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Te Deum

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

26.1

Te Deum lae da... mur.

Coro 1

Coro 2

Contino

2. Cori.

Contino



Mendelssohn's *Te Deum* in D, opening page of the autograph score.

Mendelssohn's Te Deum in D

by ROBERT M. CAMPBELL

In recent years there has been a renewal of interest in the early compositions of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Many works remained in manuscript after the composer's death,¹ and most of the choral works are now in the archives of the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, East Berlin. In the aftermath of World War II they were believed lost, but in 1960 Staatsbibliothek officials announced the rediscovery of "some one hundred early works,"² which include forty-four volumes of original manuscripts "bound together by the composer himself."³ Nine volumes of instrumental music have been issued by the Leipzig *Mendelssohn Ausgabe* since 1960, and in each genre scholars have been afforded earlier examples of Mendelssohn's precocious development than had previously been available. In 1977 the Leipzig edition offered the first volume of sacred choral music, a first edition of the Te Deum in D of December 5, 1826. It is scored for double chorus, double solo quartet and basso continuo,⁴ and is available in a modern performing edition by German publisher Carus.⁵ Due to the relatively recent publication date and past difficulties in gaining access to the manuscript, little has been written about the work.

Mendelssohn was seventeen when he wrote the Te Deum, in a period of deep involvement with the Berlin Singakademie and the choral music of Handel, Mozart, and J.S. Bach.⁶ The family, social, and musical circum-

¹Robert Schumann, a strong advocate of Mendelssohn's work, believed in 1846 that "hardly a fifth of his compositions were published." *Errinerungen an Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, edited by Georg Eismann (Zwickau: Predella Verlag, 1947), p. 73. Translations, unless otherwise noted, are by the author.

²*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 6th edition, under entry "Mendelssohn (Bartholdy), Felix," by Karl-Heinz Köhler.

³Eric Werner, *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age*, translated by Dika Newlin (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), p. 52.

⁴Serie VI, Band 1, edited by Werner Burkhardt, continuo realization by Walter Heinz Bernstein. 1972, the date given in *The New Grove* work-list, is an error.

⁵Carus is an affiliate of Hänssler-Verlag, Stuttgart. The sole U.S. selling agent is Mark Foster Music. Vocal score is listed as CV40.137/01, the continuo part as CV40.137/11, and an LP recording (London Schütz Choir, Roger Norrington) as CV63.105.

⁶For a complete review of the circumstances surrounding this composition, see Robert M. Campbell, "Mendelssohn's *Te Deum in D*: Influences and the Development of Style," Dissertation, Stanford University, 1985, pp. 6-9, 38 ff.

stances in which Mendelssohn passed his youth are well known, and chronologically the idyllic summer of 1826, when the Overture to “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” was written, just precedes the period of present interest. It was a time of strong formative influences: in literature, the writings of Jean Paul, the poetry of Goethe, and Schlegel’s translation of Shakespeare’s works, and in aesthetics, the philosophy of Hegel and the ideas of Justus Thibault marked Mendelssohn’s life as did the friendships of such diverse personalities as Klingemann, Devrient, and Rietz. Adolf B. Marx, a scholar and music critic fourteen years older than Mendelssohn, was perhaps his most influential friend during this time. Marx advocated the music of Bach and Beethoven as well as of contemporary composers such as Spontini, and Felix was intellectually attracted to his application of critical reasoning to works of music, Marx thought that the superficial brilliant style engendered by the sentimentality of Lea Mendelssohn’s salon, shown in the success of the early *Lieder ohne Worte*, induced him to spend too much time composing “in this element.”⁷ If Marx influenced Mendelssohn’s decision to compose a Latin text, the latter also had a more practical reason: the opportunity for immediate reading by one of the country’s finest choral organizations.

There were no compositions written between the Overture to “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and the Te Deum. The challenging task of writing a work of this size for the first time, with twelve related yet separately conceived movements, further indicates a gestation period of several months. A hallmark of the work is the careful organization of the movements, with an architectural symmetry based on key relationships, vocal textures, and the use of soloists. In each respect Mendelssohn makes conscious decisions that contribute to the overall balance and sense of proportion. The work contains a great deal of finely crafted double-chorus writing, and the teenager’s impressive choral technique is used to convey great depth of religious expression. Some writers have noted a lack of such depth in Mendelssohn’s sacred music — a certain superficiality — but in the Te Deum such judgments are certainly arguable. Within the self-imposed limits of the conservative, austere scoring, avoiding the normal pomp of brass and timpani, Mendelssohn’s manipulation of various forms and vocal combinations enables him to create a wide variety of mood with purely vocal means. Rudolf Werner, the only scholar to have published significant commentary on the Te Deum prior to its issue, stated that “with the Te Deum one may consider the youthful period in Mendelssohn’s sacred composition as concluded.”⁸

⁷Adolf B. Marx, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Otto Jante, 1865), p. 231. Translations, unless otherwise noted, are by the author.

⁸*Felix Mendelssohn als Kirchenmusiker* (Dissertation, Frankfurt, 1930), p. 38.

The unique elements of background — the juxtaposition of major composer, large and relatively unknown work, and historical choral organization — contribute to the current interest in the work. Its style reveals the clear influence of Handel's *Utrecht Te Deum* and, to a lesser extent, of the *Dettingen Te Deum* and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*. Bach's influence, though less specific, is more pervasive, particularly in the contrapuntal writing, and the great *alla breve* central fugue "Tu rex gloriae" shows the extent to which Mendelssohn used basic elements derived from the Bach tradition (Example 1).

EXAMPLE 1

The musical score for Example 1 consists of two systems of four staves each, labeled S (Soprano), A (Alto), T (Tenor), and B (Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "Tu rex glo-ri-ae, rex glo-ri-ae, tu rex glo-ri-ae, tu rex glo-ri-ae, tu". The notation shows a steady diminution of note values from half notes to sixteenth notes, creating a sense of forward motion. The vocal parts are written in treble clef, and the bass part is in bass clef.

The steady diminution of note values provides a typical sense of forward motion to the movement, and all procedures employed reflect a thorough knowledge of eighteenth-century contrapuntal style.

The *Te Deum* was one of six works written for use by the Singakademie between 1821 and 1828.⁹ The Singakademie had seen steady growth since its inception in 1791, and by 1829 it was a thriving organization of over 460 members. Early in 1826 the new Singakademie building was

⁹The others are *Psalm 19* (1821), *Jube Domine* (1822), *Tu es Petrus* (1826), *Dürer Cantata* (1828), and the sixteen-voice *Hora est* (1828).

opened on a prestigious Berlin avenue, an impressive edifice with a fine concert hall. Werner Burkhardt conjectures that despite the conflict of dates “it is nonetheless possible that Mendelssohn wrote the work for the dedication of the new house.”¹⁰ There are no sources to confirm or deny this attractive hypothesis, and their absence is in itself evidence. Such an important commission and performance would surely have been noted by the chroniclers of the Singakademie, and was not.¹¹ If Mendelssohn had a specific reason for composing the *Te Deum*, it is not known.

