

(Continued from first page.)

fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the successive changes in tastes and habits in the course of time, or to the sad influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily kept within the proper limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, there is a continual tendency to deviate from the right rule, fixed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of worship and laid down very clearly in the ecclesiastical canons, in the ordinance of the general and provincial councils, in the prescriptions which have on various occasions emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from our predecessors, the Sovereign Pontiffs.

It is pleasing to us to be able to acknowledge with real satisfaction the large amount of good that has been done in this respect during the last decades in this our fair city of Rome and in many churches in our country, but in a more especial way among some nations in which excellent men, full of zeal for the worship of God have, with the approval of His See and with the direction of the Bishops united in flourishing societies and restored sacred music to the fullest honor in nearly all their churches and chapels. Still the good work that has been done is very far indeed from being common to all and when we consult our own personal experience and take into account the great number of complaints that have reached us from all quarters during the short time that has elapsed since it pleased the Lord to elevate our humble person to the summit of the Roman Pontificate, we consider it our first duty, without further delay, to raise our voice at once in reproof and condemnation of all that is out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices. It being our ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit restored in every respect and be preserved by all the faithful, we deem it necessary to provide before everything else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for the object of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the holy mysteries and the public and solemn prayer of the Church. And it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us for this purpose when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odor of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges with which the Divine Redeemer once drove the unworthy profaners from the temple.

Wherefore, in order that no one in the future may be able to plead in excuse that he did not clearly understand his duty and that all vagueness may be removed which have already been commanded, we have deemed it expedient to point out briefly the principles regulating sacred music in the functions of public worship, and to gather together in a general survey the principal prescriptions of the Church against the more common abuses in this matter. We therefore publish "motu proprio" and with sure knowledge, our present "Instruction" to which, as "a juridical code of sacred music," we desire with the fulness of our Apostolic authority that the force of law be given, and we impose its scrupulous observance on all by this document in our own handwriting.

INSTRUCTION ON SACRED MUSIC. I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES. 1. Sacred music, as an integral part of the solemn liturgy, participates in its general object, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It tends to increase the decorum and the splendor of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and since its principal office is to clothe with befitting melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful, its proper end is to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that by means of it the faithful may be more easily moved to devotion and better disposed to receive the fruits or the most holy mysteries.

2. Sacred music should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and precisely sanctity and goodness of form, from which spontaneously springs its other character, universality. It must be holy, and must, according to the law of propriety, not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it. It must be true art, for otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who hear it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.

But it must, at the same time, be universal in this sense, that while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which in

a certain manner constitute the specific character of its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of another nation may receive, on hearing them, an impression other than good.

II. THE KINDS OF SACRED MUSIC. 3. These qualities are possessed in the highest degree by the Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the Chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical offices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and parity.

Upon these grounds the Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that the following rule may be safely laid down. The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form the more sacred and liturgical it becomes, and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy is it of the temple.

The ancient traditional Gregorian chant, must, therefore, be largely restored in the functions of public worship, and everybody must take care that an ecclesiastical function loses nothing of its solemnity when it is accompanied by no other music except this. Efforts must especially be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as they were wont to do in ancient times.

4. The qualities mentioned are also possessed in an excellent degree by the classic polyphony, especially of the Roman school, which reached its greatest perfection in the fifteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina, and continued subsequently to produce compositions of excellent quality from the liturgical and musical standpoint. The classic polyphony approaches pretty closely to the Gregorian Chant, the supreme model of all sacred music, and hence it has been found worthy of a place side by side with the Gregorian Chant in the more solemn functions of the Church. This, too, must therefore be restored largely in ecclesiastical functions, especially in the more important basilicas, in cathedrals and in the churches and chapels of seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions, in which the necessary means are usually not lacking.

5. The Church has always recognized and favored the progress of the arts, admitting to the service of worship everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages—always, however, with due regard to the liturgical laws. Consequently modern music is also admitted to the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions. But as modern music has come to be devoted mainly to profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted into the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motives adopted in the theatre and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces.

