

Stanfordian Thoughts
A periodical series of reflections on recorded and unrecorded works by Stanford
by Christopher Howell

22. Hymn Tunes

I thought this was going to be a quick and easy addition to the series. Instead, one search led to another. I discovered a hymn tune not listed in Stanford worklists and found new facts about the dates and publication history of others. In the end, it would take less time to play through these few hymn tunes than it will to read the article. What follows will be too musicological for some. I can only apologise to them while hoping that musicologists will find it musicological enough. Those who love *Engelberg*, *St. Columba* and *St. Patrick's Breastplate* may prefer to scroll down to my discussions of these. I hope choirmasters will consider my repertoire suggestions. And I hope some will share what has been, to me, an intriguing journey.

Some thoughts on hymns

Hymns resonate with us in many ways. I am not even sure they can be judged by the canons usually applied to music at all. In English-speaking countries, at least, hymns are often a person's first contact with something vaguely relatable to "classical" music. Depending on how their lives and interests develop, fifty years after leaving school, the hymns of their childhood may have remained their only contact with what is snobbishly defined as "serious" music. It is interesting to discover which are the hymns they remember with affection, which they never liked and which they have forgotten.

For those who have remained churchgoers, unfortunately, hymns are often akin to habits. Woe to the organist who suggests using a different tune to well-known words! The organist, as a trained musician, may "know" that the old tune is "dreary", "weak", "sentimental" or worse, and, if the tune is judged by the standards we apply to music for the concert hall, he is probably right. Maybe this is not the point. If people want to be reassured about things that seemed sure when they children, only the tune they know will do.

There is probably some consensus between musicians, non-musicians, churchgoers and non-churchgoers over a select number of hymns that count as "classics", but this consensus blurs across the English-speaking world. There are tunes dear to the Americans that most British churchgoers do not know, and do not like when they hear them. And vice-versa. That is just to limit ourselves to the English-speaking world. Protestant churches in Germany and the Scandinavian countries have books full of tunes of their own and are not particularly moved by such Anglican stalwarts as "O worship the King" or "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven". Conversely, only a few old German chorales, and scarcely any Scandinavian hymns, have taken root in Anglican circles. The Roman Catholic Church, moreover, has always had a quite different attitude towards singing in church. I can testify that if Italian Christians, born and bred as Catholics, experiment with a Protestant church, the singing of hymns is often one of the hardest things for them to come to terms with, though they usually enjoy it eventually.

Stanford and hymn tunes

It is probably fair to say that, while Parry managed one tune, *Repton* ("Dear Lord and Father of mankind")¹ over which there is consensus to call it a classic, Stanford did not. Even here, some might disagree. In my childhood days, Stanford's *Engelberg* was nowhere. Research on You Tube shows it is now widely sung. Some people even describe it as their favourite hymn tune. Even in the world of hymn tunes, the "general consensus" is not written in stone. Otherwise, Stanford fared better with arrangements. Of two famous Irish

¹ Not originally written as a hymn tune – it was an aria from the Oratorio *Judith*. It is interesting that none of Parry's actual hymn tunes captured people's hearts in the same way, though *Rustington* remains well liked.

tunes, *St. Patrick's Breastplate* ("I bind unto myself today") and *St. Columba* ("The King of Love my Shepherd is"), the first is usually sung in Stanford's arrangement, the second quite often so.

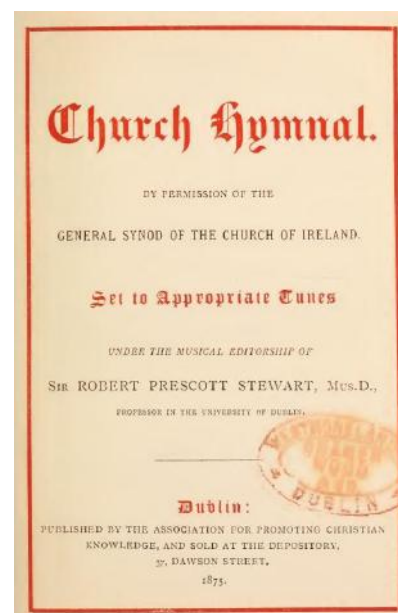
Since personal reactions seem part of the deal, perhaps I should add some memories of my own. I attended a boarding school that had a non-denominational chapel and a privately printed hymn-book. Chapel was on Sunday mornings but occasionally, when some special event made morning attendance difficult, we had evening chapel. Evening chapel invariably began with the hymn "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended", sung, as it traditionally is, to the tune *St. Clement*. I cannot hear this tune without remembering how, the first time I sang it, the late evening sun streamed through the chapel windows. It became part of me. There is also a tune for these words, *Joldwynds*, by Stanford. It is a well-made affair, but I cannot imagine myself suggesting to a congregation that they should discard *St. Clement* in its favour. Perhaps I am applying the wrong criteria. Suppose, all those years ago, we had sung *Joldwynds* rather than *St. Clement* in our chapel, would I feel today about *Joldwynds* as I do about *St. Clement*? Logic tells me I would not. Does not *St. Clement* have a graceful serenity that wraps itself around our hearts? Does not Stanford's admirable effort lack this capacity? The only way I could find out would be to become a boy again, attend a school where they sang *Joldwynds* not *St. Clement* and compare the results. So I am left to speculate.

