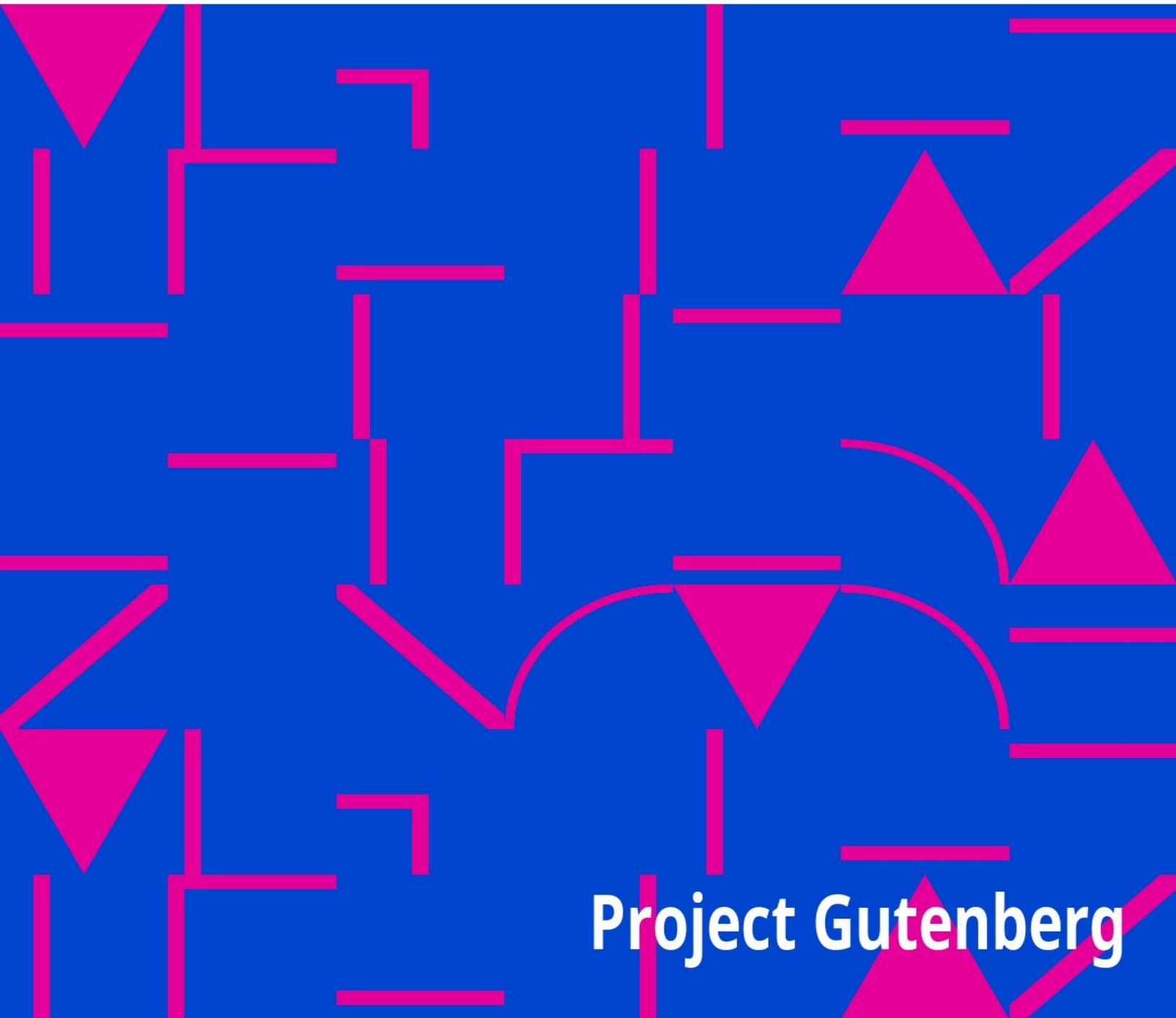
St. Gregory and the Gregorian Music

E. G. P. Wyatt



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ST. GREGORY
AND THE
GREGORIAN MUSIC

BY
E. G. P. WYATT

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PREFACE.

The original conception of this little book was due to the Rev. W. H. FRERE, and it could not have been carried out at all without his help and advice, which have been ungrudgingly given.

But he is not responsible for any part of the book, except the notes on the tropes and the third and fourth portraits of St. Gregory. Whatever else in the book is of any value has been compiled from the following sources:—

MORIN.—"Les véritables origines du Chant Grégorien." Maredsous, 1890.

MORIN.—"Revue Bénédictine," for May, 1890. Maredsous.

WAGNER.—"Einführung in die Gregorianischen Melodien," Pt. 1. Freiburg, 1901.

FRERE.—"Graduale Sarisburiense." Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society, London, 1894.

"PALÉOGRAPHIE MUSICALE," Vols. v. and vi. Solesmes, 1896.

"RASSEGNA GREGORIANA," for March-April, June, and July, 1903. Rome.

E. G. P. WYATT.

St. Gregory and his Parents

IMAGINES.AD.VIVVM.EXPRESSAE
EX.ÆDICVLA.SANCTI.ANDREÆ
PROPE.BEATI.GREGORII.MAGNI.ECCLESIAM
NECNON.EX.VITA.EIVSDEM.BEATI.GREGORII
A.IOANNE.DIACONO.LIB.IV.CAP.LXXXIII.ET.LXXXIV
CONSCRIPTA

Hieronymus Rossi sculp. Romæ

GORDIANVS.S.GREGORII.PATER S.GREGORIVS.MAGNVS SILVIA.S.GREGORII.MATER

INTRODUCTION.

The Great Pope, the thirteen hundredth anniversary of whose death is commemorated on March the 12th, 1904, was born at Rome, probably about the year 540. His father, Gordianus, was a wealthy man of senatorial rank; his mother, Silvia, was renowned for her virtues. He received from his parents an excellent liberal and religious education. He further applied himself to the study of law, and—probably at about the age of 30—was made prætor of Rome by the Emperor Justin II. But he became dissatisfied with his mode of life, and retiring to the monastery of St. Andrew, which he had founded on the Cœlian hill, lived there as monk and as abbot. He had long been an ardent admirer of St. Bennet (who had been dead little more than thirty years), and on his father's death had made use of his patrimony to found six other monasteries in Sicily. He was not, however, allowed to enjoy his retirement at St. Andrew's for long, for Pope Benedict I. ordained him deacon, and sent him to Constantinople as his apocrisiarius or confidential agent. Pelagius II. continued him in this office, making use of him especially to appeal to the Emperor for aid against the Lombards, who, while settling in North Italy, were wandering southwards, devastating the country as they went.

