

murder against Rothschild & Co. We sedentary animals scarcely deserve to be called men." Wagner had to remain in Zurich that spring, and superintending the production there of his "Flying Dutchman," or, as he was pleased to call it, a travesty of that opera. "Some of my friends here would not leave me in peace; but, having heard my 'Tannhäuser' overture, they wanted absolutely to have a taste of one of my operas. I allowed myself at last to be talked over, and am now about to introduce to the imagination of my friends a travesty of my opera, as closely resembling it as possible. Everything, as regards scenery and orchestra, is done to help that resemblance; the singers are not a bit better or worse than anywhere else; so I shall find out what can be achieved by the best intentions and a fabulous faith in me."

In May, 1852, Wagner wrote: "My 'Nibelung' tetralogy is completely designed, and in a few months the verse also will be finished. After that I shall be wholly and entirely a 'music maker,' for this work will be my last poem, and a littérateur I hope I shall never be again. Then I shall have nothing but plans for performances in my head; no more writing, only performing." In June he is getting on with the "Valkyrie": "I am hard at work and eager to finish the poem of my 'Valkyrie' in a fortnight. . . . My 'Valkyrie' (first drama) turns out terribly beautiful. I hope to submit to you the whole poem of the tetralogy before the end of the summer. The music will be easily and quickly done, for it is only the execution of something practically ready." Meanwhile the master was in correspondence with Breitkopf and Härtel, regarding the separate publication of the entire poem as soon as completed. To this Liszt, in one of his letters refers with approval, adding: "As to the definite performance of the three operas, we must have a good talk when the time comes. If, in the worst case, you are not then back in Germany, I shall stir in every possible way for the production of your work. . . . If Weimar should prove too mean and poor, we will try somewhere else; and even if all our strings snap we may still go on playing if you give me full power to organise an unheard-of music or drama festival, or whatever the thing may be called, in any given place, and to launch your 'Nibelungen' there. . . . Farewell! Be at peace with yourself, and soon publish your 'Nibelung' poem, in order to prepare the public and put it in the proper mood. Leave all manner of *Grenzboten*, *Wohlbekanntes*, *Kreuzzeitung*, and *Gazettes Musicales* on one side, and do not bother yourself with these miserable scribblings. Rather drink a good bottle of wine, and work onwards, up to eternal, immortal life."

Wagner's last mention of the "Nibelungen Ring" in 1852 is dated November 9, and runs thus: "My new poems for the two Siegfrieds I finished last week, but I have still to re-write the two earlier dramas, 'Young Siegfried' and 'Siegfried's Death,' as very considerable alterations have become necessary. I shall not have finished entirely before the end of the year. The complete title will be 'The Ring of the Nibelung, a Festival Stage-play in three days and one previous evening': previous evening, the 'Rhinegold'; first day, the 'Valkyrie'; second day, 'Young Siegfried'; third day, 'Siegfried's Death.' What fate this poem, the poem of my life and of all that I am and feel, will have I cannot as yet determine. So much, however, is certain: that if Germany is not very soon open to me, and if I am compelled to drag on my artistic existence without nourishment and attraction, my animal instinct of life will soon lead me to abandon art altogether. What I shall do then to support my life I do not know, but I shall not write the music of the 'Nibelungen,' and no person

with human feelings can ask me to remain the slave of my art any longer."

With this bitter cry of an exile, uttered amid the gathering gloom of another winter, the history of the tetralogy for the year 1852 comes to an end. But some incidents not therewith connected remain for notice before passing on to 1853; which was for Wagner a time of more varied experiences and, in that sense, of fuller life.

(To be continued.)

EASTERN ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC.

THE statement which has been so frequently made to the effect that what is called Gregorian song is a direct inheritance from King David, who sang the Psalms to the melodies as now known to us, is a gratifying proof of the high antiquity of this form of ecclesiastical music.