Considering that Stanford was a practicing church musician till the age of forty, and a prolific composer of church music throughout his life, he wrote remarkably few hymn tunes. For his Stanford catalogue, Frederick Hudson, with friends and colleagues, collated seventy-five hymn-books to show the presence of Stanford tunes from 1873 to 1987². As I will explain, four, probably five, should not be listed, while I have identified one that he missed. This makes seventeen hymn tunes, including the two arrangements of Irish melodies. He wrote more lullabies than hymn tunes. Nevertheless, he began early.

Church Hymnal [of the Church of Ireland], 1864-1936

Speaking of Stanford's boyhood, his friend and first biographer Harry Plunket Greene stated that "He set to music a Latin prayer of Mary Queen of Scots and wrote a hymn (now in the Church of Ireland Hymnal) and an Overture for Orchestra, but he was quite unaware of his own importance"³.

The hymn referred to is named simply *Stanford*. Hudson and Dibble⁴ date its first appearance to the (Irish) *Church Hymnal* of 1873. The earliest edition I have been able to see is dated 1875, but it appears to be a new printing of the 1873 book⁵. In the tune index, however, *Stanford* is dated 1864.



² Frederick Hudson: *A New Catalogue of the Works of Charles Villiers Stanford 1852-1924, Compiled from the Original Sources*, typescript 1994. Held in the Stanford Collection of Newcastle University and accessible here: https://www.ncl.ac.uk/webtemplate/libraryassets/external/specialcollectionsguide/handlists/stanford_charles_villiers_s_archive.pdf. Retrieved 13.4.2022. B 25-28.

³ Harry Plunket Greene: *Charles Villiers Stanford*, Edward Arnold 1935, p. 34. Plunket Greene was evidently unaware that the hymn was no longer in the Irish *Church Hymnal* at the time he was writing.

⁴ Jeremy Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford*. OUP 2002, p. 471.

⁵ *Church Hymnal*, by permission of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, set to appropriate tunes under the musical editorship of Sir Robert Prescott Stewart, Mus. D. Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Dublin 1875.

A detailed account of the *Church Hymnal* is provided by Nicole Robinson⁶. We learn here that the three fundamental editions of this hymn-book were issued in 1864, 1873 (with supplementary hymns added in 1891) and 1919. Robinson mentions that Stanford was among the native Irish composers included in the 1864 edition. She does not give details, but it seems evident that *Stanford* made its first appearance here.

The editor of the hymnal was Robert Stewart, who had been a mentor to Stanford in his early days. Stanford later recalled him at some length⁷. *Stanford* appeared at no. 253 with the words “Thou, God, all glory, honour, power”, from Tate and Brady. It is a respectable piece in which the twelve-year-old composer rejects the sweeter Victorian manners of Stainer or Barnby in favour of a Croft-like solidity. It held its place at least until the 1891 revision, but was dropped in 1919.

Dibble lists a further tune, *Christiana*, locating it in the *Church Hymnal* of 1874. Hudson is more circumspect. He says the “words only” are found at no. 266 in the 1874 *Church Hymnal*. Stanford’s tune, a setting of Charlotte Elliott’s *Unto Him Whose Name is Holy*, was never included in the *Church Hymnal*, which has these words at no. 266 with a tune by Johann Crüger. It was issued as a separate sheet by Novello. This has no date but the copy in the Cambridge University Library is stamped 12 May 1905⁸. It was certainly published post-1901, since Stanford is described as “Sir”. The printed score tells us the tune, named *Christiana*, was “written expressly for the Female Orphan House, Dublin”. The only reason for wondering if it was not originally written much earlier than 1905 is that Stanford’s visits to Dublin had become as rare as gold dust by then⁹. This need not have prevented him from responding to a request from the Female Orphan House. *Christiana* seems a slight improvement on the Crüger chorale.