The few historical facts we can document are brief. From a rehearsal note by Carl Friedrich Zelter, preserved in Singakademie archives, we know that the *Te Deum* was “sung through for the first time in its entirety on February 12, 1827.”¹² Other than this tantalizingly brief note, however, no contemporary references survive. After Mendelssohn’s death in 1847, his widow petitioned the Singakademie board for the return of the *Te Deum* manuscript. Karl Friedrich Rungenhagen’s letter of reply is the only document to mention the Singakademie’s actual use of the work,¹³ and categorizes it as one “that the Singakademie has used in its meetings, in part for festive occasions.”¹⁴ This implies a greater in-house status than a student composition would normally be accorded, yet no details are given. Martin Blumner says that “already, less than a week after the opening of the house, he rehearsed his new great eight-voice ‘*Te Deum*,’ which would be sung so much in the coming years.”¹⁵ This corresponds with Zelter’s note, and implies several other readings of the work.

Blumner then notes the occasion of primary interest, two years later: “. . . on February 3, 1829, his twentieth birthday, Mendelssohn again directed his *Te Deum*.”¹⁶ Georg Schünemann also mentions this date and adds that Mendelssohn directed from the piano bench, at the same time realizing the unfigured bass.¹⁷ The Singakademie did not use the work after this occasion. In his Mendelssohn biography, August Reissmann provides an oblique reference, mentioning the *Te Deum* as an example of Mendels-

¹⁰Foreword to the *Mendelssohn Ausgabe*, Serie VI, Band 1, p. v.

¹¹Martin Blumner, *Geschichte der Singakademie zu Berlin* (Berlin: Horn und Raach, 1891); Georg Schünemann, *Die Singakademie zu Berlin* (Regensburg: Gustave Bosse Verlag, 1941); Werner Bollert, ed., *Singakademie zu Berlin* (Berlin: Rembrandt Verlag, 1966).

¹²Werner, p. 31, note 32.

¹³This letter, dated January 4, 1849, is currently kept with the original manuscript as Deutsche Staatsbibliothek “Mus. ms. autogr. Mendelssohn 46.” Rungenhagen was assistant director during the *Te Deum* period, and eventually defeated Mendelssohn in the vote for Zelter’s successor as director. The Singakademie subsequently entered a period of decline.

¹⁴Full letter translated in Campbell, p. 51.

¹⁵Blumner, p. 76.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Schünemann, p. 54.

sohn's work finally being performed publicly,¹⁸ whereas Rudolf Werner states, apparently with greater authority, that the *Te Deum* was sung regularly "but obviously not officially."¹⁹ Thus, during its short-lived period of use, which can be defined as February 12, 1827 through February 3, 1829, the work was heard at least twice, and probably more often.

The reading of February 3, 1829, our best-documented version of a nineteenth-century performance, included the following elements: a beautiful new concert hall of marble and carved wood, a chorus of two hundred to three hundred singers,²⁰ the sole accompaniment of a grand piano,²¹ and Mendelssohn's abilities as a choral conductor working from the bench. This was Mendelssohn's season of first triumph, though in February of 1829 he did not yet know it. Only a month earlier he and his friend Eduard Devrient had overcome Zelter's final objections to performing Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and on March 11 they executed what is perhaps the single most famous nineteenth-century choral performance. This began an illustrious conducting career for Mendelssohn and established him as a champion of Baroque music. The *Te Deum* reading falls in the midst of these well-known, exciting choral preparations, a brief respite from working on the Bach choruses. It also involved more of the members: while February 3rd was a regular full choral meeting, a small group of "only" 164 members sang in the *Passion* premiere.

Though there are no contemporary performance accounts of the *Te Deum*, good accounts do exist of the February rehearsals for the *Bach Passion*. Circumstances are so similar that a certain amount of extrapolation is possible; both works are for double-chorus and soloists, and both were rehearsed from the piano bench. Devrient — who sang the role of Christ in the *St. Matthew Passion* performance — gives a lucid account of the scenario in the *Singakademie* during February and early March:

His perfect mastery of its details was only half his merit. His energy, perseverance, tact and clever calculation of the resources at hand made this masterpiece modern, intelligible, and life-like once more. Those who did not witness this . . . can scarcely realise or appreciate the magnificent powers of this youth of twenty. . . . Felix had both to accompany and conduct, a difficult matter with the rapid alternations of chorus and solos in ever-changing

¹⁸*Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: sein Leben und seine Werke* (Berlin: J. Guttentag, 1872), p. 28.

¹⁹Werner, p. 31.

²⁰Blumner, Anhang VIII, p. 252. It is unlikely that all 354 members were present at a single rehearsal.

²¹The *Singakademie* did not install a "kleine Hausorgel" until 1876.

rhythms: here he used to play the accompaniment with the left hand, and conduct with the right.²²

More singers came to each Passion rehearsal, and “many members of the Akademie would scarcely have been so regular in their attendance had they not been riveted and enchanted by the masterly direction of the music.”²³ Mendelssohn was clearly in good form, his choral expertise sharp and concentrated.

Zelter provided Mendelssohn with a strong and conservative role model. Though the latter had often conducted in family musicales during his teen years, the techniques of directing large choral forces were primarily learned from Zelter.²⁴ While Zelter’s conducting was marked by the “firm beat of a pedantic conductor,”²⁵ his outlook was undeniably rooted in established eighteenth-century Berlin traditions.²⁶ He was known for his preservation of earlier music, though he did not always offer the works in public concerts. This tradition, and his insistence on a firm, even beat, was part of Mendelssohn’s heritage. Neither the *Te Deum* nor the *St. Matthew Passion* was conducted by a liberal, “Romanticized” stylist, but by a classicist still close to his neo-Baroque teaching.²⁷ Such training helped to produce a series of compositions in a conservative style during the 1820’s, and at the same time, a stylistic sensibility that reflected eighteenth-century performance practices.

A modern performance of Mendelssohn’s *Te Deum* can be undertaken with either piano or organ as the continuo instrument, the former choice being justified by the circumstance of the original reading, the latter seen as generally more suitable to Mendelssohn’s sacred music. The added volume and support that an organ can provide could be of practical value for a large chorus, depending on the acoustic situation. With either choice, the use of a string or wind instrument doubling the keyboard bass is an option that should be considered. Mendelssohn’s anachronistic term *basso continuo* implies it, and in most cases it will add a cohesive and resonant element to the ensemble.

Mendelssohn did not prepare the *Te Deum* for publication, and the expressive markings were left incomplete. The original vocal parts once

²²*My Recollections of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and his letters to me*, translated by Natalia MacFarren (London: Richard Bentley, 1869), pp. 58–59.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 55–56.

²⁴Blummer, p. 67.

²⁵Frederick Dorian, *The History of Music in Performance* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1942), p. 229.

²⁶Through Zelter, Mendelssohn received a rich heritage of eighteenth-century method from J.P. Kirnberger and thus J.S. Bach. See Larry R. Todd, *Mendelssohn’s Musical Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 11–14.