It is certain that if this were the case, some traces of its Eastern origin would still be found, even at this distance of time. David was an Eastern monarch and would probably have sung his inspired words to melodies constructed upon the pattern of the scales common to Eastern music. These melodies would possibly be brought, if they were brought at all, into the service of the Church by the Jewish converts who would have been familiar with them from childhood. A writer on "Early Ecclesiastical Music" in the *Newbery House Magazine* for August, points out that "it was in Greek that the books of the New Testament and most of the early Christian writings were composed, and at a very early period Greek became the normal language of the Christian Church, and for several centuries was employed even at Rome itself in the Liturgy. Now the earliest melodies were mostly of the simplest description, so much so that St. Augustine, speaking of the Plain Song, tells us that its inflections resembled the modulations of the voice in speaking rather than in singing. The music must therefore have closely followed the rhythm and accent of the Greek language, which is so extremely different to that of the Hebrew that it seems almost inconceivable that the same melodies should be employed for the former as for the latter without being completely remodelled. Some new melodies would be composed for the purpose, while possibly even some which had already been in use among the pagan Greeks might be wedded to the services of the Church."

There is no doubt that such music as was more or less associated with heathen and pagan rites would be considerably altered if it was employed at all in the early Christian church, because it would be undesirable to awaken memories that the preaching of the new Covenant would be instituted to abrogate.

It may be mentioned incidentally that the records and observations of Eastern people show that their manners and customs are less influenced by change than those of the people of more Western and Northern localities. The musical instruments of the Egyptians and Arabs have remained unaltered for many generations, and the confirmation of the statement of the derivation of Gregorian Song might be looked for among the religious melodies of the Eastern people more or less associated by custom, manners, and descent with the Hebrews. The subtle divisions of the Eastern scale stand in the way of correctly writing down in European notation any music, in a fashion which shall completely satisfy the conscience of the transcriber that he has done his work correctly, while the native would probably be unable to recognise the music when played according to the transcription.

The Gregorian tones, it may be needless to remind the reader, are constructed out of the notes of the

diatonic scale. The first four, called Authentic, were settled, according to tradition, by St. Ambrose (A.D. 384), and have Greek names, added about the thirteenth century, because they are supposed to be the more modern representations of the Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, and Mixolydian scales. Their respective key-notes are D, E, F, and G. The semitones in each scale remain in the same position as though each scale belonged to the scale of C. To these scales St. Gregory added, in the year 590, four others, a fifth higher in their several final or tonic starting notes. These were distinguished by the general name of Plagal, collateral or related modes or scales. Of the others that were added subsequently it is not necessary to speak in this place. Not one of these scales shows any intimate relationship to such Eastern music as is preserved in the Coptic or Armenian Churches, each of which claims closer association with the older nations from whom Christian ritual is derived than the Latin or Anglican branches of the Church Catholic among whom the Gregorian Chant is preserved.

Of course, allowance can and must be conceded for the fact that modern notation has made the Gregorian scales or modes concrete, and that St. Gregory's notation, in which the pattern copy of the Gradual sent from Rome was written, was in the "Nota Romana," or Neumes—points, curves, or strokes—which indicated the places of the rising and falling of the voice in reading, rather than a definite musical note in singing. This only gave relative value to the inflections of the voice in reciting, and of course varied according to the pitch of the voice of the reader, and his ideas as to the height or depth of the elevation or depression of the voice, to say nothing of the differences of pitch in voices. The copy of the Gregorian music sent by Charlemagne to the Monastery of St. Gall in the ninth century is still preserved, but the character of the notation rendered it liable to misinterpretation. Out of these altered readings arose the various "uses" in several places, all varying in their several details, yet all pointing to a common origin.

These can be traced to the pattern copies sent out to the Western Church through the energy of Charlemagne—that is to say, if reasonable allowance be made for the exaggerations of reading of which the "Nota Romana" was capable. The best authorities on the subject affirm that the system which St. Gregory left behind him was capable of being cultivated to the highest degree, and, under favourable circumstances, a perfect scheme of music might have been derived from it. In the face of the existence of the authenticated copy of Gregorian song already referred to, and of which photographic reproductions have been recently made from the original by the monks of Solésmes, it is impossible to admit this conclusion without reservation. The same authorities assert that as "time rolled on, St. Gregory's good system began to fall into oblivion, and even his chants, handed down only traditionally, by ear and memory, were in danger of degenerating and being lost." The reason was not far to seek. There was no definite and distinct meaning to the *neumata*. They might be interpreted at the will of the reader.

