

the Papal choristers:—"Their sole happiness and merit consist in that, at the same moment of time, when one is saying 'sanctus,' another is singing 'sabbaoth,' and the third, 'gloria tua;' and this confusion of words is accompanied by some screaming, roaring, and growling, which is more like the caterwauling of cats in January than the sweet-scented flowers of the month of May." The fact that the Council of Trent found it necessary to attempt restraining the abuses of the period renders further evidence on this point unnecessary. It may only be added, as showing how slight was the consideration shown for the people, that the whole of the liturgy of the Church was set to music, even the common prayers being delivered in a kind of musical recitative, which was as unnatural as it was devoid of spiritual edification. Thus we see that the congregations, instead of being participators in the services, were little more than mere auditors—auditors, too, of that which they could not understand, and by which, therefore, they could hardly be expected to profit.

To draw the Church music away from this one-sided tendency, to simplify the medium of praise so as to bring it within the reach of the meanest capacity, to substitute for the singing of priests and choristers a united burst of song from the voice of the people, this was one of the aims which Luther had in view when he began to think out those projects for the reformation of the Church, which led in the end to such great and lasting results. He had come to see that before the spiritual independence of the individual worshipper could be secured, the ban which the Council of Laodicea had placed upon Church music must be removed. The old Latin liturgy must give way to something which the people could understand, something in which they would be allowed to join, and which would form a medium for bringing them more into communion with the spirit of the service than the musical parts of the Mass had ever done. This something was at once found in the German congregational hymn.

There is not wanting evidence to show that hymns in the mother tongue were sung during the service before Luther's time; but it would appear that these hymns were considered