²⁷Todd, p.31. ff.

held by the Singakademie, a possible source, appear to have been destroyed.²⁸ Six of the twelve movements lack initial tempo indications, and an early task is to decide on these. Burkhardt includes some suggestions, and often the score itself provides clues: the opening "Te Deum, laudamus" is unmarked, but the final *allegro* "In te, Domine, speravi," corresponding to the opening, gives a clear indication of the correct tempo range.²⁹ When such specific implications are lacking, the nature of the musical material often suggests the tempo. For the fifth movement, "Te gloriosus Apostolorum," for instance, it would be determined by the proper pacing of the bass eighth notes (Example 2).

EXAMPLE 2

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Bass and Continuo. The Bass part is in C major, 3/4 time, and features a steady eighth-note rhythm. The Continuo part is also in C major, 3/4 time, and features a steady eighth-note rhythm. The lyrics "Te glo - ri - o - sus A -" are written below the Bass staff.

Here the influence of Handel's Utrecht Te Deum seems particularly noticeable in the continuo, which goes at a steady *andante* in keeping with the dance-like nature of the vocal bass line. It should have the rhythmic quality of a Baroque movement, with the underlying eighth-note subdivision invariably felt in the vocal parts. Later in the movement the shift from common time to 3/4 provides considerable contrast. This is a major textual juncture, carefully delineated with a double bar, a shift to an antiphonal style, and changes in both time and key signatures (Example 3).

Should a tempo relationship exist between the two sections? "Proportional" options are possible, with quarter notes remaining constant or half notes equalling dotted halves, but there is no historical support for either choice. Further, neither seems to work very well. Another possibility might be to observe a caesura at the textual period, then establish a new, moderately slow tempo. In addition to supporting the structural division, this would enable the conductor to set the second tempo to best achieve the ensuing antiphonal effects.

The question of degree in applying expressive devices such as *tempo rubato* is complicated by their current general acceptance in the perfor-

²⁸Recent correspondence has confirmed that the Singakademie no longer possesses a transcription or vocal parts.

²⁹The Carus edition includes a modicum of editorial markings not found in the Mendelssohn edition.

EXAMPLE 3

The musical score for Example 3 consists of two systems. The first system features a vocal line with lyrics: "tus, lau - dat ex - er - ci -" and a piano accompaniment. The second system features a vocal line with lyrics: "Te per or - bem ter -" and a piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

mance of nineteenth-century choral music. According to Curt Sachs, the definition used by Baroque theorists involved the reversing of accents within a measure or phrase, so that off-beats were accented.³⁰ This was regarded as an ornamental procedure in handling the melody, and it did not affect the steady underlying beat. A corollary definition grew from this ornamental concept, wherein freedom of *rubato* was found *primarily* in the melody. By the 1770's this strict meaning had degenerated, and the new usage allowed the tempo itself to be adjusted. Mozart, referring to pianists he had met in

³⁰*Rhythm and Tempo* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1953), p. 306.

Augsburg, says:

They are amazed that I always keep time. Nor do they understand that my left hand knows nothing of the tempo rubato in an Adagio. [When they play rubato], the left hand gives way.³¹

The difference between the current use of the term and Sach's older, "authentic" definition is that of restoring the "stolen" beats. Our knowledge of Zelter as a conductor makes it unlikely that he was given to the consistent use of the new *tempo rubato*, or excessive *ritardando* or *rallentando* in his choral direction. He scheduled many eighteenth-century works that do not intrinsically call for such expressive devices, except at important structural cadences. Neither does the neo-Baroque aspect of the *Te Deum* call for mid-nineteenth-century practices.³² It is consciously archaic, and compositional style as well as circumstances dictate a conservative approach and performing practices based primarily in the eighteenth century.

It is unfortunate that Mendelssohn left no written comments on conducting, and that the "school" of conducting that emerged in the Leipzig Conservatory after Mendelssohn's death remained somewhat ill-defined.³³ He did state his attitudes about expression to his friends in various contexts, and Sir George Grove documented a cogent comment:

In playing, however, he never himself interpolated a *ritardando*, or suffered it in anyone else. It especially enraged him when done at the end of a song or other piece. 'Es steht nicht da!' he would say; 'if it were intended it would be written in—they think it expression, but it is sheer affectation.'³⁴

Though his conviction is stated with typical clarity, the unfinished nature of the *Te Deum* autograph opens a tantalizing gap: Mendelssohn might have made interpretive markings had he prepared the manuscript for publication. His personal conservatism, however, and his propensity for brisk, even *tempi* are documented. Throughout the formative years, the traditional outlook derived from Zelter helped to produce in Mendelssohn a musician who would exert a great deal of influence on the conductors of his generation and the next. His reputation as a "classical" Romantic composer, his demonstrated conducting style, and his stated attitudes about

³¹W.A. Mozart, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* (Basel: Bärenreiter, Kassel, 1962), Vol. 2, pp. 77-78.

³²For a chronological list of Singakademie programs, see Blumner, Anhang III.

³³Eric Werner, p. 260: "The 'academic' circles of the conservatory founded by Mendelssohn clung stubbornly to a so-called 'Mendelssohn' tradition which, created by them, would probably not have appealed very much to their patron saint."

³⁴*Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1st edition, under entry "Mendelssohn, Felix," p. 298. Grove supports this with three witnesses: Hans von Bülow, Charlotte Moscheles, and William Rockstro.

solemnity in sacred music, would not include taking significant liberties in tempo.

Matters of historical attitude, however, must be balanced by the conductor's view of the work, its expressive potential, and how that potential can be realized with the performing forces at hand. While the Singakademie under Mendelssohn's direction may not have used *ritardando* on a certain cadence, a modern performance of the work might employ it to achieve a musically justifiable effect. The goal of informed performance admits to a certain disparity of opinion. Also, Mendelssohn's comments on instrumental music have limited value for certain areas of his vocal music, particularly the solo writing. The two lovely solo movements, framing the central chorus, contain opportunities for expressive *rubato* that are difficult to ignore (Example 4).

EXAMPLE 4

Andante

Sop Solo
Te er-go quae - - - - - su-mus tu - - - is

Alto Solo
Te er-go quae - - - - - su - mus tu - is fa - -

Tenore Solo
Te er - go quae - su - mus tu - is fa - -

Basso Solo
Te er-go quae - su - mus tu - - - - is

fa - - - - - mu-lis sub - ve - ni,
mu-lis sub - ve - ni,
mu-lis sub - ve - ni,
fa - - - - - mu - lis sub - ve - ni,

Delicacy of phrasing can be realized here by a solo quartet capable of rhythmic and dynamic nuance. A supple freedom of rhythm is preferable to the metronomic approach.

Grove observes that "in conducting ... [Mendelssohn] was more elastic, though even there his variations would now be condemned as

moderate by some conductors.”³⁵ There are certain phrases in the double-chorus movements of the *Te Deum* which, if taken with moderate liberty, can benefit from interpretive freedom. Most of them are homophonic and occur in the slow movements.

EXAMPLE 5

The image shows two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are: "re no - stri, no - - stri, Do - mi - ne." for the first system and "re - re no - stri, no - - stri, Do - mi - ne." for the second. Dynamic markings above the vocal line include "cresc. f", "dim. p", and "pp". Similar markings are present below the piano accompaniment line.

