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Music in the Synagogue (Concluded)

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without glints of humour—but this is “another story”), and, by fortunate chance for both of us, to ripen into the life-long friendship which has since continued unbroken.

“To the few who knew Niecks’s character intimately in those days, it is not a matter of great surprise to find him now comfortably ‘Chaired.’ For his present honourable position has been won—apart from his gifts—by indomitable perseverance, an untamable appetite for study, and an imperturbable patience under, oftentimes, bleakish circumstances.

“Be that as it may; Edinburgh now has an energetic Professor, who has lived long enough in Scotland to know and appreciate the musical needs and requirements of his adopted country: as well as an actively practical musician, who can sympathise and work hand in hand with the members of his profession. And the obviously important and welcome results of such a wise choice are already within sight, and promise many more in the near future.

“Is not the man who can take his place at various desks in the orchestra, deliver erudite lectures, and write thoughtful books on music and her sons an ideal ‘Professor’? Although, as regards learning and knowledge, far beyond the sphere of his own particular art, he has few equals, Niecks exhibits none of the attributes of a root-grubbing Smelfungus (a comprehensive and varied professional training in his youth precludes the possibility), but is an advanced, enthusiastic and receptive musician, presenting in his person the rare combination of wide culture with practical experience.

“Always accustomed to look upon him as the nearest approach to a philosopher that I have yet met in the flesh, I know I shall not offend my old friend by saying that my admiration for his accumulated wisdom is accentuated by the fact that he refrains from composing music himself. *Rara avis!*”

## MUSIC IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

BY THE REV. FRANCIS L. COHEN.

(Concluded from page 521.)

NEXT to the Scriptural lessons, the most important section of each Jewish service, occurring even when no such lessons are read, is the sequence of benedictions known as the ‘*Amidah*’ or Standing Prayer, from the attitude in which it is recited. It is a very ancient compilation, dating back to the days of Ezra and the very first synagogues, and being fixed in its present form since at least the second century. The Standing Prayer is that portion which, in the liturgy of the Dispersion, more immediately takes the place of the sacrifice offered on the same occasion in the ritual of the Temple. It is interesting to observe that in reminiscence of the days when books were scarce, this sequence of benedictions

is first recited silently by individuals, and then (except at Evening Service) repeated aloud by the officiant, the *Sanctus* and the Levitical Benediction (in Hebrew of course) being introduced in the public repetition. It is preceded, morning and evening, by the reading of the *Shema* or passage from Deuteronomy (vi., 4-9) commencing “Hear, O Israel,” together with certain other Pentateuchal readings and some praises. All these it attracts, so to speak, to its own melody, a species of cantillation, not fixed by any system of accents, but consisting of a *free vocal development* on traditional lines of certain themes specifically associated with the particular Service or section of the Service.

### THE PRAYER-MOTIVES.

According to this method, resembling the *harmonia* of the Greeks, or the use of the *raga* among the Hindus, a parallel form of intonation is associated with the corresponding passages in every service throughout the liturgical year, identical in style and practically so in treatment, but varying in tonality according to the occasion. The motives usually consist of a sort of *coda*, to which the benediction closing each paragraph is chanted. This prayer-motive or melody-type is technically spoken of as the *Niggun* or “melody” of the Service. In old Germany it was termed “Steiger,” which shows that the scales and modal peculiarities of these motives were long ago recognised. The development of the motives, and the fixed melodies sometimes introduced as episodes, are together spoken of as *Khazzanuth* or “Precentory”—if that word may be coined. The modes of the prayer-motives have been stated above, and it will be noticed that they are not in every case diatonic.

