14	
	225	

Note:— The above total of 225 members does not include 13 persons who have still not paid their 1956 subscription.

Signed: Maurice Frost, *Chairman*.

D. C. B. Harris, A.A.C.C.A., *Treasurer*.

19th March, 1957.

instruction by 'la Gamme'—meaning in this context the so-called 'Guidonian Hand', by which a pupil was taught to associate the degrees of the scale (or strictly of the hexachords) with a sequence of positions at the joints and tips of the fingers[1]. This old method, he declares, is a vexatious obstacle, which discourages many from learning and may even wholly exclude some people who happen to be weak in their fingers. Instead, he is prepared to assert that the early stages of music can be learned 'en papier' as readily as those of the other 'sciences', and he has pupils to prove it—'jeunes gens et autres' who, without the Guidonian Hand and in far less time, have not only learned to sing a part 'seurement et de bonne grace', but can also fully understand what they are doing. The point is driven home at the end of the book, where a spare half-page carries the light-hearted quatrain :

Puis qu'en papier ou parchemin
On peut apprendre la Musique,
Laissez ceste Gamme rustique :
Et me prenez Le Droict Chemin.

This fresh and popular approach to music through instruction in sight-singing was a sign of the times. The printed word, especially when in the vernacular, was becoming ever more important, and for the musically-inclined at Geneva there were already some of the new psalm-tunes, plain or harmonised, published and waiting to be used. Calvin himself, though he favoured only simple music in worship, seems to have recognised the value of sight-singing, perhaps because the psalm-tunes in their great variety of metres could hardly have been used without it. The records show that in May 1550, when Bourgeois was well established as the leading musician of the Genevan community, the manuscript of his 'pety traicté de musique' was shown to Calvin, who advised the Council that 'il sera bon l'imprimer'. The Council agreed to publication—at the author's expense—and the printing of the little book was completed during the summer[2].

Le Droict Chemin has twelve short chapters. The first ten of these deal with the hexachords, the solfa syllables, and the 'mutations'; the pitching of the voice by tones, semitones and other intervals; the notation of notes, rests, dots and ligatures; the various kinds of triple time; the 'tacte' (or beating of time); proportional time-signatures; and melodic syncopation. The two final chapters are for the would-be psalm-singer, and reveal the author's 'ruse' to help him. This is the typographical device of setting the words on the musical stave with the notes, each note having its syllable in small print to the left of it and on the same

1 Illustrations of the Guidonian Hand are given by Scholes in *The Oxford Companion to Music* (9th edn., 1955), plate 161.

2 Very little is known of Bourgeois beyond the brief statements in the records of the Geneva Council. Relevant entries are reprinted in *Arrêts du Conseil de Genève*, edited by Alfred Cartier (Geneva, 1893), and in *Loys Bourgeois* by Paul-André Gaillard (Lausanne, 1948).

line or space as the note-head. To demonstrate this 'ruse', Bourgeois prints the Genevan melody for 'Le Cantique de Simeon' twice in full, first with the appropriate solfa syllables beside the note-heads, and then with the proper syllables of Marot's text—'Or laisse Createur...' This version of the Nunc Dimittis was already in use and may have been chosen for its familiarity.[1] A few pages later, however, the reader is confronted with the new setting of Psalm 34, which is paraphrased in 21 six-line stanzas, beginning :

En tout temps l'excellence
Du Seigneur chanteray.

This is provided with a characteristic hypodorian melody of metre 76. 76. 66. D., covering two stanzas, and presumably by Bourgeois himself; but neither the tune nor its metre appeared in the complete Genevan psalter of 1562.[2]

It is tempting to see what we can learn from Bourgeois about the contemporary manner of performance of the psalm-tunes; but in reading him we must remember that he was as much concerned with the part-singing of his harmonised settings (in the home or elsewhere in private) as he was with the unison singing in church. In the matter of *tempo* he gives us only slender clues. His printed examples, and indeed all the tunes in the definitive Genevan psalter, have the barred-C time-signature and are without bar-lines. The notes are semibreves and minims only, except for a very few ligatures and a conventional long note at the end of each tune. Bourgeois is careful to point out the theoretical difference (on the proportional system) between the barred-C and unbarred-C signatures, the former implying that all notes were diminished to half their value. But there is always the possibility that here, as frequently elsewhere, the barred-C was used conventionally rather than significantly; so on the evidence of time-signature we can only say that the singing of the tunes was probably faster rather than slower. A more helpful hint may lie in the phraseology of the explanation Bourgeois gives to beginners of the different note-values they will encounter in the psalm-tunes. It must be understood, he says[3], that there are some words and syllables which have to be sung 'pesamment' (i.e. weightily or slowly) and others which must be sung 'legierement' (lightly or swiftly). The first, he explains, are those which are set to breves, semibreves, or ligatures; the others are those set to minims. From this we may reasonably conclude that he envisages a style and pace in which the minims can fairly be described as 'légères'.