They were, as already stated, mere points, hooks, or flourishes of various shapes and directions. Their position represented to the reader the comparative height to which the voice should be elevated, and their shape often showed the force of accent. They were rhetorical, not musical, signs. Moreover, the variations in the manner of handwriting often introduced a matter of doubt and uncertainty. No two scribes wrote alike, and there was no basis of reference such as is shown in the existence of the

five lines of the staff. These determine the relative position of notes. In writing out the old Gregorian song in *neumata* it was impossible for the writer to place the marks so correctly that they were not capable of varied reading. The reader or singer often made their inflections higher or lower than were intended. John Cotton, a monk of Triers, in the eleventh century (1047), whose remarks are quoted by Gerbertus, says: "That the same marks which Master Trudo sang as thirds, were sung as fourths by Master Albinus; and Master Salomo, in another place, even asserts that fifths are the notes meant, so that at last there were as many methods of singing as teachers of the art."

So that by this it may be seen that if the ancient Gregorian song was derived from a high Hebrew tradition, it was difficult if not impossible to preserve it in its purity by any means that were in the possession of the musicians of the first ten centuries of the Church. Guido, of Arezzo, who is credited with the invention of a simple elementary theory and practical method, did not exist until the time of Pope John XIX., who ruled over the Church from the year 1024 to 1033. This Pontiff invited Guido to Rome, and "gave him most honourable proofs of his satisfaction, after having, in one lesson, under his direction, advanced himself so far as to be able to sing a chant, previously unknown to him, from the Antiphony brought by Guido, and after the manner of notation which he had invented."

In consideration of Guido's contributions to musical art, many of the Italian writers of the seventeenth century regarded him as the restorer, if not the inventor, of musical science. At all events, few modern thinkers will be inclined to depreciate the great value of his services. Those who look with scorn and contempt at all efforts to trace the origin of music to the period of a mythical existence, and who believe in the tangible, will readily admit that the reality of musical art began with Guido. Therefore, if this be conceded, the question of the more remote origin for Gregorian song must be abandoned as insoluble. At all events, its present form is untraceable beyond Guido. The "melody of language" which St. Gregory aimed at was intransmittable until a definite notation existed. It was not until the end of the sixteenth century that a new zeal developed itself in the Church of Rome, which considered itself the guardian of this particular form of chant, and the desire arose for a perfect uniformity of use. This was possible then, for notation had acquired definite forms and meanings, and the art of musical composition had been reduced to recognisable *formulae*. The labours of Palestrina and of his friend and pupil Guidetti in restoring the purity of the Gregorian song are well known. In 1582 the "Directorum Chori" appeared. This was followed in 1587 by the "Cantus ecclesiasticus officii majoris," and the "Præfationes in cantu firmo" in 1588. In 1614 the "Graduale Romanum" and the "Rituale Romanum" were issued. The hymns which Palestrina had printed in 1589 were reprinted in 1644 at the expense of Urban VIII. As these were official publications, they fixed the character and style of the Gregorian chant in a manner which had never been attained before. Every trace of Eastern character which the melodies may have possessed was thoroughly eliminated, and the tones were brought within modern European diatonic range.

Their connection with Greek music, if it ever existed, was represented by the retention of the names of the several scales. It is impossible to say whether there is any likeness in the Gregorian tones to Greek music, for the only specimens which exist are fragments, and they are capable of varied interpretation.

The music of the ancient Greeks was without doubt derived from the Egyptians, and thus an Eastern character from two sources would belong to all music descended from either or both peoples.

The ecclesiastical music of other Christian communities of Eastern origin may be studied with interest in connection with this question. An able and appreciative notice in the April number of the *Scottish Review* of Coptic Ecclesiastical Music, based upon a work published in Cairo by Le Père Jules Blin, entitled "Chants liturgiques des Coptes," gives some examples of ancient Church music, which may be studied with advantage by those interested in the subject.