Hudson and Dibble locate a further four tunes, arranged from Irish melodies, in the *Church Hymnal* of 1936: *Fanad Head*, *Glencolumbkille*, *Molville* and *Remember the Poor*. The 1936 *Church Hymnal* is a reprint, with additional hymns, of the third edition of 1919. This edition made a point of increasing the native Irish content, though Stanford himself is represented only by *Joldwynds* and his 1916 version of *St. Patrick’s Breastplate*. I will discuss these under the hymn books in which they originally appeared. I have only seen the 1936 edition, but it is evident from Robinson’s discussion that *Fanad Head*, *Glencolumbkille*, *Moville* (not *Molville*) and *Remember the Poor* were already included in 1919. *Glencolumbkille* is described as harmonized by L. L. Dix. No arranger is named for the other three. Though 1919, as opposed to 1936, makes it at least chronologically possible that Stanford had a hand in them, is there any reason to suppose that he did?

None that I can see. It is true that the four hymns are based on tunes from the Petrie collection, which Stanford edited¹⁰, but so are most of the other Irish tunes in the 1919 hymnal, for which no Stanfordian connection has been claimed. It is also true that these four melodies are included in Stanford’s collections of

⁶ Robinson, N. (2021). *Hymnals as Historical Documents: A Contextualisation of the Church Hymnal and its Representation of the Church of Ireland and its People 1864–1919*. Technological University Dublin. DOI: 10.21427/K982-9A40 <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/appadoc/114/>, retrieved 7.12.2023.

⁷ Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, Edward Arnold 1914, pp. 45-51.

⁸ See Hudson, *ibid*, B 22.

⁹ The last specific reference in Dibble (*ibid*, pp. 282 et seq) to a Dublin visit was the occasion of his abortive presidency of the Feis Coeil in 1896. Dibble does not say this was the last time he touched Irish soil but I have found no references to further visits, in Dibble or elsewhere. He wrote a *Welcome March* for King Edward VII’s visit to Ireland in 1903, but did he go there? (There is no definite proof that the *Welcome March* was even played.) During this visit, the King made a point of showing interest in the poor and sick, his programme including a visit to the slums (cf. Senia Pašeta, *Nationalist Responses to Two Royal Visits, 1900 and 1903*, *Irish Historical Studies*, XXXI no. 124, 11.1999). Could Stanford have supplied the orphans with a piece for a possible visit by the King?

¹⁰ *The Complete Collection of Irish Music as Noted by George Petrie. Edited, from the Original Manuscripts, by Charles Villiers Stanford*. Published in three parts for the Irish Literary Society of London by Boosey and Co. 1902-5. Facsimile edition by Dover, 2003.

folksong arrangements, with words by A. P. Graves and often quite elaborate piano accompaniments¹¹. In these genuine Stanford arrangements, the original shape of the melody is always maintained. In the hymnal, the melodies have been adjusted to make them work as hymns. One the evidence of his authenticated arrangements, Stanford would not have done this. Lastly, the harmonic procedures suggest that the arranger worked from the original tunes in Petrie and not from Stanford's arrangements of them. *Remember the Poor*, for example, has a fairly simple chordal accompaniment in *Songs of Erin* which could have been used in the hymn-book without many changes, but the hymn-book version is quite different. I believe, therefore, that these hymns do not belong in the Stanford worklist.

1870s-1900 – a fallow period for hymn books

Following his boyhood effort, Stanford wrote very few hymns for almost forty years. This is not as surprising as it may seem. Anthems, motets, service music and even carols get published separately. Hymn tunes need a hymn-book. The major hymnals had all solidified around the 1870s and serious attempts to overhaul them were not made until the end of the century. *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, first issued in 1861, had reached a second edition in 1875. A few supplementary hymns – none by Stanford – were added in 1889 but essentially it reached the 20th century unchanged. *Church Hymns with Tunes* came out in 1874, edited by Sullivan. A 1900 reissue seems unaltered. There was little scope, then, for an Anglican composer to get a new hymn tune into an important hymn-book in the last quarter of the 19th century.

This is not to say that Stanford did not set down a few hymn tunes during these years. Given that he could have dashed off a hymn tune faster than most of us could copy one out, it is possible that a few more were written for one-off functions and are hiding in forgotten publications or simply lost. Not all hymn-books have composer indexes, which does not aid the search. The following emerge, partly from Hudson, partly from my own observations.

The Saints of God (1888)

This is dated 7 January 1888 and was printed¹² privately without words. It formed part of the Jenkinson collection, which entered the Cambridge University Library in 1923.