When he was at length recalled to Rome, he begged to be allowed to return to his monastery. The Pope allowed him to do this, but employed him as his secretary. It was either now, or just before he went to Constantinople, that there occurred the famous incident in the slave market, when, struck by the beauty of some lads exposed for sale, he asked what was the name of their nation. On being told, "Angles," he exclaimed, "Good, for they have the faces of angels, and ought to be fellow-heirs of the angels in heaven." In reply to his inquiry as to the name of their native province, he was told that its inhabitants were called Deiri. He answered, "Good; snatched from the wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ." What was the name of the king of that province? The answer was "*Æ*lia." Then said he, "Alleluia! the praise of God ought to be sung in those parts." He passed on, but did not forget the incident, for he wrung permission from the Pope to go himself on a mission to convert the Angles; but no sooner

had he started than the Romans clamoured to have him recalled, and he had to return. He did not, however, forget his interest in the nation, and when he was Pope he was able to carry out those plans which earned him the affectionate titles of “Gregory our Father,” and “The Apostle of the English,” from those who owed so much to him.

DEPRECAMUR TE DOMINE

Deprecamur te domine

De-pre-ca-mur Te, Do-mi-ne,
in om-ni mi-se-ri-cor-di-a tu-a,
ut au-fe-ra-tur fu-ror tu-us et i-ra tu-a
a ci-vi-ta-te is-ta,
et de do-mo san-cta tu-a;
quo-ni-am pec-ca-vi-mus:
Al-le-lu-ya.

[play tune: Deprecamur de domine]

In 590 Pope Pelagius died. It was a time of great misery at Rome; there was famine and a pestilence in the city, the Tiber overflowed its banks, and the Lombards threatened invasion. The Popes were virtually the rulers of Rome at this time, and all the inhabitants turned to Gregory as their only hope. His proved abilities and high character were known to all, and he was unanimously elected by the clergy and the people. He shrank, however, from the office, and even petitioned the Emperor Maurice to withhold his confirmation of the election. While waiting for the Emperor’s answer, Gregory employed the occasion in preaching to the people, calling them to repentance. A Litany was sung through the streets of the city by seven companies of the clergy and people, starting from different churches and meeting at the Basilica of St. Maria Maggiore. From this litany, perhaps, was taken the processional antiphon, “Deprecamur Te Domine,” which was sung by Augustine and his companions on entering Canterbury at the outset of their English mission. At length the confirmation of his election arrived from the Emperor, and though Gregory still tried to avoid the office, he was eventually obliged to take it, and was consecrated September the 3rd, 590.

During the thirteen years of his popedom, Gregory had full scope for his talents as administrator, as well as ruler. The Roman Church had by this time become possessed of a great “patrimony,” and Gregory found time in the midst of his

work of reforming the clergy and purifying the morals of the Church, to attend to even the smallest details in the management of these great estates. His letters give us the most vivid picture of his work and of his character. In them he is constantly giving directions and making arrangements that no injustice should be done to even the meanest peasant or serf on these estates; that their rents should be fixed, and no capricious exactions demanded of them, nor surcharges added to the payments legally due from them. He showed to the Jews a toleration and consideration which he did not always extend to schismatics, heretics, and heathen. He seems to have reserved his most violent language for Lombards and Patriarchs of Constantinople. He called worldly or negligent bishops to order, and in particular took vigorous measures to root out simony, which was very prevalent. He sent Augustine and his companions to England, and wrote them letters of exhortation and instruction; he found time to send them also church furniture, vessels and vestments, and a number of books.

He also became engaged in a controversy with John the Faster, the Patriarch of Constantinople, about the title of “Universal Bishop,” which was arrogated to the latter by himself and those about him. It was not a novelty, but Gregory seems to have seen the danger involved in its continued usage to the power which he claimed for the See of Rome. A whole series of his letters are consequently taken up with his vehement, not to say violent, protests against John’s use of the title. It is probably in connection with the fact that the Emperor Maurice had supported the Patriarch John in his claim of equality with the Pope of Rome, that the explanation is to be sought of a circumstance which remains the chief blot on Gregory’s fame. Maurice had given him little help against the Lombards, and had in various ways seemed to oppose or actually opposed Gregory in some of his reforms. When, therefore, Phocas murdered Maurice and usurped his throne, the Pope wrote him a fulsome letter of congratulation. He may not have been fully acquainted with the infamous character of Phocas, nor have fully known of the atrocious manner in which he had murdered the Emperor and his family, yet he must have known, at least, that he was a traitor, a murderer, and an usurper. Nothing can excuse him—knowing this—for writing in such a strain, saying “Glory to God in the highest,” and “Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad,” at the hopes aroused by the piety of the new Emperor.

He attached great importance to preaching, and many of his sermons remain to this day. He also wrote “Liber Pastoralis Curæ,” a treatise on the responsibilities and duties of Bishops. This book had immense influence; it was circulated in

Spain; the Emperor had it translated into Greek; it was an authoritative text-book in Gaul for centuries; and it was translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred, and was widely disseminated in England. But it is in the services and service-books of the Church that he set his mark most conspicuously. He organized and enriched them, even the Canon of the Mass in which he added to the prayer of oblation the words “Diesque nostras in tua pace disponas.” The work which has been traditionally ascribed to him in the department of Church Music we shall enter into more fully.

From his monastic life onwards Gregory seems to have suffered from bad health, due in part, probably, to his extreme asceticism while living in his monastery. During the last few years of his life he was in continual pain from gout, which makes his activity and his achievements still more astonishing. For long he was confined to his bed altogether. He died on March 12th, 604. In contrast to the enthusiasm with which his accession to the Papacy was greeted, he was now accused by the fickle population of having caused the famine, which was then raging, by his lavish expenditure, though the latter was largely due to the charitable relief which he habitually gave to alleviate the distress which prevailed all the time that he filled the Papal chair. But he was canonized after his death by universal consent in the West, and the Council of Cloveshoo, in 747, fixed the 12th of March for his veneration: “That the birthday of the blessed Pope Gregory, and also the day of the burial of St. Augustine the Archbishop and Confessor (who being sent to the English by the said Pope, our father Gregory, first brought the knowledge of the Faith, the sacrament of Baptism, and the notice of the Heavenly Country), which is the 26th of May, be honourably observed by all: so that each day be kept with a cessation from labour, by ecclesiastics and monastics; and that the name of our blessed father and doctor Augustine be always mentioned in singing the Litany after the invocation of St. Gregory.”