### CHROMATIC MODES.

By ancient tradition from the days when the Jews, now for ages settled in Teutonic and Slavonic lands, were under the same tonal influences as the peoples in South-Eastern Europe and Asia Minor still are, chromatic scales have been preserved. The chromatic intervals may have survived as a relic of the Oriental tendency to divide a tone into sub-intervals, and as a result of the intricacy of some of the vocal embroideries in use, which are of a character to amaze an ordinary singer. Among the Western precentors, born and bred as they are amid mensurate music on a contrapuntal basis, there is still a remarkable propensity to introduce the interval of the *augmented second* in and out of season, especially between the third and second degrees of any scale in a descending cadence. They even sometimes employ enharmonic intervals in rapid figuration, the pace of the Hebrew recitation, melismatic and syllabic alike, being much more rapid than that usually heard in church. Quite commonly two augmented seconds are introduced into the



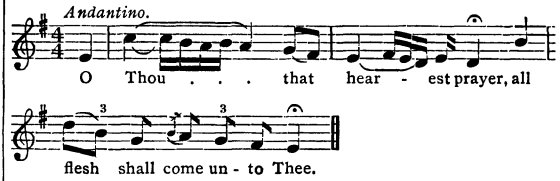
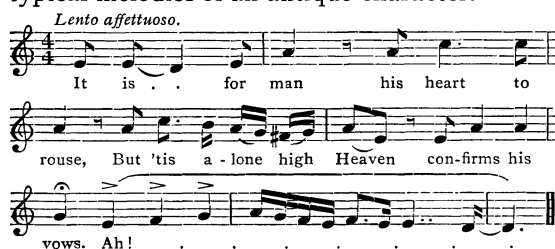
It must be observed that the preceding is but one possible development among many, for while the main features will remain fairly constant, the detail will depend upon the capacity and "personal equation" of the particular officiant, his *rapport* with the congregants present, the strain on his voice due to the acoustic peculiarities of the building, the duration of the day's devotions, and other such varying conditions. But the development here given may be taken as a fair average, being, save for the modifications necessitated by the difference in rhythm between Hebrew and English, due to a master of renown.

## FIXED MELODIES.

In addition to the antique forms of cantillation and free recitation discussed above, there are also a large number of *fixed melodies* which fall to the Jewish officiant during the course of his unaccompanied chanting. These reflect all the tonal fashions of the last eight centuries, according to the date of their introduction; but it may be generally stated that the more ancient are *solo* settings of particular texts, while the more recent include the chants, hymns, and versicles, usually to texts of mediæval origin, in which officiant and congregation (now led by the choir) take part antiphonally. There are two main classes of fixed solo melodies, which may be termed "refrains" and "doxologies." In these again is evident the working of the principle already mentioned, in accordance with which a particular mode is associated with a particular day in the liturgical year.

## REPRESENTATIVE THEMES.

Owing to the tuneful individuality of these fixed melodies, they are often utilised as "representative themes" illustrative of the devotional thought underlying the celebrations of the day with which they are associated. The "refrains" are chiefly employed on the Festivals and special Sabbaths, on which occasions, according to most local uses, long Hebrew poems are appointed to be read through silently as meditations. The last stanza of each section of these poems is chanted by the officiant to the "refrain" of the day, which is also often used as an antiphonal chant when a sequence of Biblical verses introduces some special section of the office. It will suffice to quote two such "refrains" from the Penitential services, which, covering as they do the Day of Memorial (Lev. xxiii. 24, Num. xxix. 1) and the great Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 30; xxiii. 31, 32), are particularly rich in typical melodies of an antique character.



The other class, the "doxologies," are of greater liturgical importance, occurring as they do on every occasion of public worship. They are settings of the *Kaddish*, literally "Sanctification," the ancient text of which includes a prayer for the universal sanctification of the name of God, the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven in our days, and the Messianic peace. Formerly the *Kaddish* concluded each service, but it is now usually followed by a hymn. Yet at the end of each office the full form is always chanted, while the first half is regularly recited at the close of each distinct section of the devotions and study of the Law, which together make up the Jewish liturgy. The melodies of the *Kaddish* are accordingly regarded as most characteristic "representative themes," and are often used as such in anticipatory allusion to a coming sacred day. Some are almost monotone, the most frequent are syllabic; but those in use on the High Festivals are richly melismatic. Most of the melodies are of late mediæval origin, but still more recent accretions are often traceable. Yet underneath all is almost always discoverable the ancient Oriental melody-type, which was, perhaps unconsciously, in the mind of the officiant who first fixed the melody in the form in which tradition has preserved it during recent centuries.