Example 5 shows the most carefully-marked phrase of the entire work and the importance the composer attached to its proper execution. Nevertheless, even after reflecting upon the indications, the conductor is still left with some leeway to shape the final measures.

Mendelssohn uses only four basic dynamic levels and the manuscript is sparsely marked, with a single “piano” or “forte” often applying to an entire section. All matters of dynamic nuance are thus left to the conductor, who must play a determining role in the re-creative process.

Since the Baroque period, it has become increasingly the custom to indicate by notation the composer’s wishes for all dynamic variations of a structural significance, while still leaving it mainly to the performer’s responsibility to introduce those slighter dynamic inflections which notation should not . . . attempt to tie down.³⁶

Issues of dynamics arise as early as the second theme of the first movement: the “forte” marking obviously announces new thematic material, introduced in homophony (Example 6).

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 299. By the 1880’s, it seems that moderation was a quality in a conductor deserving of condemnation.

³⁶Robert Donington, *The New Grove*, under entry “Dynamics.”

EXAMPLE 6

The musical score for Example 6 consists of two systems. The first system includes four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the first system are: "mus: te Do-mi-num con-fi-te - - - - - te - - - - - te Do - mi-num con-fi-". The second system continues the vocal parts with lyrics: "mur, con-fi-te - - - - - mur, mur, con-fi-te - - - - - mur, te - - - mur, te Do - mi-num" and "te Do - - mi-num con-fi-te - - - mur,". The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support for the vocal lines.

Yet in the extended imitative section that follows, an unrelenting “forte” would not give the vocal interplay adequate room for expansion. The conductor must establish dynamic relationships between the subject and its surrounding material, stressing contour and appropriate character.

The Te Deum presents a practical problem for many small and medium-size choral groups: it is spacious and has substantial double-chorus requirements. However magnificent three hundred voices might be, they are not necessary for a satisfying performance. Two choirs capable of strong

part-singing are required, and two solo quartets, one of which needs able soloists. Tessituras are high in some movements, the soprano writing going up to B-flat, the bass to F-sharp. For those choirs more comfortable with four-part choral writing there is an option: a sequence of three movements for SATB choir and solo quartet. The two solo movements are beautiful and well-crafted, and the second of these, "Te ergo quaesumus," works well in ensemble. "Patrem immensae majestatis" is a more demanding movement and is better left to the soloists. Finally, the cheerful third movement, "Tibi omnes Angeli," is in four parts, with several short *divisi* phrases, and makes an excellent closing chorus. The architectural symmetry and key relationships of the work as a whole are lost, but the goal of disseminating this noble, forgotten music is well served.

The Te Deum resists classification from either stylistic or interpretive points of view. Alfred Einstein concludes that Mendelssohn's Protestant music represents an anomaly, and this is also true of his vocal music on Latin texts.

Mendelssohn could not found a new Protestant church style even on Bach . . . without completely transforming his own style, and without overcoming everything archaic. For this reason, these works of Mendelssohn are really homeless compositions, strange both to the concert hall and to their imagined liturgical setting.³⁷

The Te Deum and the other Latin works, however, did not even have an imagined liturgical setting. They represent a formative phase in Mendelssohn's choral development, and when the initial impetus for the compositions had passed, interest faded quickly. Some of these works may deserve this fate, but fortunately those worthy of publication and study are finally receiving due attention.

Mendelssohn's attitude towards religious music is expressed succinctly in a letter he sent to Zelter from Rome in 1831. Reacting to a poor performance of a Passion setting during Holy Week, his observations shed light on his approach to text and the nature of his religious devotion.

But then, in its inward truth and in virtue of the story it would make present to us, that music would be truly religious music. Then I should need no 'associations' with the music, for the music would no longer be an 'instrument to raise the mind to devotion,' as these people conceive it, but it would be a language that spoke only to me, and the meaning be expressed only by the words themselves, embodied only in them.³⁸

³⁷*Music in the Romantic Era* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1947), p. 159.

³⁸Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Selected Letters of Mendelssohn*, edited and translated by W.F. Alexander (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1894), p. 52.

The inspiration for his sacred compositions came not from any commission or material compensation, but from a more pure, inner source. His approach to text and its associations is one that transcends sectarian differences. Like the six chorale cantatas, the early Latin church works show Mendelssohn capable of a great depth of religious expression. His accomplished technique as a choral writer ranks among the best in the nineteenth century, and the *Te Deum* is its first significant flowering in a large, integrated work.

Slur and Tie in Anglo-American Psalmody

by KARL KROEGER

One of the most ambiguous notational symbols in Anglo-American psalmody of the eighteenth century is the slur connecting a series of repeated notes. Are these to be performed as discrete, articulated sounds, or do they represent merely one continuous sound, without separate articulation, the ties for which have been combined into one symbol for convenience? Are all cases to be interpreted the same way? If not, what conditions warrant different readings? The notational device is often found in American sacred music of the Colonial and Federal periods and is frequently encountered in the music of William Billings. Since Billings was the leading American composer of sacred music in his day, this study will focus on his use of the device, but inasmuch as he followed the same notational practices as most Anglo-American psalmody, our conclusions should have some relevance to the music of other composers in the psalmody tradition as well.

The tie came into use when the bar line was introduced into the music of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in order to indicate the continuation of a single sound across a bar line, as well as the notation of time values for which no single notational symbol existed. The slur in vocal music, indicating that a number of notes of different pitch were to be sung on one syllable, is of comparable age. In the earlier mensural notation a melisma could be indicated by combining its notes into a single symbol — the ligature. Frequently ligatures and single notes were intermixed, with the text placement indicating, often imprecisely, the length of melismatic passages. With the advent of bar lines, reflecting new expressive vocal techniques of the waning sixteenth century, new symbols were needed to convey new ideas and the use of the slur and the tie did much to clarify composers' intentions.

In his *An Introduction to the Skill of Music*, John Playford called the tie and slur a "tye":

A Tye is of two uses: first, when time is broken or struck in the middle of the note, it is usual to tye the two minims or a minim and a crotchet together,

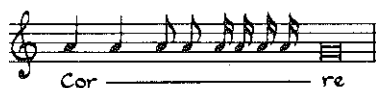
as thus:



The second sort of tie is, when two or more notes are to be sung to one syllable, or two notes or more to be plaid with once drawing the bow on the viol or violin.¹

The repetition of a pitch on a single syllable is an ornament found regularly in Baroque vocal music from as early as Caccini's *Nuove Musiche* (1601/02). Frequently referred to as a "trillo," it was usually improvised by singers to add expression to long notes. Playford included a description and example of the trillo in his *Introduction* as follows:

Trill, or Plain Shake.



The trill . . . is upon one Note only; that is to say, to begin with the first Crotchet, and to beat every Note with the Throat upon the Vowel . . . unto the last Breve.²

While this Baroque vocal ornament was not normally a part of Anglo-American psalmody, repeated notes set to a single syllable of text are found with some frequency in the psalm-tunes and anthems of British and American composers during the period. British psalmodists, such as William Tans'ur, William Knapp, Aaron Williams, and Joseph Stephenson, used the device in their music, and their notational practices were later adopted by American composers such as Daniel Read, Jacob French, Oliver Holden, Supply Belcher, and William Billings.