St. Gregory, from Antiphoner of Hartker of St. Gall

THE
GREGORIAN TRADITION.

The tradition that St. Gregory reformed the Plainsong of his day, especially that of the Antiphonale Missarum, seems to have been held universally till 1675, when Pierre Gussanville brought out an edition of Gregory's works, in which he threw doubts on the tradition. He was followed in 1729 by George, Baron d' Eckhart, a friend of Leibnitz, who put forward the theory that it was Gregory II., and not Gregory I., who had done this work. In 1772, at Venice, a new edition of Gregory's works was published by Gallicciolli; and in this were reproduced the arguments of Eckhart, leaving the question open for future investigation. Nothing more was heard of the theory till 1882, when, at the Congress of Arezzo, some speakers reproduced the doubts of Eckhart and Gallicciolli.

This did not attract much attention at the time, and the question was again reopened in 1890 by M. Gevaert in a lecture given in the presence of the Académie and of the King of the Belgians. The earlier "doubters" had argued the question from a purely historical standpoint: M. Gevaert lays stress especially on the musical side of the question. Theirs was chiefly negative; he proposes a theory of his own. He wishes to substitute Gregory II. or III. for Gregory I. The traditional view has been upheld against him by Dom Morin, Dr. Peter Wagner, and Rev. W. H. Frere.

The Historical Evidence may be summarized as follows, working backwards from a time when the Gregorian tradition was in existence beyond all question: —

> I.—JOHN THE DEACON (*c.* 872), *Vita St. Gregorii, lib.* II., *cap.* vi., *Antiphonarium Centonizans, Cantorum Constituit Scholam*. "In the house of the Lord, like a most wise Solomon, knowing the compunction which the sweetness of music inspires, he compiled for the sake of the singers the collection called 'Antiphoner,' which is of so great usefulness. He founded also the School of Singers who to this day perform the sacred chant in the

> Holy Roman Church according to instructions received from him. He assigned to it several estates, and had two houses built for it, one situated at the foot of the steps of the Church of the Apostle St. Peter, the other in the neighbourhood of the buildings of the patriarchal palace of the Lateran. There to-day are still shown the couch on which he reposed while giving his singing lessons; and the whip with which he threatened the boys is still preserved and venerated as a relic, as well as his authentic Antiphoner. By a clause inserted in his deed of gift, he laid down under pain of anathema that these estates should be divided between the two portions of the School in payment for the daily service."—(*Patr. Lat.*, lxxv., 90.)

This extract may be taken to prove that—

> 1. In 872 at Rome Gregory I. was believed to be the author of the Antiphoner which bears his name.
>
> 2. The Schola Cantorum looked upon Gregory I. as its founder and endower.
>
> 3. The Schola was still believed to possess his "authenticum Antiphonarium" and certain other objects connected in the popular mind with the memory of what Gregory had done for the cause of the ecclesiastical chant.

It is certainly an important point that the Schola itself attributed its foundation to Gregory I. Such a tradition would be carefully preserved in an important corporation like this.

A further witness to the existence of St. Gregory's couch is to be found in *Notitia Ecclesiarum Urbis Romæ*, an itinerary assigned by de Rossi to the seventh century, (de Rossi, *Rom. Sot.*, *vol.* i., *pp.* 138-143.)

> II.—Pope Leo IV. (847-855) to the Abbot Honoratus, *Ex registro Leonis IIII*. "There is something quite incredible, the sound of which has reached our ears: a thing which, if true, tends rather to diminish our consideration than to give it honour, to obscure it rather than to give it lustre. It appears in short that you feel nothing but aversion for the beautiful chant of St. Gregory, and for the manner of singing and reading laid down and taught by him in the Church, so that you are in disagreement on this point not only with the Holy See, which is near to you, but also with almost the whole Western Church, with all who use Latin to offer their praises to the Eternal King and pay Him the tribute of harmonious sounds.

> “All these Churches have received with so much eagerness and ardent affection this tradition of Gregory, and after having received it unreservedly they find so much pleasure in it, that even now they apply to us for more of it, thinking that perhaps something more which they do not know of, may have been preserved among us. This Holy Pope Gregory, a servant of God and a famous preacher and a wise pastor, who did so much for the welfare of mankind, he it was who also composed this chant, which we sing in the Church and everywhere, with great pains and with a complete knowledge of the musical art. He wished by this means to act more powerfully upon men’s hearts in order to arouse and touch them; and in fact the sound of his sweet melodies has gathered in the Churches not merely spiritual men, but also those who are less cultivated and sensitive.
>
> “I pray you not to allow yourself to remain in disagreement either with this Church, which is the chief head of religion, and from which no one wishes to stray, or with all those Churches of which we have spoken, if you love to live in complete peace and concord with the Universal Church. For if—which we do not believe—your aversion for our instruction and for the tradition of our holy Pontiff is such that you are not willing to conform in every point to our rite, both in chants and lessons, know that we will repel you from our communion; for it is fitting and healthful for you to follow the usages for which the Roman Church, mother of all and mistress of you, shows such great love and invincible attachment. For this reason we order you, under pain of excommunication, to conform in the Churches both in singing and reading exclusively to the order instituted by the Holy Pope Gregory and followed by us, and without fail to practise and sing it in future with the utmost zeal. For if—which we cannot believe—anyone shall attempt by any means whatever to turn you from the right path by leading you to a tradition other than that which we have just prescribed to you for the present and the future, we not only order that he be deprived of partaking of the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but in virtue of our proper authority and that of all our predecessors, we decree that in punishment of his audacity and presumption he remain under a perpetual anathema.”—(*Cod. Brit. Mus.*, *add.* 8873, *fol.* 168.)

Pope Leo, the author of this letter, had himself been a pupil at this same monastery of St. Martin. From thence also the priest John, the Precentor of St. Peter’s, had set out 200 years before to teach the English the system of chanting and reading followed at St. Peter’s.