The author of the paper, the Rev. S. G. Hatherley, Protosphyter of the Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople, is a well-known musical graduate of Oxford, whose opinions on this special subject are entitled to respect. He tells us "that the Koptic, or Coptic, people are the real native Egyptians, descended, with very little admixture of foreign blood, from the people of Pharaonic times, whose language they have perpetuated; and that the Coptic Church is the form of the Christian religion retained by a large number of those descendants."

The institution of Christianity among the people is due, according to tradition, to St. Mark, and the liturgy of St. Mark "was the special property and use of the Egyptian Church. It so continued till after the schism brought about by the heresy of Dioscorus, and his condemnation by the Council of Chalcedon," A.D. 451. The Liturgy is partly Greek and partly Coptic, with a certain admixture of Arabic, which "make it that the Divine service of the Coptic church for polyglot variety has no equal."

The music of the Liturgy, as printed by Le Père Blin, represents the threefold linguistic peculiarity of the service. "The oldest, or Greek portion, is set to melody of the most pure type; the mediæval or Coptic portion is set to melody of very good form, entirely diatonic, but less strict than the old Greek; while the modern, or more Arabic portion, is decidedly more sing-songy, and freer in all respects. But though freer, this last portion still imitates the old manner so far as to be entirely based upon the diatonic genus, thus preserving a certain unity with the two previous portions."

Here is a "Kyrie" as a specimen of the music, with Greek words:—

Ky - ri - e - e - le - i - son . . .

The following is a portion of the "Gloria" in another of the tongues employed in the Ritual, with added harmonies—

Ten (e) hōc e - rok, ten (e) cmon e - rok, ten shem shem m -
We praise Thee, we bless . . . Thee, we serve . . .

- mok: te non-ōsht m - - - mok . . .
Thee, we worship Thee . . .

It will be interesting to compare these pieces with modern Gregorian Chant and see if they can be resolved to a common origin. Still more interesting would it be to compare the older musical ritual of the Church of the Mechitaristic or Armenian Christians with the above examples for the like purpose. They derive their name from Mechitar da Petro, who, in the year 1701, founded a religious society at Constantinople for the purpose of diffusing a knowledge of the ancient Armenian language and literature. The society removed to the Morea, and remained there until that part of Greece was subjugated by the Turks in 1715. From thence they went to St. Lazare, near Venice, where they are now located. They trace their connection with Christianity as far back as the fourth century. They refused to accept the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, and constituted themselves into a separate Church, which took the title of Gregorian from St. Gregory, not the later Pope Gregory, who converted them to Christianity.

They possess a notation totally different from that in general use. It is somewhat similar in character to the "Nota Romana," as it consists of small curved lines, and signs of accents which are placed over the notes intended to be affected by such accents. This admits, like the *neumata*, of the performance of more subtle divisions of the notes of the scale than is possible by the means of ordinary European notation. They have, however, effected a translation of the music of their Ritual, in European notation, and a Collection of "Les Chants liturgiques de l'église Arménienne" has been made "en notes musicales Européennes," by Pietro Bianchini, and has been printed at the Monastery at Venice by the Brethren of the Congregation of the Mechitaristic Church there.

The following, the "call to attention" made by the Deacon in the Service, though a very short piece, offers a fair sample of the character of the melodies sung from the time of the foundation of the Church:—

Eros
chu - - - - - mē.

Subjoined is the first of the eight tones of Sacred Armenian Melody, with the official harmonies, fifths and all—



Here also comparison, which Shakespeare says is "odorous," may be made "sonorous" and perhaps instructive.

The examples of Eastern ecclesiastical music here given might be extended further, but if by their means attention is called to the matter it is possible that some advantage to art will accrue. Many compositions have been founded upon the known Gregorian melodies—might not some of these be made a means of new departures? A short time ago M. Bourgault Ducoudray made a series of researches in modern Greek melodies, and suggested that the modern composer, wearied in the search for original melodic sequences in the old paths, might find the matter he sought for in the melodies of the modern Hellenic people. Is there no likelihood of fresh inspiration arising from better knowledge of Eastern ecclesiastical music?

MUSIC IN THE FUTURE.