One can search long and diligently through printed and manuscript collections of early Anglo-American psalmody without finding a tie binding three or more notes. Ties appear to have been confined to two adjacent notes only. If the sound was intended to last the duration of three or more notes, a slur was drawn from the first to the last (Example 1).

¹London, 1674 (reprinted Ridgewood, New Jersey, 1966), pp. 35–36. The influence of Playford's work on the theoretical introductions for many early Anglo-American tunebooks can easily be shown; see my *The Complete Works of William Billings*, Vol. I, p. xxiv and footnote 38.

²Playford, p. 47.

EXAMPLE 1



Billings, CONSONANCE, mm. 63–65.

Ties and slurs are almost never implied in the same passage. If a slur is drawn between the first and last notes of a melisma, repeated notes within the melisma will not themselves be tied. Example 2 offers a typical illustration.

EXAMPLE 2



Billings, RESIGNATION, mm. 19–20, Bass

In most Anglo-American tunebooks of the eighteenth century, the slur is discussed briefly, among the miscellaneous notational symbols of music along with the sharp, flat, natural, repeat sign, and bar line. It is usually defined as being “in form like a bow, drawn over, or under, the Heads of two, three, or more Notes, when they are to be sung to but one syllable.”³ This general definition does not address the question of how repeated notes under the slur are to be performed; but some of the compilers did remark on the problem. For example, in the introduction to his *American Singing Book*, Daniel Read gives a somewhat fuller definition:

A slur ties or links any number of notes together which should be sung to one syllable, when sung in words, but not when sung in notes, except when two or more notes which stand together on one and the same letter are slurred, and then they should be sung as but one note.⁴

According to Read’s directions, if a singer comes upon two or more adjacent notes of the same pitch within a slur (as in Example 2 above), they should be sung as one continuous sound. Read’s principle may apply in cases where the composer has given us no indication to the contrary, but it does not appear to hold for every situation. At times composers seem to have deliberately notated repeated notes since conventional time values would have been available according to the practice of the time. Thus, such notes were evidently intended to receive separate articulation in performance.

³Billings, *The Singing Master’s Assistant*. Billings and other writers dealing with the rudiments of music in psalmody apparently used the term “slur” to cover both functions.

⁴New Haven, 1785, p. 12.

The question to be answered, then, is: When should a performer follow Read's instructions and when should he not?

Billings, among the many English and American composers of psalmody, seems to have used repeated notes within a melisma most often. His more than 340 compositions provide at least 88 examples of the device. Found predominantly in his anthems, it also occurs in psalm- and fugging-tunes with some regularity, and it appears throughout Billings's tunebooks, from *The New-England Psalm-Singer* (1770) to *The Continental Harmony* (1794), with the exception of *Music in Miniature* (1779).⁵

As we view these instances, we can recognize three categories:

1. Repeated notes under a slur (used in the sense of a tie), which should not be sung separately (43 examples)
2. Repeated notes within a melisma, which should be articulated separately,
 - a. when certain kinds of text interpretation are involved (29 examples)
 - b. when Billings wants to achieve rhythmic coordination between voices in passages involving changes of harmony or chord position (13 examples)
3. Repeated notes of a melismatic passage in which the articulation is not clear (3 examples).

Considering these categories in turn, one can derive some general interpretative principles from the notation.

The Tie Substitute

Billings most frequently repeats notes under a slur when the slur actually serves as a substitute for a series of ties. This normally involves several whole or half notes separated by one or more bar lines. The opening section of Billings's *Rutland* presents a typical instance (Example 3).

In his notation of this passage, Billings has given, I believe, several clues to its interpretation. First of all, the tenor in measures 7–8 has two tied whole-notes, which suggests that the treble and counter (i.e., alto) in these measures should also be sung as continuous sounds. If this reading is correct, then it follows that the treble between measures 5 and 8 should be sung in continuous sound. Moreover, if we interpret the treble in this way,

⁵Since *Music in Miniature* was intended for use in congregational singing, it contains only psalm- and hymn-tunes, and no fugging-tunes or anthems. The latter two forms are the most likely to employ the full range of expressive effects and hence repeated notes under a slur.

EXAMPLE 3

in the Ground, ⁵ in the Grou - - - - nd, in the
 { my flesh shall slumber in the Grou - - - - nd,
 Grou - nd, in the
 Grou - - - - nd, in the Ground,

the bass should be performed in the same manner. Perhaps the most persuasive clue to the interpretation of the passage, however, is the manner in which Billings has notated the text. Here he has indicated the continuation of the vowel sound in “ground” with a series of dashes, placing the final consonants on the last of the repeated notes. Thus the passage seems to follow Daniel Read’s rule and “should be sung as but one note.”

Similar passages are found in many other tunes and anthems of the time. Some of them, however, introduce new problems, such as a passage from Billings’s anthem “Thou O God” (Example 4).

EXAMPLE 4

55 e the lit-tle % % e the lit-tle Hills —
 Hill - - - - s
 e the lit-tle % % e the lit-tle Hills —
 Hill - - - - s

The ties on the final two notes in the treble and tenor suggest that the notes in the counter and bass should be performed in continuous sound. If the final two notes in the bass are to be performed as one, it seems probable that the entire five measures should be so sung. If, therefore, the slur in the bass is interpreted as a tie substitute, there seems no good reason to consider the repeated notes in the melisma of the counter to be different. But the counter presents a somewhat modified situation in that it includes two pitches rather than one, both repeated under the slur. A more pronounced example of this kind is seen in Billings’s fugal-tune *The Bird* (Example 5).

EXAMPLE 5



The tied notes in the bass suggest that the repeated notes in the other voices should also be tied, though in this case Billings did not separate vowels and ending consonants.

Billings and other psalmodists obviously also used the tie to indicate time values that could not be expressed by a single notational symbol, but if such time values occurred within a longer melisma, a slur would be drawn from the first to the last note of the passage without any intermediate ties.

Finally, a special situation is found in music set in 6/4 and 6/8 time. Perhaps in order to stress the unit of beat, the dotted whole note representing the equivalent of the full measure was not used. Whenever the value of a dotted whole note was needed in 6/4 time, it was represented by two dotted half notes tied together. If these dotted half notes were part of a longer melisma, a slur would again extend from the first to the last notes of the passage without intervening ties, and repeated pitches should be interpreted as tied notes, even though no bar line separates them. Billings's anthem "Who Is This That Cometh" might serve as an illustration (Example 6).

EXAMPLE 6

Musical notation for Example 6. It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The top staff has a treble clef and the bottom staff has a bass clef. A slur is drawn over a melisma in both staves, starting with a dotted half note and followed by several dotted half notes. The lyrics "Prai - - - - - se the Lord." are written below the top staff.

In other cases, repeated notes appearing under a slur and not being separated by bar lines might have been notated more conveniently in larger note values had they been so intended. Here we seem to be dealing with situations where Billings indeed wished repeated pitches to be articulated separately, and where we must turn our attention to further categories.