The above extract throws an important light on the progress of the Gregorian reform of the ecclesiastical chant. In the latter half of the ninth century a powerful monastery close to Rome had not yet adopted it. Compare with this fact the presence of the Ambrosian chant in the province of Capua in the middle of the eleventh century (Kienle, in *Studien und Mittheilungen des Benedictiner und Cistercienser-Orden*, 1884, *p.* 346), and the Ambrosian rubrics of various books copied a little later for churches at Rome itself (*Tomasi, Opp. vol.* vii., *pp.* 9 & 10), and it will be seen how gradually the Gregorian books attained their universal supremacy.

III.—HILDEMAR (between 833 and 850), author of a commentary on the Rule of St. Bennet, speaks of St. Gregory as the composer of the "Roman Office": "Beatus Gregorius qui dicitur Romanum Officium fecisse." (*Expositio Regula ab Hildemaro tradita*, *p.* 311, *Ratisbon*, 1880.)

IV.—WALAFRID STRABO (807-849). *De Ecclesiasticarum rerum exordiis et incrementis* (composed about 840). "The tradition is that St. Gregory, just as he regulated the order of the masses and of consecrations [*i.e.*, the Sacramentary and the Pontifical Rituale] so also had the greatest part in the arrangement of the liturgical chants, following the order which is observed to this day as the most fitting: as is commemorated at the head of the Antiphoner." (*Op. cit. c.* xxi., *Patr. Lat.*, cxiv., 948.)

St. Gregory, from MS. of Coronation Services

This refers, strictly speaking, to the Antiphonale Missarum. But the following extract treats directly of the chants of the office contained in the *Liber Responsorialis*, or corresponding volume for the hour services.

"As for the chants for use at the different hours, whether of the day or of the night, it is believed that it was St. Gregory who assigned to them their complete arrangement, just as he had already done, as we have said, for the Sacramentary." (*c.* xxv., 958.)

These two passages establish the fact that there was a tradition in the middle of the ninth century that St. Gregory set in order the ecclesiastical music. It seems also that there was an inscription at the beginning of the Antiphoner stating as a fact that he had done this. The following extract helps us to identify what this

inscription was.

> V.—AGOBARD OF LYONS (779-840). *Liber de Correctione Antiphonarii*, *c.* xv., *Patr. Lat.* civ., 336. "But because the inscription serving for title to the book in question [*i.e.*, the Antiphoner] puts in the forefront the name of 'Gregorius Præsul,' thereupon some people imagine that the work was composed by the Blessed Gregory, Pope of Rome and illustrious doctor."

He is here defending the chant of Lyons against the ultramontane efforts of Amalarius to introduce the Roman ways. He goes on to try to prove that the Antiphoner defended by Amalarius cannot be St. Gregory's, because he had forbidden the use of words not taken directly from Scripture.

VI.—AMALARIUS OF METZ (815-835) is undoubtedly the person who played the foremost part in the fusion of the Gallican element with the rest of the Gregorian or Gelasian Liturgy, from which combination has come in substance the Roman Liturgy in use to-day. He had travelled much, and had been at Rome. He is a weighty authority in the present question. The following extracts are taken from a supplementary chapter of his *De Divinis Officiis*, published by Mabillon, in his *Vetera Analecta* (*Paris*, 1723). He is speaking of the Pope Gregory who is the author of the Dialogues, and who sent St. Augustine into England.

> "Amongst the monks who have been raised to the Supreme Pontificate can be cited Denys, and Gregory of incomparable memory. Now Gregory, amongst many other things by which he furthered the advantage of the Church, had the glory of being the chief organizer of the Office for clerical use." (*p.* 93.)
>
> "In the time of St. Bennet the whole order of psalmody had not yet been fixed with precision in the Psalter and the Antiphoner: it was the incomparable Pope Gregory of holy memory, himself a zealous observer of the rule of St. Bennet and an imitator of his monastic perfection, who afterwards regulated the arrangement of it under the direction of the Holy Spirit." (*pp.* 93-4.)
>
> "Far from blaming those who preserve the Gregorian usage, they should rather praise them." (*p.* 94.)
>
> "In the authentic model of St. Gregory, the *Alleluia* and the *Gloria* are suppressed at the Mass for Innocents' Day, in order to express the grief of the

mothers or of the Church." (*p.* 96.)

Amalarius was commissioned by Louis the Debonair to procure at Rome a copy of the Antiphoner to serve as a model for an uniform use in place of the varying uses then to be found. The Pope in answer to his request replied, "I have no Antiphoner that I can send to my son and lord the Emperor. Those which we had, were taken to France by Wala, Abbot of Corbie, when he came here on a mission." On his return to France, Amalarius went to Corbie, where he found the four volumes brought by Wala. They contained an inscription saying that this collection was put in order by Pope Adrian I. But he found that they differed from the books at Metz, which were older still; so in despair he made a compilation of his own, taking from each what seemed to him the best.

Now it has been argued that if these Antiphoners had either of them borne the name of Gregory the Great, Amalarius would not have had the audacity to alter them in this manner, nor would he if there had existed anywhere in Gaul any bearing his name. But this idea has arisen from the confusion attending the name "antiphoner." The book that Amalarius was dealing with was not the Antiphoner for Mass, but the Antiphoner for Divine Service. There were great variations in the latter in different localities down to the reform by Pius V., far more than in the former. When the "famous authentic model of Gregory" is spoken of, it is the Antiphonale Missarum which is meant.

VII.—AMALARIUS, Bishop of Trèves (809-814). *Liber Officiorum*, from a MS. at Trèves, quoted by Morin, *fol.* 6, *De Missa Innocentium*. "The Mass of the Innocents begins in the Diurnal with this Rubric: '*Gloria in Excelsis Deo* is not sung, nor *Alleluia*, unless it be Sunday; this day is passed in a sort of sadness.' The Holy Pope Gregory, in whom dwelt in very truth the Holy Ghost, and to whom is due the composition of this office, means us to share the feelings of the pious women who bewailed and lamented the death of the Innocents. And if it is permitted to transgress the order of so great a Father, it would equally be lawful to chant Alleluia with the complete office of the day on Good Friday."

It is a question here of the Antiphoner of the Mass.

(*fol.* 7.) On the day of the Epiphany "we lose one of the chants which we have at Christmas, viz., the Invitatory. St. Gregory, the organizer of the offices, meant by this peculiarity to recall to our memory as strongly as he

could what passed formerly at the time of the accomplishment of the mysteries which we honour. That is why we chant in the sixth place the psalm which we had avoided in the beginning. It is true that certain blunderers treat this with indifference and contempt, thinking it much better to follow the ordinary usage of each day. But, as we have already said, he wished by this to distinguish" &c., &c.