There is a tragic story behind this. On 5 January 1888, Marian Sydney Jenkinson, née Wetton, the youngest sister of Stanford's wife Jennie, had died, aged only 30. Six months earlier, almost to the day, on 6 July 1887, she had married Stanford's close friend – he had played the organ at their wedding – Francis Jenkinson (1853-1923). In a memoir, dated 1926, H. F. Stewart recalled that "the marriage was a radiantly happy one, but it had the seeds of tragedy. After a short visit to Northumberland, where he saw the Roman wall and began a friendship with Dr Thomas Hodgkin, he took his bride to the small house which was to be his home for nineteen years, but hers alas for but six months. The time was cloudless for them for they did not know that she was already hopelessly ill"¹³.

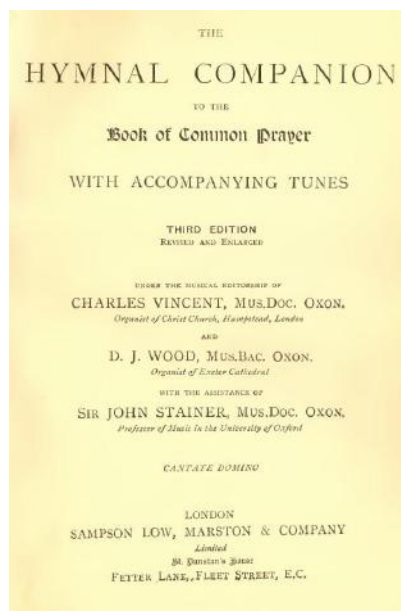
The Saints of God was written, therefore, two days after Marian's death. Though the printed sheet does not give words, the title takes us to William Dalrymple Mackagen's hymn *The Saints of God*, which has been regularly used at funerals and is usually sung to Stainer's tune *Rest*. Stanford's music fits these words perfectly. I query whether it is really intended as a hymn tune, though it has the appearance of one on paper and provides music for a single verse. The grief-struck harmonies seem to call for a slow tempo and the expressive resources of an *a cappella* choir. An unusual feature, if we judge it is a hymn, is the extended final

¹¹ *Songs of Old Ireland*, 1882, *Irish Songs and Ballads*, 1893 and *Songs of Erin* op. 76, 1901.

¹² Hudson says it was printed. The scanned copy I obtained from the Newcastle Stanford Archive looks to me like a beautifully written manuscript – certainly not Stanford's. A misalignment of the parts five bars before the end suggests it is the work of a draughtsman rather than a musician.

¹³ See <https://millroadcemetery.org.uk/jenkinson-marian-sydney/>, retrieved 12.12.2023.

Amen which seems to allude to W. H. Monk's tune *Wordsworth*. This latter, published in 1865 in *The Holy Year* as a setting of Christopher Wordsworth's *O Day of Rest and Gladness*, is not one of Monk's best-known tunes. It is difficult to say whether the resemblance is coincidental, or whether this tune had been a favourite with Marian. I suggest, therefore, that *The Saints of God* is a short choral anthem written for performance at Marian's funeral. We can note, too, that it entered the Cambridge University Library with Jenkinson's papers following his death in 1923 and is marked "Private". He kept it to himself all his life. This tiny but moving piece could be a worthwhile addition to the unaccompanied choral repertoire.



St. Basil the Great ("O Christ, Thou hast ascended") (c.1890)

A partial exception to the dearth of hymn books to which composers might contribute was the third edition, in 1890, of *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer*¹⁴. This thorough reshaping of a hymn-book originally issued in 1870, with a second edition in 1877, was a precursor to the spate of new and revised hymnals in the early 1900s. Stanford's single contribution was *St. Basil the Great*, a straightforward, serviceable but unremarkable tune. The *Hymnal Companion* did not survive long into the 20th century but *St. Basil the Great* entered the 1916 revision of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* with the words "We hail Thee now, O Jesu". Hudson evidently overlooked *The Hymnal Companion* – he lists the *Ancient and Modern* republication of *St. Basil the Great* as its sole appearance.

Now the labourer's task is o'er ("Luard") (1891)

This was written for the funeral of Henry Richards Luard (1825-1991), held in the Chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge on 6 May 1891. Luard was an antiquarian and historian and a Fellow of Trinity College. He was also a cousin of the composer Bertram Luard-Selby. Stanford's tune was later included, with the name of *Luard*, in the 1904 edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. It had to compete there with Dykes' tune *Requiescat*, which had been written for the 1889 revision of this hymnal. *Requiescat* was, in its turn, an alternative to Barnby's *Hebron*, which had been attached to these words in the 1874 *Church Hymns*. Dykes is usually a reliable provider of hymn tunes and Barnby had his moments, but Stanford is notably better in handling the last two lines of the verse. *Luard* remained in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* till at least 1924, but both words and music were later dropped. Also in 1924, it was sung at Stanford's own funeral.