6. Amongst the various kinds of music that which appears less suitable for accompanying the functions of public worship is the theatrical style, which was in the greatest vogue, especially in Italy during the last century. This of its very nature is diametrically opposed to the Gregorian Chant and the classic polyphony and therefore to the most important law of all good music. Besides the intrinsic structure, the rhythm and what is known as the "conventionalism" of this style adapt themselves but badly to the exigencies of true liturgical music.

III. THE LITURGICAL TEXT. 7. The language of the Roman Church is Latin. It is therefore forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions—much more to sing in the vernacular the variable or common parts of the Mass and Office. 8. The texts that may be rendered in music and the order in which they are to be rendered, being determined for every liturgical function, it is not lawful to confuse this order or to change the prescribed texts for others selected at will, or to omit them either entirely or even in part, unless when the rubrics allow that some verses of the text be supplied with the organ while these verses are simply recited in choir. However it is permissible, according to the custom of the Roman Church to sing a motett to the Blessed Sacrament after the "Benedictus" in a Solemn Mass if it is also permitted, after the offertory prescribed for the Mass has been sung, to execute during the time

that remains a brief motett to words approved by the Church. 9. The liturgical text must be sung as it is in the books, without alteration or inversion of the words, without undue repetition, without breaking syllables and always in a manner intelligible to the faithful who listen.

IV. EXTERNAL FORM OF THE SACRED COMPOSITIONS. 10. The different parts of the Mass and the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which ecclesiastical tradition has assigned to them, and which is admirably expressed in the Gregorian Chant. Different, therefore, must be the method of composing an Introit, a Gradual, an antiphon, a psalm, a hymn, a Gloria in Excelsis.

11. In particular the following rules are to be observed: (a) The "Kyrie," "Gloria," "Credo," etc. of the Mass must preserve the unity of composition proper to their text. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose them in separate pieces, in such a way as that each of such pieces may form a complete composition in itself, and be capable of being detached from the rest and substituted by another.

(b) In the Office of Vespers it should be the rule to follow the "Caeremoniale Episcoporum," which prescribes the Gregorian Chant for the psalmody and permits figured music for the verses of the "Gloria Patri" and the hymn. It will nevertheless be lawful on the greater solemnities to alternate the Gregorian Chant of the choir with the so called "falsobordoni" or with verses similarly composed in a proper manner. It may be also allowed sometimes to render the single psalms in their entirety in music, provided the form proper to psalmody be preserved in such compositions; that is to say, provided the singers seem to be psalmodizing among themselves, either with new motifs or with those taken from the Gregorian Chant, or based upon it.

(c) In the hymns of the Church the traditional form of the hymn is preserved. It is not lawful therefore, to compose, for instance, a "Tantum Ergo" in such wise that the first strophe presents a romance, a cavatina, an adagio and the "Gloria" an allegro.

(d) The antiphons of the Vespers must be as a rule rendered with the Gregorian melody proper to each. Should they, however, in some special case be sung in figured music they must never have either the form of a concert melody or the fullness of a motett or a cantata.

V. THE SINGERS. 12. With the exception of the melodies proper to the celebrant at the altar and to the ministers, which must be always sung only in Gregorian Chant, and without the accompaniment of the organ, all the rest of the liturgical chant belongs to the choir of levites, and, therefore, singers in church, even when they are laymen, are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir. Hence the music rendered by them must, at least for the greater part, retain the character of choral music.