This passage refers to the Antiphoner of the Office.

(*fol.* 9-10.) "That is why Gregory, the author of our office, has placed Septuagesima.... However, Gregory the institutor of our office...."

It is a question of the Antiphoner and of the Sacramentary.

(*fol.* 39.) "The author of our office, who is none other than Gregory...."

He is referring to a portion of the Antiphoner of the Mass.

In the following passage Amalarius distinguishes the work of the two first Gregories as to the Thursdays in Lent.

(*fol.* 102.) "The Holy Pope Gregory in arranging the offices of the year had left vacant the Thursdays of Lent.... A long time after him another Pope, Gregory the younger, ordained that these days should also be celebrated by Masses and Prayers, but with less solemnity, and he borrowed wherever he could material to form the offices of these Thursdays."

VIII.—POPE ADRIAN I. (772-795). A MS. from Saint Martial de Limoges contains this passage (*Paris, Bibl. Nat., No.* 2400.) "Adrian II., after the example of his predecessor of the same name, completed the Gregorian Antiphoner in several places. He also arranged a second prologue in hexameter verse to be chanted at High Mass on the first day of Advent. This prologue begins in the same way as another very short one composed by the first Adrian to be sung at all the Masses of this first Sunday in Advent, but that of Adrian II. is composed of a greater number of verses."

We have seen the passage in which Walafrid Strabo speaks of the inscription at the beginning of the Antiphoner, ascribing its origin to Gregory I., and again that in which Agobard of Lyons tells us that the inscription contained the words "Gregorius Præsul." There are five forms extant of the prologue in hexameter

verse. The shortest, and therefore the one probably composed by Adrian I., is as follows:—

> "Gregorius Præsul meritis et nomine dignus
> Unde genus ducit, summum ascendit honorem.
> Renovavit monumenta patrum priorum: tunc
> Composuit hunc libellum musicæ artis
> Scholæ cantorum anni circuli: Ad te levavi."

All the five forms begin with the same two first lines. Eckhart got over the difficulty caused to his theory by these lines by supposing that "Gregorius Præsul" meant not Gregory the Great, but Gregory II. But he does not explain how "Unde genus ducit," &c., can refer to the latter. But it fits Gregory I. in this way: Pope Felix was his great-great-grandfather; so that, on succeeding to the papacy, he as it were entered on a family inheritance.

This prologue proves that the Antiphoner was ascribed by tradition to St. Gregory in the latter half of the eighth century.

IX.—EGBERT, Archbishop of York (732-766), is a still more important witness. Born about 678, he was ordained deacon at Rome, and received the archiepiscopal pallium from Gregory III. in 735. He was the disciple and friend of Bede, the confidant and benefactor of St. Boniface, and the teacher of Alcuin. Shortly after he became archbishop he composed a work addressed to his brother bishops, and called *De Institutione Catholica*. The following extracts from it refer to the Ember-day Fasts.

> "As for us in the Church of England, we always observe the Fast of the First Month in the first week of Lent, relying on the authority of our teacher, St. Gregory, who has thus regulated it in the model which he has handed down to us in his Antiphoner and his Missal through the medium of our pedagogue the Blessed Augustine." (*Patr. Lat.* lxxxix., 441.)

> "As for the Fast of the Fourth Month, the same St. Gregory, by the same envoy, has prescribed in his Antiphoner and his Missal the week which follows Pentecost as that in which the Church of England ought to celebrate it. And this is attested not only by our own Antiphoners, but also by those which we have inspected with their corresponding missals in the Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul." (*Ibid.*)

Egbert brings us back to the seventh century, but during that century (the

beginning of which saw the death of Gregory) we have no direct evidence. There are some considerations, however, which may account for this.

In the first place, we have very little light thrown on the history of St. Gregory by the sources of the seventh century. Apart from his Registrum there is little recorded that would by itself justify his surname of the Great. In the *Liber Pontificalis* there are only a few lines about him, whilst the Hellenic Popes, who sat in the Papal chair from 685 to 741, have detailed biographies, generally very laudatory. The mission of Augustine for the conversion of England is undoubtedly one of the most striking facts in Gregory's life; but the only chronicler of the seventh century who mentions it is the Continuator of Prosper. Is it surprising, then, that there is a still more profound silence on a fact less calculated to attract outside attention, such as is the recasting of the liturgical books peculiar to the Church at Rome?

In the second place, care must be taken not to apply the ideas of to-day to another age. It must not be supposed that the Gregorian Reform was promulgated throughout the Western Churches in the same manner, for instance, as the Reform of Pius V. The modern system of centralization did not then exist. When Gregory took the liturgical books in hand, he had at first in view only the Papal chapel, and the churches at Rome under his immediate supervision. It was their importation into England in the lifetime of St. Augustine, and into the Frankish Empire two hundred years after, under the pressure exerted by the first Carlovingians, which gave the greatest impetus to their universal use. In Italy, on the contrary, and even at Rome, it came about gradually only through the insistence of such Popes as Leo IV. and Stephen X. that the Gregorian Chant in the end completely supplanted that in use in early times in the Peninsula. This explains why the first witnesses in favour of the Gregorian tradition come to us from England and Carlovingian Gaul.

St. Gregory, from MS. of The Dialogues of St. Gregory at the British Museum

Again, one ought not to expect to find the chroniclers laying stress on the Gregorian origin of the Roman books in the lifetime of those who were contemporaries and disciples of the great Pope, and who had themselves introduced the book from Rome. The fact would be taken as a matter of course. It would not be till these had passed away that a tradition would begin to form,

and stress be laid on the fact; and this brings us to the date of Archbishop Egbert.

Besides, who would have suspected the full importance of this Gregorian form, and, in particular, have foreseen that it would put a limit to the period of elaboration of the Western liturgy? So many Popes had already taken the matter in hand. The great work of Gregory was to organize, set in order, and fix. But only time can show what is really fixed. The greatness of his work is only apparent after having remained unaltered for centuries.

These considerations tend to show that there is no cause for surprise that it should have taken so long for people to realize the greatness of Gregory's work in setting in order the music of the Church.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

The oldest Antiphoners that we possess are some two hundred years later than Gregory I. But they possess two peculiarities which raise a presumption in favour of an origin at least as old as St. Gregory.