But in two other matters directly affecting performance

1 *E.H.* 269.

2 Cartier (*op. cit.*, p. 156) suggests that this paraphrase may be by Guillaume Gueroult, who was occupied, at the same time as Beza, in translating the psalms left out by Marot.

3 *Le Droict Chemin* has no page-numbers; the passage is in Chapter XII.

Bourgeois does give us definite and valuable information. These are (*a*) the need for sharpening the penultimate melody-note at a cadence, which the singer must sometimes do for himself, and (*b*) the 'jerky' performance of crotchets and other short notes even when they are printed equal. It is difficult to discuss these points without musical illustration, but they may be mentioned briefly. As regards (*a*), a 'cadence' here means a melodic formula of three notes such as D—C—D at the end of a line of words, the question being whether to sharpen the C even if no sharp is indicated. While admitting that exact rules for this sort of *musica ficta* are hard to formulate, Bourgeois offers some good generalisations, which are worth study[1]; and his reasons for such changes are historically interesting. The dip of a semitone rather than a tone is used, he says, 'pour avoir plus doulce melodie. & áfin que chacune voix ou note puisse avoir dessus & dessouz soy son harmonie: c'esta dire un accord melodieux, composé de divers sons, comme de tierces, quintes, sextes, octaves, &c. Ce qui ne se pourroit faire autrement.' This harmonic reason for departing from the strict mode is well understood, and is exemplified in the requirement that a dominant chord, even in a minor key, must contain a major third; but the remark that the change produces 'a sweeter melody' will perhaps surprise modal purists.

As regards (*b*), Bourgeois tells us definitely that if (under the barred-C and certain other time-signatures) we come upon a number of crotchets in succession—his printed example is of crotchets moving stepwise up and down the scale—then 'the manner of singing them well is to take them by twos, dwelling a little longer on the first of each pair than on the second, as if the first were dotted and the second were only a quaver', the reasons being 'that the first is a harmony-note and the second is more often a discord ...and also that the notes have a better grace in the manner described, than if all were equal'.[2] This statement is immediately relevant to the treatment of crotchets in such harmonised psalm-settings as those of Goudimel and of Bourgeois himself, and is one of the earliest references to the much-discussed 'notes inégales', which were especially, but not wholly, a French mannerism of performance and are referred to by various writers in the 17th and 18th centuries. Their effect, in the sort of example quoted by Bourgeois, is to give not only melodic 'grace' but also a more lively and unencumbered minim-movement, and a greater fulness of harmony. In cases where the crotchets are not passing-notes of the kind illustrated, the performer must decide for himself whether or not to treat them as 'inégales'.[3]

[1] *Ibid.* Ch. II.

[2] *Ibid.* Ch. X.

[3] A good example of the 'inégales' manner, written out as it is to be performed, occurs in Dowland's harmonisation of the OLD 100TH (last line, bass part) in Ravenscroft's Psalter of 1621. See *E.H.* 365 (first alternative version).

The beginner's hints in *Le Droict Chemin* must surely be the earliest of all 'aids' to metrical psalmody, destined to be followed in the next 250 years by a whole procession of Introductions, Methods, Helps, Companions, Devout Guides, and what not. But if Bourgeois was first in the field, he was not alone for long. In 1560, for example, Calvin's friend Pierre Davantes brought out a most interesting *Pseaumes de David...avec nouvelle et facile méthode pour chanter,* containing the 83 psalms on whose melodies Bourgeois had worked, and printed in the elegant *civilité* type used for certain books on manners for the young. The aim of Davantes in this book is to help the singer in other stanzas than the first, his plan being to number the lines and spaces of the stave, so that a note can be known by a number, with a simple sign to indicate the note-length. The first stanza of each psalm has the melody printed normally, with the addition of solfa syllables in the manner of Bourgeois; the remaining stanzas have only the figures and signs as a sort of melodic shorthand. Another early instructional psalter was that of Pierre Vallete, who appears in the records as a deputy for the absent Bourgeois in 1553. Vallete claims to reduce the pupil's labours from 3 or 4 months to 2 or 3 weeks, his chief 'aid' being the printing of solfa syllables above the musical stave. It is worth noting that both Davantes and Vallete make it clear that in the practice of these psalm-tunes the 'tacte', or down-and-up beating of time, occupied the duration of a semibreve, even under the barred-C signature, and also that the rests at the ends of lines were *a tempo* rather than *ad libitum.* Thus, to their early users, tunes such as the OLD 100TH, the OLD 124TH, and LES COMMANDEMENS were felt to be in what we should call 2/2 time, though without particular downbeat stress.[1]