Text Interpretation

That Billings indulged in “word painting” or madrigalism has long been recognized.⁶ He often set words to music in such a way as not only to convey their meaning but also to illustrate their sound, and frequently his settings included pitch repetitions within a melisma. In his fugging-tune *Dunstable*, Billings suggests the sound of the hunted hart’s panting with a motif consisting of three repeated eighth notes (Example 7).

EXAMPLE 7

The musical score for Example 7 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. The lyrics are: "so pants, so pants the hunt - - ed" on the top staff and "so pants the hunt - ed hart to find and" on the bottom staff. The melody in the treble clef features a motif of three repeated eighth notes, which is repeated several times throughout the passage. The bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

There is little question in this case that Billings intended the repeated eighth notes to be articulated: He could have written a dotted quarter note (as he did in the last measure) had he intended a continuous sound. Similarly, the repeated notes in a passage from his anthem “Thou O God” carry with them not only the meaning but also the sound of laughter (Example 8).

EXAMPLE 8

The musical score for Example 8 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. The lyrics are: "lau - gh, they shall laugh, they shall" on the top staff and "laugh; they shall laugh, they shall laugh, they shall" on the bottom staff. The melody in the treble clef features a motif of repeated eighth notes, which is repeated several times throughout the passage. The bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment.

Occasionally Billings seems to have used the device as a motif in itself, without attempting a direct imitation, as, for instance, in his fugging-tune

⁶See J. Murray Barbour, *The Church Music of William Billings* (East Lansing, Michigan, 1960), particularly pp. 60–61 and 101–102.

Washington, where the word “chariots” is set several times to repeated notes under a slur (Example 9).

EXAMPLE 9

The musical score for Example 9 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The top staff has the lyrics "-tend thy state," above it. The bottom staff has the lyrics "-tend thy state, _____ those" below it. A large slur spans across both staves, covering the word "chariots" in the bottom staff. The notes under the slur are repeated eighth notes in the bass staff and repeated quarter notes in the treble staff. The lyrics "char - - - - - 'ots" are written above the slur in the bottom staff.

Such repetitions normally involve smaller note values, such as eighth notes and quarters, contained within a measure where larger values could easily have been applied. They also appear as typical motifs passing from one voice to another.

Harmonic-Rhythmic Coordination

Another situation in which one encounters repeated pitches within a melisma seems to result from Billings’s desire to keep a rhythmic pulse going during changes of harmony or chord position. Again, Billings could have substituted other note values had he wanted a continuous sound. An example of this type is Billings’s anthem “And I Saw A Mighty Angel” (Example 10).

EXAMPLE 10

The musical score for Example 10 consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The top staff has the lyrics "sho - - - - - ut" above it. The bottom staff has the lyrics "sho - - - - - ut" below it. A large slur spans across both staves, covering the word "shout" in the bottom staff. The notes under the slur are repeated eighth notes in the bass staff and repeated quarter notes in the treble staff. The number "160" is written above the slur in the top staff.

There seems to be no question that the repetitions of pitches in the counter and tenor should be articulated by the singers. A similar but more extended passage is found in Billings’s anthem “O Praise The Lord” (Example 11).

EXAMPLE 11

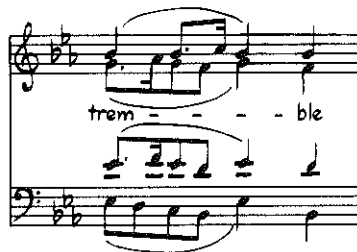


These situations may involve any note value from eighth notes to whole notes, either contained within a bar or separated by a bar line where the context of the repetition clearly indicates the intention.

Ambiguous Situations

In a few cases where pitches are repeated under a slur, the interpretation is not clear and neither the notation nor the context suggests an unequivocal solution to the problem. The performers must rely on their intuition rather than on set principles. For example, in *Redemption*, should the repetition of the pitch in the treble be articulated (Example 12)?

EXAMPLE 12



The repetition may be prompted by the imagery of “tremble”; or it may be a way of indicating a double-dotted note — a symbol that, however, is rarely used in eighteenth-century psalmody,⁷ but Billings has provided no clues to the interpretation of the passage.

Another ambiguous example is found in Billings’s anthem “Who Is This That Cometh” (Example 13). In this case the counter and bass have two half notes tied over the bar line, followed by a half note that is set to the

⁷There are no examples of double-dotted notes in Billings’s music, and the symbol is not covered in the theoretical introduction of any Anglo-American tunebook that I have seen.

next word of the text. The tenor, however, has three repeated half notes under a slur, set to the same word.

EXAMPLE 13

Example 13 is a musical score for two voices, likely Soprano and Tenor, in a key of D major (two sharps). The lyrics are: "won-der-ful, coun-sel-ler, the might-y God, his might-y God, the". The score shows a melisma where the words "might-y God" are repeated. In the tenor part, the first two notes of the second "might-y God" are repeated half notes under a slur, which is a notation error as described in the text. The bass part also has a melisma with "might-y God, the".

There is no obvious reason for the repeated half notes in the tenor. Perhaps here the ambiguity is the result of an engraver's error. Having inscribed three half notes in the counter, the engraver may have gone on to draw the same notation in the tenor. Realizing his mistake, he corrected it by the simplest means available to him: a slur between the first and third notes of the group. If so, the three half notes are meant to be performed as a continuous sound.

A similar situation is encountered in Billings's anthem "Lift Up Your Eyes" (Example 14).

EXAMPLE 14

Example 14 is a musical score for two voices in 3/4 time, featuring a melisma of the word "round". The score shows the exchange of the melisma motif between the upper voices and the bass. The motif consists of a sequence of eighth notes. In the bass part, the motif ends with a dotted half note, which is a repeated note. The word "round" is written above the notes in the upper parts and below the bass part.

The exchange of the motif between the upper voices and the bass is repeated twice. Except for the first time in the bass, the motif ends with a dotted half note. Evidently there is no special purpose for the repeated note in the bass at the end of the example. One may again suggest that the engraver made an error and, rather than correcting it by beating out the wrong symbol, he chose to include it in the melisma. But here the context offers no rational explanation for the error. The best one can suggest is that since it seems to serve no obvious musical function, the repetition should be considered a tie substitute.

A rather curious repetition of pitches under a slur appears in many printings of Billings's fugging-tune *Bethlehem*. The repeated half notes in the counter and bass of Example 15 seem to indicate that Billings wanted them to be articulated inasmuch as he could easily have substituted whole notes instead.

EXAMPLE 15

The an-gel of the Lord came down and glo-ry shone
 glo-ry shone a-round. The an-gel of the Lord came down
 round.
 roun - - - - - d.

By referring to Billings's original publication of the tune in his *The Singing Master's Assistant*, the interpretation immediately becomes clear. In the original a change of system occurs between the second and third quarter notes of the third measure. Billings included the first half of the measure in the upper system and the second half in the lower, dividing a whole note into two half notes to accommodate the split measure. While the interpretation seems quite clear in the original printing of *Bethlehem* — one of Billings's most popular works — other tunebooks still include the two half notes but without the change of system.

