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Clifford Ford, ed. *The Canadian Musical Heritage—Le Patrimoine musical canadien. Vol. II: Sacred Choral Music 1.* Ottawa: Canadian Musical Heritage Society, 1984, xxix, 238 pp.

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measures 92 and 94, the sharp sign above the left hand carries full-length brackets in thin ink. In a further comparison of sizes and shapes of square brackets, those on page 78, for example, are much more inconspicuous as an aid in reading the page than the ones on page 26 which detract from the clarity of the page.

A corrigendum has been loosely inserted into the volume indicating corrections to seven mistakes in the first fourteen pages of the text. This fact in itself is suggestive of a degree of carelessness in proof-reading. The inclusion of such an unbound page would seem to defeat its purpose, as the page is almost certain to fall out at the first use of the volume.

To the uninitiated these comments may seem trivial. However, consistency in the use of editorial symbols and minute detail of orthography constitute the basis of good editorial practice. Editing music is a discipline that deals with such minutiae, since they are the guides to clarity and legibility in a modern edition. With careful proofreading, more editorial consistency, and better printing facilities the production quality can be improved in future volumes. This first volume may well be seen as an experimental effort. Given the caliber of scholars and musical personalities involved in the project, one is confident of the quality of the future volumes in the series.

When a nation has acquired enough confidence to assess and display its musical heritage, it is one sign that the cultural life of the nation has embarked upon its period of maturity. The Canadian Musical Heritage society is fulfilling a vital function by displaying our musical past to us. And curiosity about the past is an essential ingredient of our concern for the future.

Gordona Lazarevich

CLIFFORD FORD, ed. *The Canadian Musical Heritage—Le Patrimoine musical canadien*. Vol. II: *Sacred Choral Music 1*. Ottawa: Canadian Musical Heritage Society, 1984, xxix, 238 pp.

Sacred Choral Music 1, the second volume in the Canadian Musical Heritage Series, contains sacred choral music from the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions of the late seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. The works are mostly for SATB choir with organ accompaniment, sometimes with soloists, but there are also a few pieces for men's and some for women's (or boy's) chorus. The volume is carefully edited on the whole, with only a few minor errors in the musical text (e.g., p. 47, m. 123, beat 3, left-hand ledger line missing; p. 145, m. 34, right hand read B-flat not G-flat). In addition to editing the works, Ford has in a few instances completed or supplied organ accompaniments.

The Roman Catholic section begins with some seventeenth-century

examples whose inclusion is difficult to justify, even given the rather wide-ranging selection criteria of the series (see p. v). *Jesous Ahatonhia*, the so-called "Huron carol," is presumably included as the "first Canadian Christmas carol," although the music almost certainly originated in France and the text is only rather tenuously attributable to Brébeuf. In any event, it is so well known and widely available that its inclusion here seems somewhat superfluous. Similarly the Prose section of the Office *Sacrae Familiae*, at one time declared to be the "first Canadian composition," is more likely to have been composed in France where the text was written, as Willy Amtmann, who has investigated the case most carefully, has conjectured (see Amtmann 1975: 143-44). The opening of *Sacrae Familiae* is also available in at least three other common reference books. Finally, there has also been a recent edition of the anonymous motet *Magnus Dominus* from the collection of the Ursuline Monastery in Quebec City, a work probably but by no means certainly composed in Canada around 1700. In short, all three works share a rather dubious Canadian provenance and all are readily available in other sources.

It thus seems quite likely that the nineteenth century saw the real beginning of sacred choral music composition in Canada, rather than its resumption after a 150-year hiatus, as Ford seems to imply in his Introduction (p. vii).

The Roman Catholic tradition in the nineteenth century is represented in this volume mainly by Antoine Dessane (1826-73) and Ernest Gagnon (1834-1915). Dessane, born in France and trained at the Paris Conservatory, was organist at Notre Dame in Quebec City. Gagnon was born in Quebec and trained both at home—by Dessane among others—and in Paris. Gagnon engaged in a public dispute with Dessane concerning the correct method of accompanying plainsong, a disagreement that ended with Dessane's resignation of his post as organist (he was succeeded by Gagnon) and temporary exile in New York. The compositional styles of the two are as contrasted as their views on plainsong accompaniment must have seemed at the time. Dessane, as judged by the selections in this volume, favored rather dramatic large-scale newly composed settings of sections from the Latin rite in what might be termed French Academic Classical style. Gagnon, on the other hand, wrote mainly small-scale works in a simple, restrained style, either in French and based on popular tunes or in Latin and based on plainchant. The selections chosen by Ford are no doubt characteristic and representative of the best efforts of each composer, but do tend to overwork a limited number of musical formulae when taken as a whole.

They are nonetheless considerably more interesting and musically satisfying than the works in the Protestant section of the volume, which consist mainly of undistinguished four-part homophonic anthems featuring predictable harmonizations in a limited range of keys. One is relieved to find some imitative writing such as at the end of *O be Joyful*

in the *Lord* by T. Turvey, an idiosyncratic modulation as in J.P. Clarke's *Trisagion* (mm. 41-44), or downright crudity as in the chain of seconds (or ninths if the middle voice is performed by a tenor) in the fourth measure of Humbert's *Hail to the Day Spring*. The selections from Bishop John Medley's *Church Anthems, Services and Chants* which end the volume are the only Protestant works that approach the level of technique and imagination shown in the contemporaneous Roman Catholic sacred music.

It remains to be seen whether this and other publications of the Canadian Musical Heritage Series will create any widespread interest in Canada's musical past. At the very least the series will make a selection of early musical Canadiana available to a wider public. Moreover, it will provide a much-needed companion to the several monographs on early Canadian music and doubtless provide the raw material for future ones. Finally, whatever the intrinsic or relative merits of the music presented in this and future collections, it yields a valuable insight into over two centuries of domestic musical activity in Canada.

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AMTMANN, W.

1975: *Music in Canada 1600-1800*. Montreal: Habitex Books.

ISTVAN ANHALT. *Alternative Voices: Essays on Contemporary Vocal and Choral Composition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, xi, 336 pp.

In attempting to develop analytical tools and interpretative modes of expression necessary for the clear verbal articulation of ideas essentially musical in their manner of formulation and presentation one is faced with an early and inescapable dilemma. Essentially the problem, which addresses the fundamental and perpetual question of exactly what music expresses, reduces to a simple choice.

On the one hand it is possible to treat music as a self-referential system of concrete techniques and symbols whose power and significance as elements in an artistic statement are measured and explained solely in the extent of their mutual interaction and nurturing and in the degree to which they combine to realize that statement. Such an approach has had a long and useful history. After all, the techniques of performance and composition have to be learned and applied, and the necessity of this will, it is hoped, continue to be evident.

On the other hand, the fact has to be recognised that this approach is incapable of tackling the more generally important questions which