At about the same time, and no doubt under Genevan influence, the English publisher John Day took the opportunity of providing musical instructions in his early editions of 'Sternhold and Hopkins'. In the (as yet incomplete) Psalter of 1561 he included 'A short Introduction into the Science of Musick' to encourage 'the rude & ignoraunt in Song...[in]...the godly exercise of singing of Psalmes, aswell in common place of prayer, where altogether with one voice render thankes and praises to God, as priuatly by themselfs, or at home in their houses', and this preface was retained in the first complete English Psalter of 1562. In the 1570's John Day published other editions with a 'new print of Note', whereby, as he tells us, 'thou mayst knowe how to call every Note by his right name...[and] mayst sing the Psalmes the more spedely

[1] In the Genevan original of the OLD 100TH each of the first three lines ends with a semibreve followed by a semibreve rest. Modern versions which substitute a semibreve note and a pause-sign achieve almost the same effect. Other modern versions which merely suppress the Genevan rests should not be accepted uncritically.

LES COMMANDEMENS, in modern books, usually appears with note-values halved, and is sometimes rhythmically corrupted. The version at *E.H.* 277 would be satisfactory without the triplet signs.

and easlier'. Here the device was again akin to that of Bourgeois, each melody-note being preceded on the stave by the initial letter of its solfa name.

Of the later years of Bourgeois himself we know very little. Two years after the publication of *Le Droict Chemin,* and 10 years before the complete Genevan Psalter appeared, he went on leave of absence to see to the publication of his harmonised psalm-settings, and there is no evidence of his return to Geneva. His relations with the Council had not always been easy, and he may have had a natural wish to make fuller use of his musical skill than the Huguenot service required or allowed. The reader of *Le Droict Chemin* will perhaps feel that in certain passages towards the end of the book the professional musician gives way to the dutiful reformer, in obedience to what has been well described as the 'spiritual martial law' at Geneva. We are told, for example, that it is not the task ['devoir'] of the Christian to sing other things than Psalms or Spiritual Songs, and that those musicians are to be blamed who, instead of composing to the glory of God, 'prefer to puzzle their heads over verses so coarse that one should shrink from even uttering them, and still more from fitting them to music'.[1] Whether or not these opinions, and others in even stronger vein, were really characteristic of Bourgeois the man, we cannot tell; but there is nothing in the book to make us doubt his general loyalty to the Reformed Faith, or the sincerity of his closing words to his readers:

> Vous pouvez bien maintenant cognoistre (mes freres) de combien ce chemin est plus droit, & plus court que celuy de la Gamme: & comment Dieu par sa bonté infinie veult chasser toutes tenebres & erreurs de dessus la terre, & illuminer le monde de science & verité. Cela consideré, ne soyez ingratz envers luy de l'en remercier, en recognoissance d'un tel benefice: & dediez, non seulement vostre chant, mais aussi vostre vie totallement à sa gloire. Adorez le en esprit & verité. Invoquez le en confiance & il vous exaucera. Ne donnez point sa gloire à un autre. Croyez à sa parolle. Obeissez à ses commandementz. Tremblez à sez iugementz.
>
> Fuyez les ydoles, car ceux qui leurs serviront, seront confondus: mais ceux qui esperent en Dieu par Iesus Christ, seront sauvez.

1 *Ibid.* Ch. XI.

REVIEW

SOME GERMAN HYMN-WRITERS

Sursum Corda, by Sydney H. Moore, Independent Press, 128 pp., 8s. 6d.

From few sources has hymnody been so greatly enriched as from Germany in the 17th and 18th centuries. Most of us are familiar with the greatest of the hymns of that period, particularly through the translations of John Wesley and Catherine Winkworth; but Mr. Sydney Moore, a former Headmaster of Silcoates School, Wakefield, has now given us a delightful account, not only of these, but of many less known.

Mr. Moore sets out from the assumption that a hymn cannot be dissociated from its writer nor from the circumstances which gave it birth; but he tilts, with considerable justification, at the invention or reproduction of fanciful and sentimental origins—as, for example, the commonly held view that Rinckart's 'Now thank we all our God' was written to celebrate the end of the Thirty Years' War. Somewhat inconsistently, he himself reminds us that 'Rock of Ages' was prompted by Toplady's calculations that a person of eighty years might be debited with 2,522,880,000 sins, and that 'The Voice that Breathed o'er Eden' was a reply to the Divorce Bill of 1857—though these, no doubt, are not fancy but facts.

In a dozen well written chapters Mr. Moore deals, biographically rather than thematically, with the hymns of such well known writers as Johann Heermann, Matthäus von Löwenstern, Martin Rinckart, Josua Stegmann, Paul Gerhardt, and Gerhard Tersteegen, with some informative comments on one or two writers less known, Christian Knorr von Rosenroth and Friedrich von Logau. In speaking of von Logau, Mr. Moore shows himself to be a translator of no little skill.