Summary

Thus, when interpreting the meaning of repeated notes under a slur in Anglo-American psalmody, one must take several factors into consideration: the length of the notes, the availability of other symbols in the standard notational system, and the obvious imagery of the word to which the melisma is set. In addition, one should consider the possibility of an error by the engraver or typesetter. Normally, when Billings or the other psalmodists of his day wanted repeated pitches within a melisma to be articulated, they clearly indicated this in their notation, and repeated notes under a slur were often used as a motif. In such cases, the repeated notes should be articulated in performance.

If the repeated notes are separated by bar lines, particularly when the note values are whole or half notes, or if the repeated notes within a measure make up a value for which no common symbol was available in the standard

notational system, then it is likely that a tie substitute is intended and the repeated notes should be sung as one continuous sound. Composers often indicated the continuation of the sound in the text by dividing the syllable concerned but joining it with a series of dashes.

The theoretical introductions to Anglo-American tunebooks do not give any real guidance as to the manner in which repeated notes intended to be articulated within a melisma are to be performed. Should they receive an aspirated attack or merely a slight, pulsating reinforcement of the sound? Should all articulations be performed the same way? The only statements in the tunebooks that may pertain to the performance of these passages are general, such as: "The best way is to sing with ease and freedom . . . there being nothing forced or unnatural in good music."⁸ "A long chain of notes under a slur should be sung somewhat softer than plain notes, being lightly warbled in the throat," says *The Chorister's Companion*.⁹ While agreeing with the statement in *The Chorister's Companion*, Oliver Holden remarks that

some erroneously argue (and such is their practice) that every note, and all parts of a note, which occur in those parts of a bar, which are said to be accented parts, should be accented. This is as much as to say, that authors of music should substitute 4 crotchets for a semibreve, and 3 crotchets for a pointed minim, and slur them together, which is exactly the manner in which they are addicted to sing them. This discovers a want of knowledge and taste. . . .¹⁰

Though soft singing and a smooth choral sound were the ideals of performance, most writers of introductions recognized that "regard should be had to words to sing loud or soft as the words require. The music should bend to the words and not the words to the music."¹¹ "Singing should be strong where the words are suitable, such as might, thunder, &c., and soft where the words are so, as mild, weak, &c."¹²

In strophic settings the musical effect of a passage might change with the changes in the mood of the text, as Elias Mann pointed out:

When, therefore, different words or ideas are applied to the same tune, expressive of various emotions of *joy, grief, fear, sorrow, &c.*, the notes (either by quickening or moderating the time — swelling or softening the voice, &c.) should yield so as to sympathize with the subject, otherwise the music will lose its proper effect.¹³

⁸Read, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁹Simeon Jocelin and Amos Doolittle, *The Chorister's Companion* (New Haven, 1782), p. 14.

¹⁰Oliver Holden, *The Union Harmony* (Boston, 1793), p. xi.

¹¹Oliver Bronson, *Select Harmony* ([Connecticut] 1783), p. 3.

¹²Simeon Jocelin, *The Chorister's Companion*, 2nd edition (New Haven, 1788), p. 17.

¹³Elias Mann, *The Northampton Collection* (Northampton, Massachusetts, 1797).

The manner in which repeated notes in a melisma should be performed depends, therefore, in large measure upon the word to which the melisma is set. One can imagine a performance of *Dunstable* (Example 7) in which the repeated eighth notes would be performed differently in each stanza, ranging from a heavy articulation to almost no articulation at all.

In answer to the questions raised above, based on the limited evidence available, all varieties of articulation that are consistent with the meaning of the words and the effect of the music at any particular point seem possible. We have reason to believe that William Billings, who was more sensitive to the imagery and meaning of his texts than most other American psalmodists of his day, would agree with this interpretation.

Choral Performances

REFLECTIONS ON THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR

A REPORT

With special 1985 issues devoted to the music of Bach, Handel, and Schütz, the *American Choral Review* paid tribute to a year of choral activities of unprecedented scope. The range of Bach anniversary performances seems to defy the limits of summary. In anticipation of the Bach year, the American Chapter of the New Bach Society had issued listings of the activities in twenty-six established American Bach Festivals (compiled by Ward Woodbury) and of 1985 Bach Festivals in thirty-two states (compiled by Gordon Paine). The Society's report at the end of the year added details of Bach Festivals in the Federal and Democratic German Republics, Argentina, Norway, France, Bulgaria, Iraq, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Japan, and the U.S.S.R.

The State of Michigan distinguished itself by offering the two International Bach Conferences held in this country, at the University of Michigan, Flint, in April, and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in July.

International Handel Festivals were held in London, Göttingen, and Halle — the traditional sites of Handel observances — as well as at the University of Maryland which, with its yearly performances at College Park and Washington, D.C., has inaugurated a long-range plan of presenting all of Handel's oratorios.

The only International Schütz Festival of the year took place at the University of Illinois, Urbana, which, in collaboration with the American Chapter of the Schütz Society (with headquarters at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey), offered outstanding performances under the direction of Chester Alwes, Alexander Blachly, Roger Norrington, and Heinz Hennig.

In September the *Internationale Bach Akademie Stuttgart*, joined with the West German *Gesellschaft für Musikforschung* in a week-long International Music Festival honoring Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Schütz, and Alban Berg, with major choral performances conducted by Helmuth Rilling, John Eliot Gardiner, Wolfgang Gönnenwein, Michel Corboz, Heinz Hennig, and Eric Ericson.

What emerges from a year of extraordinary events is a world remaining in deep search in facing the postulate of its greatest choral legacy. The standard works inspire ever new settings. John Nelson, conductor of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, realized a ten-year plan of performing the St. John Passion, the St. Matthew Passion, and the B-Minor Mass with the American Boychoir (Princeton) during Holy Week at Carnegie Hall — a triumphant achievement, especially in the sense that its painstaking preparation of the choristers, under their director John Kuzma, brought them probably closer to the great boychoir traditions than any comparable American group had ever been. Conversely, the issue of incorporating Bach's great choral works in the repertoire of our major symphony orchestras once again proved problematic in the semi-staged Tanglewood performance of the St. Matthew Passion. Wrote Will Crutchfield in *The New York Times* (August 18, 1985):

Seiji Ozawa conducted the first half of the Passion with his customary energy, but one had the feeling that it wasn't really his piece; some hard-to-define element of its contemplative grandeur was elusive. At intermission, it was announced that the conductor was unwell (exhaustion and dizziness, Tanglewood officials later specified), and the longer second part was led by the Tanglewood Festival Chorus's director, John Oliver, in his Boston Symphony debut. Mr. Oliver was not ostentatious or demonstrative, but gave the impression that the St. Matthew was closer to his concerns than to Mr. Ozawa's; the remainder of the work flowed more naturally. Mr. Ozawa's musical policy took a conservative middle ground between the older "symphonic" Bach style and the lightness and clarity that the baroque revivalists have shown us.

The "baroque revivalists" had the last word in many ways. The Year's Best Recordings column of the *Times* (John Rockwell, December 29, 1985) said:

Once again, one of the most fertile areas of innovation was early music, and especially "authentic" performances of Baroque music.