The first peculiarity lies in the version of Scripture from which are taken the portions to which the music is set. This version is the old Latin one known as "Itala." Now even if at the time of St. Gregory it had not entirely given place to the Vulgate, yet from his time onwards the latter prevailed universally (except for the Psalter, which was retained at Rome till the time of Pius V., and is still used at St. Peter's), not only in Rome, but in all the West; so much so, that St. Isidore of Seville could assert in the first half of the seventh century, that St. Jerome's version had already been taken into use by all the Churches as preferable to the ancient one. It is natural to seek the explanation of preserving an obsolete text of the words in the respect felt for the melodies to which they were set. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that these melodies existed for the most part before the definite abandonment of the Itala at Rome, that is to say before the middle of the seventh century.

The second peculiarity which supports this conclusion is to be found in the comparison of the Offices, known to have been added since the time of St. Gregory, with the older portion of the Antiphoner. With very few, and those very doubtful, exceptions, the materials for these are all taken from older Offices.

Sometimes both words and tunes are transferred bodily; sometimes new words are set to the old melodies.

There are certain Masses of Saints, the chants for which were taken from those which later were collected together to form the Common. For the Feasts of the Annunciation, the Assumption, and the Nativity of the Virgin, all the chants were taken from older Masses, *e.g.*, from the masses of Advent and of certain Virgins and Martyrs. The Procession of the Purification, both words and melody, was borrowed from the Greeks by Pope Sergius. For the Mass of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross all the chants were taken from elsewhere, with the possible exception of the Communion. The *Introit* and the *Gradual* were taken from Maundy Thursday, the *Alleluia* from Friday in Easter week, and the *Offertory* from Maundy Thursday, or the Second Mass for Christmas-day. The *Introit* for the Purification is borrowed from the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

The compositions either in the Sanctorale or the Temporale of the Mass that can be definitely dated as introduced after the death of St. Gregory are very few, and may perhaps have been borrowed, with the Festivals themselves, from outside by the Roman Church.

It is a reasonable conclusion to draw, then, that the addition of these portions in the seventh century shows at least a great diminution of musical productive power, and that the bulk of the Antiphoner of the Mass must have been composed before this date. This inference is supported by the conclusion which M. Gevaert draws from his examination of the Antiphons of Divine Service (*La Melopée Antique*, *p.* 175), viz., that the Golden Age for compositions of this class was the period 540-600. The natural deduction from this is that the main settlement of the Antiphoner of the Mass fell within the same period.

Still it may not have been wholly due to a cessation of musical activity that new music for the Mass gradually ceased to be written in the course of the seventh century, for a certain amount of music still continued to be written for the Hour Services. It may have been due to a feeling that the book was a closed and settled one after a final and authoritative revision such as St. Gregory's is traditionally held to have been, and that it was presumptuous to add to it. But whichever view is taken of this, the Gregorian tradition is equally supported.

A further support to the claims of Gregory I. as against Gregory II. is to be found in an examination of the Communions of the Masses of Lent. These form a

series taken from the Psalms in numerical order, I. to XXVI., with the exception of five for which have been substituted texts taken from the Gospel. The Thursdays in Lent, however, form an exception to this scheme; they are interpolations breaking the order of it. Now we know that they were added by Gregory II.; therefore the original scheme of the Masses of Lent, at least, was drawn up before the time of Gregory II. Of the twenty-four pieces contained in the masses for the first six Thursdays in Lent, twenty-one appear in the Sundays after Trinity. It seems certain that the Thursdays in Lent must have borrowed from the Sundays after Trinity, and not *vice versa*; this is supported by the fact that the Graduals and Offertories of the Thursdays in Lent are all borrowed, and of the Sundays after Trinity hardly any. So this addition, which we know to be of the date of Gregory II., was made to a scheme already in existence, and both words and music were borrowed from other parts of the Antiphonale Missarum.

As against the claims made for the Hellenic Popes of the seventh and eighth centuries, it is worth while to examine the music which it is probable was introduced by Hellenic influence during that time, and compare it with the bulk of the "Gregorian." The tropes and the melodies from which the sequences developed probably come under this head, and some specimens of these may be seen in the *Winchester Troper* (*Ed.* Rev. W. H. Frere, *H. Bradshaw Society*, 1894). An examination of these melodies will show that their structure is entirely unlike the structure of the Gregorian melodies, especially in the close with a rise from the note below the final to the final, which continually occurs at the end of the phrases. This will be very clear from the accompanying melody, *Cithara*, from which the sequence *Rex Omnipotens* was formed. This form of close appears at the end of each of the first five sections, and again at the end of the seventh and eighth. In the rest of the sequence, the melody rises to a higher range, and the close appears a fifth higher in the ninth and tenth sections, a fourth higher in the eleventh and thirteenth, and a whole octave higher in the twelfth. This transposition of the range of the melody is more developed here than in most sequence melodies, but some such transposition is a prominent characteristic of many of them. There is nothing at all like it in the genuine Roman chant.

CITHARA

CITHARA

[play tune: Cithara]

IN WHAT DID THE WORK OF ST. GREGORY CONSIST?

John the Deacon describes his Antiphoner as a "cento" (*Antiphonarium Centonem compilavit*), and speaks of him, as we have seen, as "Antiphonarium centonizans." "Cento" is a Low Latin word meaning patchwork, combination, or compilation. "Antiphonarius cento" would therefore mean an Antiphoner compiled from various sources. And this is the character of the Gregorian Antiphoner of the Mass, even of the nucleus which remains after omitting the parts known to have been added since Gregory's time. Indeed the whole phrase quoted above has a ring of truth about it, and makes the tradition which he reports of a more genuine historical character, for if it had been a mere vague tradition in glorification of St. Gregory, he would have been more likely to have spoken of him as the composer of the Antiphoner, and not as a mere compiler. The oldest part of the book is formed of the Feasts celebrated in honour of events and saints spoken of in Scripture, and of the oldest Roman Saints. The Masses for these are taken from Scripture, especially from the Psalms. For Feasts of non-Roman origin, the text is taken from the Church from which they are introduced; *e.g.*, the Feast of St. Agatha from the Sicilian Church, or the Feasts coming from the Greek Church which were translated from the Greek. The want of uniformity in the arrangement of the text is seen by comparing the different classes of chants in *Codex St. Gall*, 329. As a rule, the words of one and the same Mass are all of different origin. The most ancient part of the Masses is the Graduals and Tracts, and all these (which are the most ancient solos of the Mass) in the Gregorian nucleus are taken from Biblical sources. This part of the "cento Antiphonarius" is put together in one system after an established tradition. In the oldest Feasts there are Psalm-graduals, but Introits taken from other books of the Bible. The parts other than the Gradual and Tract were chosen on a different system, a considerable number in fact have words not taken from the Bible at all. The Communions, again, form a class by themselves, and were sometimes chosen with special reference to the Gospel for the day, which is the case with no other class of the texts of the chants.