By this it is not to be understood that solos are entirely excluded. But solo singing should never predominate in such a way as to have the greater part of the liturgical chant executed in that manner; rather should it have the character of hint or a melodic projection, and be strictly bound up with the rest of the choral composition. 13. On the same principle it follows that singers in church have a real liturgical office, and that therefore women, as being incapable of exercising such office, cannot be admitted to form part of the choir or of the musical chapel. Whenever, then, it is desired to employ the voice of soprano and contraltos, these parts must be taken by boys, according to the most ancient usage of the Church. 14. Finally, only those are to be admitted to form part of the musical chapel of a church who are men of known piety and probity of life, and these should by their modest and devout bearing during the liturgical functions show that they are worthy of the holy office they exercise. It will also be fitting that singers while singing in church wear the ecclesiastical habit and surplice, and that they be hidden behind gratings when the choir is excessively open to the public gaze.

the chant preceded by long preludes or to interrupt it with intermezzi pieces. 18. The sound of the organ as an accompaniment to the chant in preludes, interludes and the like, must be not only governed by the special nature of the instrument, but must participate in all the qualities proper to sacred music as above enumerated.

19. The employment of the piano is forbidden in the church, as is also that of noisy or frivolous instruments such as symbols, bells and the like. 20. It is strictly forbidden to have bands play in church, and only in a special case and with the consent of the ordinary will it be permissible to admit a number of wind instruments, limited, judicious, and proportioned to the size of the place—provided the composition and accompaniment be to execute it be written in a grave and suitable style and similar in all respects to that proper to the organ.

21. In processions outside the church the ordinary may give permission for a band, provided no profane pieces are executed. It would be desirable in such cases that the band confine itself to accompanying some spiritual canticle sung in Latin or in the vernacular by the singers and the pious associations which take part in the procession.

VII. THE LENGTH OF THE LITURGICAL CHANT. "It is not lawful to keep the priest at the altar waiting on account of the chant or the music for a length of time not allowed by the liturgy. According to the ecclesiastical prescriptions the "Sanctus" of the Mass should be over before the elevation, and therefore the priest must here have regard to the singers. The "Gloria" and the "Credo" ought, according to the Gregorian tradition, to be relatively short. 23. In general it must be considered to be a very grave abuse when the liturgy in ecclesiastical functions is made to appear secondary and in a manner at the service of the music, for the music is merely a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid.

VIII. PRINCIPAL MEANS. 24. For the exact execution of what has been herein laid down, the Bishops, if they have not already done so, are to institute in their dioceses a special commission composed of persons really competent in sacred music, and to this commission let them entrust in the manner they find most suitable the task of watching over the music executed in their churches. Nor are they to see merely that the music is good in itself, but also that it is adapted to the powers of the singers and be all ways well executed. 25. In summaries of clerics and in ecclesiastical institutions let the above-mentioned traditional Gregorian Chant be cultivated by all with diligence and love, according to the Tridentine prescriptions, and let the superiors be liberal of encouragement and praise towards their young subjects. In like manner let a "Scolae Cantorum" be established, whenever possible, among the clerics for the execution of sacred polyphony and of good liturgical music.

26. In the ordinary lessons of liturgy, morals, Canon law given to the students of theology, let care be taken to touch on those points which regard more directly the principles and laws of sacred music, and let an attempt be made to complete the doctrine with some particular instruction in the aesthetic side of the sacred art, so that the clerics may not leave the seminary ignorant of all those notions, necessary as they are for complete ecclesiastical culture. 27. Let care be taken to restore, at least in the principal churches, the ancient "Scolae Cantorum," as has been done with excellent fruit in a great many places. It is not difficult for a zealous clergy to institute such "Scolae" even in the minor and country churches—nay, in them they will find a very easy means for gathering round them both the children and adults, to their own profit and the edification of the people. 28. Let efforts be made to support and promote in the best way possible the higher schools of sacred music where these already exist, and to help in founding them where they do not. It is of the utmost importance that the Church herself provide for the instruction of its masters organists and singers, according to the true principles of sacred art.

IX. CONCLUSION. 29. Finally, it is recommended to choir-masters, singers, members of the clergy, superiors of seminaries, ecclesiastical institutions and religious communities, parish priests and rectors of churches, canons of collegiate churches and cathedrals, and above all to the diocesan ordinaries to favor with all zeal these prudent reforms, long desired and demanded with united voice by all; so that the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, may not fall into contempt. Given from our Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, on the day of the Virgin and Martyr, St. Cecilia, November 22, 1903, in the first year of our Pontificate.

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