Yet the elusiveness of authenticity stays with us as well. Television viewers watched an impressive rendition of Bach's Christmas Oratorio on Christmas Day. Taken from an earlier presentation by the Concentus Musicus under the direction of Nikolaus Harnoncourt, the performance gave to choirboys the difficult assignment of rendering Bach's demanding solo roles for soprano and alto voices. They were superbly handled, but one could not escape the impression of curious imbalance prompted by the fact that tenor and bass arias were not sung by choristers of corresponding caliber but by seasoned soloists (with an unforgettable Evangelist's role taken by Peter Schreier). The claims of authenticity will continue to scorn

solution, and it seemed indicative of this situation that the exquisite setting was that of a Catholic church.

To what extent did the Anniversary Year expand our knowledge of the works of the great masters? In a relatively little noticed Festival-Conference, the Orchestra Association of Springfield, Massachusetts, under the direction of Robert Gutter, presented the first complete performance of Handel's *Roman Vespers*, the group of his Latin church works presumably written for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in 1707 (the cycle will be recorded for Victor under the direction of Michael Korn). Heinz Hennig's Stuttgart performances included a premiere performance of Schütz's *opus ultimum*, a composite of Psalm and Magnificat settings. The thirty-three newly authenticated chorale preludes of Bach were formally introduced to the scholarly world by Christoph Wolff at the Leipzig International Bach Festival, scheduled, like the Handel Festival in Halle, to mark the birthday date proper. And at the end of the year, UMI Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan, issued a remarkable Bach publication, edited by Howard H. Cox, Professor of Old Testament at the Moravian Theological Seminary, and presenting facsimile reproductions of all pages from Bach's personal copy of the Bible that show the composer's manuscript entries.

The problem of this unique document, which was discussed in an earlier issue of the *American Choral Review* (October, 1972), is that it contains, next to illuminating statements unquestionably in Bach's hand, a wealth of entries, such as marginal symbols and text underlining, that could not readily be identified for lack of handwriting characteristics. If one explores the underlined portions, however, they suggest astounding references to Bach's personal and artistic life. Did Bach, indeed, give us in these entries a mirror of his personal thoughts and convictions? The questions were answered by an ingenious process of ink analysis, applied for the first time in history: the entries are Bach's own. But the epochal discovery will leave us with new questions characteristic of the tasks ahead, for the book presents us only with the evidence itself; the challenge of Bach interpretation continues.

— A.M.

Recent Scores

BACH, JOHANN SEBASTIAN. *Now Thank We All Our God* (Chorale from Cantata 79, *God, the Lord*). Arr. by Paul Gamil. Text in English only. SAB, piano or organ. Harold Flammer (Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa.) (9 p., .85)

BRAHMS, JOHANNES. *Three Songs by Johannes Brahms, Set 1* — 1. "We Wandered" (Wir Wandelten); 2. "Sapphic Ode" (Sapphische Ode); 3. "How Lovely the Earth!" (Juchhe!). Choral settings and English texts by Hawley Ades. Texts in German and English. SATB, piano (also available for SSAA, piano). Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa. (15 p., 1.00)

DISTLER, HUGO. *Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein* (Oh, God, from Heaven Look on Us) (*Der Jahrkreis*, Op. 5, no. 29). Text in German and English. Edited by Clifford G. Richter. SSA. Bärenreiter (European American Music Corp., Clifton, N.J.) (4 p., .30)

— . *Wir glauben an Gott, den Vater* (Our Faith in God, the Father) (*Der Jahrkreis*, Op. 5, no. 27). Text in German and English. Edited by Clifford G. Richter. SSA. Bärenreiter (European American Music Corp., Clifton, N.J.) (7 p., .40)

EDDLEMAN, DAVID. *Hanukkah!* 2-part voices, piano, optional tambourine. Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa. (11 p., .95; tambourine part included)

EHRET, WALTER, arranger and editor. *Wayfaring Stranger*. Spiritual. SAB, piano. Bärenreiter (European American Music Corp., Clifton, N.J.) (7 p., .40)

FOSTER, STEPHEN C. *Beautiful Dreamer*. Arr. by Leonard Van Camp. SATB, piano, optional vocal or instrumental descant. European American Music Corp., Clifton, N.J. (8 p., .40)

FARGASON, EDDIE, arranger. *On Jordan's Stormy Banks*. This is an arrangement of the American folk hymn, *Promised Land*. SATB, accompaniment (pre-recorded accompaniment tape and orchestration available from the publisher). Glory-Sound (Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa.) (8 p., .80)

HALLOCK, PETER. *Gloria In Excelsis*. SATB, congregation, organ, optional handbells and trumpet. Text in English. G.I.A. Publications, Chicago, Ill. (13 p., .70; trumpet part included)

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MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY, FELIX. *Grant, O Lord, Thy Grace Unbounded (Lass', o Herr, mich Hilfe finden)*. MS, SATB, organ. Edited and English version by Robert Campbell. Text in English and German. Harold Flammer (Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa.) (10 p., .90)

MERMAN, JOYCE, arranger. *A Disneyland Who Zoo*. Songs from Disney movies (including "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah," "When I See an Elephant Fly," "The Reluctant Dragon," "Ferdinand the Bull," "Never Smile At a Crocodile," "The Siamese Cat Song," and "Who's Afraid Of the Big Bad Wolf?"). Sequence, dialogue and arrangements by Joyce Merman. Unison or 2-part voices, piano. "As the songs are sung . . . full-color slides of the original Disney characters may be projected, preferably on a screen above the singers. . . ." Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa. (24 p., 3.50; voice parts 1.00; color slides 10.00)

PARKER, ALICE. *The Day-Spring*. Christmas cantata based on early American hymns. Children's choir (unison), adult choir (SATB), flute, keyboard. Hinshaw Music, Chapel Hill, N.C. (32 p., 2.50)

PIERPONT, JAMES. *Jingle Bells or The One Horse Open Sleigh*. Original version

(1857). Ed. by Sandy Valerio. SATB, keyboard. ABI/Alexander Broude, N.Y. (6 p., .60)

RASLEY, JOHN M., arranger. *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*. This is an arrangement of the hymn tune *Resignation*, from the hymn book *Southern Harmony* (1835). SATB, organ. Harold Flammer (Shawnee Press, Delaware Water Gap, Pa.) (6 p., .75)

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WOLFF, S. DRUMMOND. *I Bind Unto Myself Today*. A Chorale Concertato for choir (SATB), congregation, 2 trumpets, organ. This is a setting of the traditional Irish tune, *St. Patrick's Breastplate*. Text ascribed to St. Patrick. Concordia, St. Louis, Mo. (12 p., .85; trumpet parts available separately)

— . *Now Let the Heavens Be Joyful*. This is a setting of a Provençal carol tune. SATB, brass quartet (2 trumpets, 2 trombones), organ. Concordia, St. Louis, Mo. (12 p., .60)

— , arranger. *Three Hymns For Christmas*. Settings of *In Dulci Jubilo*, *Navarre*, and *Divinum Mysterium*. Double SATB (one may be a solo quartet), optional organ and brass quartet. Concordia, St. Louis, Mo. (14 p., .90; organ and brass parts available from publisher)

WOOD, DALE. *Jesus, the Very Thought Of Thee*. SATB, organ. The Sacred Music Press, Dayton, Ohio. (6 p., .60)

— Richard Jackson

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