Now this editing of the texts must have implied the editing of the music also. In the middle ages the choir played a more important part than they do to-day in the Roman Church. For now the Service is complete without their part, as the priest

says the whole Service whether the choir is there or not. But formerly it was different; all listened or took part, including the celebrant, while the choir sang. The latter had a very definite share in the liturgical order, which was incomplete without them; in particular, the soloists had full scope for their talents in the chants between the Epistle and Gospel. In view of this intimate relation between the choir and the altar, a revision of the text must almost necessarily have implied a revision of the music. And this is probably the chief part of his musical reform; in the saying about him, ascribed to Pope Adrian II., “Ipse Patrum monumenta *sequens renovavit* et auxit.”

What was the musical material on which he had to work, which he had to put into shape, and to which he added new pieces? It is probably substantially represented by the Ambrosian chant as we find it in the oldest MSS. It seems most likely that it is the musical counterpart of the primitive liturgy organized, as is supposed, about the epoch of Pope Damasus, of which the Ambrosian, Gallican, Mozarabic, and Celtic are so many variations, due to national characteristics. Documentary proof of this is but scanty, but a study of the Lessons used at Mass supports the theory as far as the text is concerned. It is further recorded that at Monte Cassino the Ambrosian chant was fused with the Gregorian by order of Pope Stephen IX. (1057-8). Here the Pre-Gregorian chant is simply called Ambrosian.

ANTIPHON

Antiphon, Gregorian and Ambrosian

GREGORIAN

O Sa-pi-en-ti-a, quae ex o-re Al-tis-sim-i
pro-di-is-ti at-tin-gens a fi-ne
us-que ad fi-nem, for-ti-ter su-a-vi-ter-que
dis-po-nens om-ni-a: ve-ni ad do-cen-dum nos
vi-am pru-den-ti-ae.

AMBROSIAN

O Sa-pi-en-ti-a, quae ex o-re Al-tis-sim-i
pro-ces-si-sti at-tin-gis a fi-ne
us-que ad fi-nem, for-ti-ter su-a-vi-ter
dis-po-nens que om-ni-a: ve-ni ad do-cen-dum nos
vi-am sci-en-ti-ae.

[play tune: Antiphon, Gregorian]

[play tune: Antiphon, Ambrosian]

INTROIT

Introit, Gregorian and Ambrosian

GREGORIAN

Gau-de-a-mus om-nes in Do-mi-no,
di-em fes-tum ce-le-bran-tes in ho-no-re
A-ga-thae mar-ty-ris: de cu-jus pas-si-o-ne
gau-dent an-ge-li, et col-lau-dant
Fi-li-um De-i.

AMBROSIAN

Lae-te-mur om-nes in Do-mi-no,
di-em fes-tum ce-le-bran-tes ob ho-no-rem
A-ga-thae mar-ty-ris: de cu-jus tro-phae-o
gau-dent an-ge-li, et col-lau-dant
Fi-li-um De-i.

[play tune: Introit, Gregorian]

[play tune: Introit, Ambrosian]

GRADUAL

Gradual, Gregorian and Ambrosian

Gradual, continued

GREGORIAN

Ex Si-on spe-ci-es de-co-ris e-jus:
De-us ma-ni-fe-ste ve-ni-et.
℣ Con-gre-ga-te il-li sanc-tos e-jus,
qui or-di-na-ve-runt
te-sta-men-tum e-jus
su-per sa-cri-fi-ci-a.

AMBROSIAN

Ex Si-on spe-ci-es de-co-ris e-jus:
De-us ma-ni-fe-ste ve-ni-et.
℣ Con-gre-ga-te il-lic sanc-tos e-jus,
qui or-di-na-ve-runt
te-sta-men-tum e-jus
su-per sa-cri-fi-ci-a.

[play tune: Gradual, Gregorian]

[play tune: Gradual, Ambrosian]

The theory is further supported by a comparison of the most ancient MSS. of the Milanese chant with the Gregorian Antiphoner. A considerable number of melodies are practically identical with those in the Roman books. The framework, so to speak, is the same, but the details and embellishments often differ. The Ambrosian melodies are sometimes rather bald, and often excessively florid; the extremely long neums which they often contain appear to have been due to Greek influence. The Gregorian, on the other hand, appear to have been in some places pruned, in others expanded, with the result that they give the impression of being better balanced; the different parts of the musical phrases are more justly proportioned. In the Ambrosian melodies the B natural occurs very constantly, and gives them a masculine flavour, sometimes amounting to harshness.

The examples here given will enable some idea to be formed of the advance made by the Gregorian version upon the Ambrosian, both in music and text.

But Pope Adrian II. says of St. Gregory not merely “renovavit,” but “auxit.” He not only edited and adapted the old melodies, but provided new ones for the new texts which he added to the cycle of liturgical worship. What were these musical additions?

He extended the use of Alleluia to all Sundays and Festivals throughout the year except in Septuagesima, and it is probable that he added new melodies for the new Alleluias. It is significant that the Alleluias are the least stable part of the Antiphoner. At all events, the Ambrosian alleluiatic verses differ entirely from the Gregorian. The same consideration applies to the tracts, the use of which he extended in Septuagesima.

Another tendency of Gregory’s reform was his marked desire to harmonize the text of the Communions with that of the Gospel of the day. There are a considerable number of these, hardly any traces of which are to be found in the Ambrosian books. It is, then, reasonable to ascribe to St. Gregory an important part in the composition of these chants.

The further important question arises, did Gregory carry out this musical work himself, or was it done by others under his direction?