[We deem it inadvisable to court incredulity by any statement as to the occult means by which the following spirit-writing was obtained; it were best to let it speak for itself and our readers can then form their own judgment as to its authenticity. We would only venture to point out that the description here given of the drawbacks and new diseases created by that very progress of invention which vainly strives to overcome the ills of this world, would seem to stamp the narrative with the seal of truth.]

I take up my phonograph, dear friend, to give you some idea of how music is progressing, here in the Inner Circle of Central London. From Albert Gate to your house in S.S.W. by W. Kensington is 172 miles as the crow flies; but allowing for difference of time, you will get this dispatch as soon as written. You do well to confine yourself to mathematical researches connected with music, working out—oh, mighty and noble task!—the algebraical formula which will allow the Choral Symphony to be expressed in the form of an equation of the n th order; a far more worthy task than listening to the feeble and degenerate specimens of the art which are all that our composers can now produce. The *dilettante* of to-day must seek his musical enjoyment in the past, and even this is fraught with danger, as you shall hear.

The perfecting of the phonograph a century ago was, as you are aware, the invention which for awhile raised our divine art to so dazzling a pre-eminence and then urged it to its downfall. Before that brilliant epoch there had been a constant striving towards a higher and yet higher *technique*. No

orchestral concerts were found to be good enough, no performers astonishing enough for the public to whom the marvels of a Richter and a Rubinstein were grown contemptible by familiarity. At last, when as many as seventy per cent. of the students in the Academies were found to be succumbing beneath the stress of their studies, when those terrible diseases, violinist's arm, pianist's cramp, and concert deafness were wreaking such havoc in the musical world, the perfected phonograph came as a boon and a blessing to men, rendering concerts all but unnecessary and bringing the finest performances of music within the reach of everybody. Ruin stared the profession in the face, and for a time the most frightful distress prevailed. One performance of a work, one rendering by an artist, was all that was required, and replicas of the phonographic cylinder were sold by the thousand in the music shops and bought at a marvellously low price by the public. Under this stern compulsion rose the musical trades unions, now so powerful in their organisation. They forced the music dealers to pay a heavy royalty on phonograph rolls, which money went to support the suffering artists. Later, the first novelty of the phonograph having worn off, actual performances came into temporary fashion again, and with them the renaissance of the art of composition. Again followed a revolution, caused by that still greater invention, the spectro-phonograph. That it should have been found possible to trace sound long after it had ceased, simply from the disturbance which it had created in the atmosphere by its vibrations seems marvellous enough, but that such dead sounds could be resuscitated and reproduced at any subsequent time, *here* science may indeed be considered to have made a new departure and consummated a veritable triumph. This new principle once understood the reproduction of vanished visible objects (the spectro-phonograph) was the natural sequence, and finally the ingenious combination of the two resulted in the now so familiar phono-spectro-graph, by the aid of which I can at this moment hear and witness the first performance at Bayreuth far back through the centuries. And yet—and yet the gifts which science bestows on us are never unmixed blessings. True, we have stamped out the diseases engendered by too severe a prosecution of musical studies; but have we not created new and even worse ones? This thought was brought home to me yesterday, when I went with some foreign visitors to inspect the new Kensington Hospital and Infirmary for Musicians. It occupies the former site of the Albert Hall, long become useless and a ruin. On going over this admirably-managed institution, I was really horrified to find how much disease our modern developments of music have given rise to. There is critic's cramp, a troublesome complaint, the sufferer from which ceases to be able to criticise intelligently; he can only reiterate that each piece he hears is "an imitation of Wagner." There are two large wards for the two great Wagner diseases—Wagnermania and Wagnerphobia. The first attacks young composers especially, and the latter old ones and critics. The Wagner-maniacs used to be dieted entirely on Mendelssohn; but this treatment was found too heroic a remedy, and milder means are now tried—copious doses of Bach. Wagnerphobia still defies medical skill. But by far the greater number of patients were suffering from various forms of the listening habit, caused by too immoderate an indulgence in the pleasures of the phonograph. Only last week a very dear friend of mine was found to have contracted a morbid tendency to put in his cylinders the reverse way and, locking himself in his study, set the instrument going for hours together.