## THE ORDER OF SERVICE.

After the explanation which has been given of the forms of Jewish sacred song, some lucidity may attach to an exposition of the Order of Service on an ordinary Sabbath morning. With the sermon (in the vernacular of course), such a Saturday Service will occupy about two hours and a half. But it must not be imagined that one officiant is chanting all that time, although he may have to be singing for three or even four hours in succession on the Day of Atonement. The earlier portions of the Sabbath Service, being praises and Psalms, are chanted to "refrain" themes by an assistant. The chief Precentor then concludes the praises with an elaborate *Introit* and a doxology, and recites the closing verses of the *Shema'* and of the Benedictions to the Sabbath motive. The responses ("Blessed be His Name" and "Amen") are based on the same motive. Then follows the silent reading of the Standing Prayer, which the Precentor repeats at length, developing the Sabbath motive, with choral response. If it be New Moon, or a Festival, *Hallel* here follows, being Psalms cxiii. to cxviii. Some of the Psalms are read silently, others sung as chants or anthems (without any repetition of words) to modern compositions,



and the first and last verses of Psalm cxviii. have traditional fixed melodies. Next comes a doxology, and then the Scroll of the Law is taken from the Ark. The versicles and processional at this point have modern choral settings. The Pentateuchal lesson is then cantillated from the Scroll, seven congregants being "called up" to the reading, which is usually the function of the Preacher or of the Assistant Reader. After a melodious rendering of the doxology, a member of the congregation is "called up" to cantillate the Prophetic lesson. The Scroll is then displayed to the people, rolled up, and re-invested with its silken cover and silver ornaments during the reading of this lesson from the pointed text of a printed volume. The Precentor now intones a blessing for the congregation, and the Preacher recites (usually in English) the Prayer for the Queen and Royal Family. Psalm cxlv. follows, and then Psalm xxix. is chanted while the Scroll is being returned to the Ark, the Precentor concluding the Morning Service with some versicles and a doxology. The "Additional" Service comes next, a Standing Prayer, again repeated with development of the day's motive; then follows the sermon, after it a metrical hymn, a brief prayer, a doxology, and a final hymn. These

hymns, it must be noted, are identical week after week. On Festivals, the Service is much the same in outline, but the prayer-motives and the choral compositions are different. In the penitential season, on the Day of Memorial, the Service is greatly protracted, taking from four to six hours; and on the Day of Atonement it occupies the whole day. On these occasions the ritual is divided between at least two officiants, but it is rendered still on the same lines of melody-type and of motive development. But in the repetition of the Standing Prayers many meditations and poems are introduced, and many of them are chanted at length, a few with choral response. Even if the emotional strain of the sacred occasion do not call forth greater elaboration of the development, the many fixed melodies, such as the *Kol Nidrei*, well known through Bruch's transcription, in themselves constitute an arduous task for the officiant. In illustration of the height of expression and intensity to which his song on that solemn occasion sometimes rises, this article may conclude with the transcription of a traditional rhapsody, replete with an emotion often transcending mere verbal utterance, which is introduced in the recital of the "Additional" Service on the Day of Atonement.

*Moderato, con espressione.*

Now the priests and the people that were stand - - ing in . . . the Temple court, ah!

ah! when they heard . . . ah!

the dread Name, ah!

pro-noun - ced by the mouth . . . of the High

Priest, ah! . . . ah! . . . with ho - ly awe and with ma - jes - ty, . . . at that

mo - ment, ah! . . . ah! . . . ah! . . . ah!

they pros - trat - ed them-selves, ah!

bow-ing down, ah!

dim - in - u - en - do. . . and

fall - ing on their fa - ces, and said: Bless His Name, Whose glo-rious King- dom is for ev - er - more.