Indeed, it is through translations that these hymns are in the main known to us. The author is full of praise for John Wesley's work in this field. For example, he regards 'Commit thou all thy griefs' as a revelation of the high art of translation, and speaking of Tersteegen's 'Gott ist gegenwärtig' and of John Wesley's translation , 'Lo, God is here', he calls Wesley 'the prince of all translators of German hymns.' He is appreciative of Pusey's translation of Löwenstern's 'Christe du Beistand' ('Lord of our life and God of our salvation') —one wonders if he is equally enamoured of Barnby's tune CLOISTERS? He is less impressed by Bridges's 'hopelessly free version' of Herrmann's 'Herzliebster Jesu' (Ah, holy Jesus' how hast thou offended?'), fine hymn though it is, and much prefers Miss Winkworth's 'Alas, dear Lord, what law then hast thou broken?' as being much nearer the original. He praises too her delightful version of Gerhardt's 'Fröhlich soll

mein Herze springen' ('All my heart this night rejoices').

Gerhardt Mr. Moore regards as the greatest hymn writer of the 17th century, and he regrets that his contribution to English hymnody is so slight. He came to his work at the end of a barren period, when the fine vigour of Luther had largely been dissipated in dogmatic controversy, and 'exalted the hymn, a despised whittling-block for every novice hand, to the place of the supreme literary accomplishment of his century.' His hymns were no longer objective, 'for the church, for the congregation, for all the people', but, like those of Charles Wesley a century later, were 'a cry of the individual soul for God.' Mr. Moore speaks warmly of J. W. Alexander's translation of 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden' ('O sacred Head, once wounded'), though he regards Richard Massie's version as more accurate; he expresses the hope that the latter's 'Lord, how shall I receive thee', will be included in future collections.

One of the most valuable chapters is that which deals with Moravian hymns. Unlike some critics—a recently published anthology is a noted example— he does not confine his comments to the grotesque 'Blood and Wounds' hymns. In spite of these, as Mr. Moore shows, Zinzendorf was a great hymn writer, and not only his hymns, but those of Sangenberg, Dober and the Nitschmanns (Cennick, distinguished though he was, cannot be included here, for he was not a German) deserve and will enjoy a long life. Best of all perhaps is Rothe's 'Ich habe nun den Grund gefunden', the source of one of John Wesley's finest translations, 'Now I have found the ground', though it is doubtful if Rothe, in spite of being the first pastor of the little congregation at Berthelsdorf from which sprang the Renewed Church of the Brethren, was ever technically a Moravian. Mr. Moore is unbounded in his admiration of Moravian hymns, which, he maintains, 'can challenge those of any people of any age.'

The last two chapters of the book are outside the general scheme, but are no less interesting. The first of the two traces the influence of the 'Enlightenment' on the German hymns, when the attempt to rationalise historic hymns merely emasculated them, and when a host of new hymns appeared, 'always didactic, generally dry as dust, occasionally disgusting.' The second is in the form of an appendix, which sets out 'to show how study of the hymn book may throw fresh light upon political history, by pointing out the frequent references to the Turkish menace in the 16th century.

There are, of course, some omissions—Mr. Moore does not choose to give a complete history of German hymnody in the period—but he has given us a most valuable little book, written with knowledge, insight and enthusiasm, and full of wise comment.

CLIFFORD W. TOWLSON.

AN ENQUIRY

Mrs. Selma Bishop, Ph.D., 1325 Meander Street, Abilene, Texas, U.S.A., asks whether any member of the Society can supply her with information about the 13th edition of Isaac Watts's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, published between 1735 and 1739. She has located all the other early editions, but this has escaped her, and she would be glad to know whether it has in fact altogether disappeared. Any reply should be sent direct to Mrs. Bishop.

MR. EDWARD COLEGROVE

We record with deep regret the sudden death, on February 24th, 1957, of Mr. Edward Colegrove, J.P., Manager of Hall the Printer, Ltd., who for the last eight years have printed the *Bulletin* for us. Mr. Colegrove was a distinguished citizen of Oxford, and his passing has left the whole City with a sense of personal loss. His unfailing interest and co-operation in the work of our own Society remain with us a matter of great gratitude, and we beg to extend our sincerest sympathy to the printing firm, and to Mr. Colegrove's family.

CONFERENCE

A Conference will be held at Bristol from the 12th to the 14th November, 1957, at which, among others, the Ven. Adam Fox, the Rev. Dr. Maurice Frost and the Rev. A. S. Gregory will lecture. Full details in the next issue, but enquiries may be made at once of the Secretary.

The Secretary wishes to obtain a copy of *Bulletin* 1 19, if any reader has one to spare.