It is natural to think of his Schola Cantorum in this connection. The foundation of this must have had a profound effect both on the standard of the performance of the chant, and on the spread of the Gregorian reform. Books were scarce in those days, and musical notation defective. Teaching was chiefly by word of mouth. The Director of the Choir had his manuscript to teach from, and his pupils had to learn the melodies by heart. The chief singer also had his *liber cantatorius* from which to sing the solos, such as the Graduals and Tracts. The School was, necessarily, not merely for teaching correct versions of the chant, but for preserving the correct tradition of the method of performance. Most of the seventh century popes were connected with the School or proceeded from it.

The skilled musicians belonging to this School may have helped to carry out the reform under Gregory's direction. But no tradition appears to have been preserved to that effect, and the unity and uniform characteristics seem to point to the work of one genius, even in the smallest details; and the characteristics there displayed seem to fit in with what we know from other sources of his character, in his writings and in his actions.

In conclusion it is submitted that the evidence here put forward, though in some respects rather scanty, yet, in the absence of any strong evidence to the contrary, is quite sufficient to justify the tradition that St. Gregory was the organiser, reformer, and to some extent the author of the Antiphoner of the Mass. It is, of course, more difficult to say definitely what his work actually was in these three divisions, but a quite sufficient amount of certainty has been attained for us to realize the extent and the nature of the debt which succeeding ages have owed to the great Pope, and so far the attacks that have been made on the tradition have only resulted in setting it on a firmer and more definite basis.

THE PORTRAITS OF ST. GREGORY.

The oldest portrait of which we have a record is one of which a very full description was given by John the Deacon, Gregory's biographer. This likeness was to be seen in John's day (in the latter part of the ninth century) in Gregory's house, which he had converted into a monastery, in a small room behind the brethren's store-room or granary. It was surrounded by a circular plaster frame. Probably the whole figure was not represented; at all events, the following

description which he gives stops at the hands.

“His figure was of ordinary height, and was well made; his face was a happy medium between the length of his father’s and the roundness of his mother’s face, so that with a certain roundness it seemed to be of a very comely length, his beard being like his father’s, of a rather tawny colour, and of moderate length. He was rather bald, so that in the middle of his forehead he had two small neat curls, twisted towards the right; the crown of his head was round and large, his darkish hair being nicely curled and hanging down as far as the middle of his ear; his forehead was high, his eyebrows long and elevated; his eyes had dark pupils, and though not large were open, under full eyelids; his nose from the starting-point of his curving eyebrows being thin and straight, broader about the middle, slightly aquiline, and expanded at the nostrils; his mouth was red, lips thick and sub-divided; his cheeks were well-shaped, and his chin of a comely prominence from the confines of the jaws; his colour was swarthy and ruddy, not, as it afterwards became, unhealthy looking; his expression was kindly; he had beautiful hands, with tapering fingers, well adapted for writing.”

The description goes on to say that Gregory wore the *penula* (cloak) of chestnut colour, and over it the sacred pall, and that in his hands he carried the book of the Gospel. We learn, further, that he did not have the round nimbus, but a rectangular or square one, with which it was the custom to adorn the heads of portraits of eminent people in their life-time. John considers this a sure proof that the painting was executed during the life of the saint; if it had been done after his death, he would have been given a circular nimbus.

In the same monastery were portraits of his father and mother, Gordianus and Silvia. But of course all have been destroyed.

The portrait (*frontispiece*) here reproduced is a reconstruction from John the Deacon’s description, made by Angelo Rocca, Bishop of Tagaste, and a noted archæologist of his time (1597). He combined the three portraits in one.

Another reconstruction from John the Deacon’s description may be seen in *Rassegna Gregoriana* for June, 1903. This follows the description more closely than does that of Rocca.

At a later date there grew up the custom of representing St. Gregory always with a dove. According to John the Deacon it was already customary in his day (*c.*

872). This is seen in our second illustration (*opposite page* 11), taken from the Antiphoner of the monk Hartker of St. Gall (date between 986 and 1011). This illustration has the characteristics found in the greater number of representations of Gregory; the dove (the symbol of the Holy Ghost) is represented as inspiring him, and he is dictating to the scribe, who is said to be the deacon Peter. The veneration felt for his writings, and in particular those of the ecclesiastical chant, was such that they were felt to be due directly to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Here the Pope is represented as wearing an alb, a dalmatic, a *planeta* and over it the sacred pall, and on his left forearm, a maniple.

The third picture (*opposite page* 16) is prefixed to two Coronation Services in a miscellaneous volume formerly belonging to Christ Church, Canterbury, on a page now numbered 8. The pages 9-18 comprise a Coronation Service of the x./xi. century, and on pp. 19-29 there follows another service of the xiiith century. On p. 30 is another picture, probably of German workmanship, representing a man writing. Each seems to be independent of its surrounding leaves; there seems no connection between the two, unless it be that they depict the same person.

The former of the two clearly depicts St. Gregory; it has been constantly said on the strength of the legend above, “Dunstani Archiepiscopi,” that it represents St. Dunstan, but the dove points clearly to St. Gregory; the legend is possibly a later addition, and if St. Dunstan is to be found upon the page at all it is in the archiepiscopal figure kissing the toe of the great figure. This act of homage suggests that the large figure represents a Pope. Moreover, St. Dunstan is shown prostrate at the feet of Christ in another picture, which may very possibly be from the saint’s own hand; it is, therefore, reasonable to identify him with the figure below. Possibly also it may be suggested that this picture, too, represents St. Dunstan’s handiwork.

St. Gregory wears a pall over a yellow chasuble, and over this above is a red fringe ornament which is probably a rational. The purple dalmatic with scarlet border is very conspicuous under his chasuble; the under-vestments are less distinct, but the ends of the stole show over a very dark garment, which is, perhaps, a tunicle. The mitre is of very early shape. The archiepiscopal figure below wears a similar mitre, a pall over a light green chasuble; underneath a pink dalmatic and a purple show at the arms, as well as below.

The monk who balances him is in a white habit, but the figure kneeling below is

in a black habit of the same pattern, ungirt, and with a cowl.

The colouring of the whole is crude, and the drawing lacks delicacy.

The fourth portrait (*opposite page* 24) is taken from a MS. of *The Dialogues of St. Gregory* (*Harl.* 3011), at the British Museum, *f.* 69 v., at the end of the 3rd book. The background is bright green, with a brown border round it. It is a brown-ink drawing, with some yellow wash. The inscription above it is *Teodericus depinxit hanc imaginem Gregorium patrem*. It exemplifies once again the symbol of the dove, which is here evidently not connected specially with the musical work of St. Gregory, but with his literary efforts as a whole.

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