Fairest scene of all creation (1893)

"A hymn to celebrate the Royal Wedding, July 6th 1893". The wedding was that of Prince George (later King George V) and Princess Mary of Teck. A lengthy, blow-by-blow account of the wedding, including the illustration below, appeared in the *New York Times*¹⁵. It tells us that the music for the entrance procession consisted of Handel's *Marches* from the *Occasional Overture* and *Scipio*, Sullivan's *Imperial March*, a *March in G* by Smart and Wagner's *March* from *Lohengrin*. The service began with a specially composed marriage

¹⁴ *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer, with accompanying tunes*, Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged under the General Editorship of Charles Vincent and D. J. Wood, with the assistance of Sir John Stainer. Sampson, Low, Marston and Company, no date, but preface dated 1890.

¹⁵ Viewable here: <https://www.edwardianpromenade.com/weddings/royal-wedding-3-princess-mary-of-teck-prince-george-duke-of-york/>, retrieved 8.12.2023. Scroll down to nearly the end for the link. It may seem strange to depend on an American newspaper but the *Illustrated London News*, for example, while equally detailed on the persons present and the clothes they wore, makes no reference to the music except to a "specially composed hymn" by an unnamed composer.

chorale, *Father of Life*, by Dr. Creaser¹⁶. In the middle came a hymn, *O Perfect Love*, by Sir John Barnaby¹⁷. The final hymn was *Now thank we all our God* and they filed out to the Mendelssohn Wedding March. While it would be interesting to see other accounts, better still a programme, the implication is that Stanford's hymn was not performed at the wedding. It was published by Novello. The words by Canon Neville are too specific, with their references to "Sailor Prince and Royal Bride" and "an Empire's loyalty", for the hymn to be used at any other wedding but that intended. The reference to "new-born hope of gladness / After sore calamity" may refer to the fact that this was the first Royal Wedding Queen Victoria had countenanced in St. James's Palace since the death of Prince Albert in 1861. It may also recall that Princess Mary had been engaged to Prince George's elder brother Prince Albert Victor, who died on 14 January 1892, causing her to switch to the next brother in line with what some thought undue haste. Stanford's tune is unexceptionable.



Prince George.

Princess Mary.

As with gladness men of old ("Orient") (1894)

This carol for unaccompanied SATB is not strictly a hymn, but is discussed here because it was later included, renamed *Orient*, in the 1904 Methodist Hymn Book¹⁸, presumably with Stanford's blessing. Worklists tell us it was an extra supplement to *The Musical Times* of 1 December 1894 and that is what it says on the score. Reference to this number of *The Musical Times* shows that the extra supplement was an anthem, *Jesu, who from Thy Father's throne*, by F. Cunningham Woods, while the regular supplement was Stainer's anthem *There was silence in Bethlehem's fields*¹⁹. Was there an "extra-extra supplement" that escaped the usually thorough Jstor scanners, or was it planned and typeset but not used? Novello issued it separately, in any case.

As the title suggests, it is a setting of the famous hymn by William Chatterton Dix. These words are invariably sung to the tune known as *Dix*, derived from a chorale by Conrad Kocher (1786-1872), and I could not sincerely suggest to a congregation that they should replace Kocher's well-loved, purposefully striding tune with Stanford's more gently lilting piece. By 1894, *Dix* had already been associated with these words for more than three decades – it was adapted by W. H. Monk for the 1861 *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. A number of Stanford's hymn tunes were intended to replace an earlier tune, but the tune in question was usually poor, little used or unloved by some. Here, he was competing with a popular favourite. Why?

One reason might be that Dix himself disliked the tune bearing his name. He wrote in 1898 to Duncan Campbell, "I dislike it, but nothing now will displace it. I did not christen it"²⁰. Though he wrote this four years after Stanford's version was published, his opinion was presumably not newly formed, so he may have expressed it earlier, even to Stanford. What we do not know is whether he thought Stanford's tune better, unless the phrase "nothing will displace it" harbours a regret that Stanford had failed to do so. It may have

¹⁶ This must have been William Creaser (1844-1933), Organist of the Chapel Royal from 1891 to 1901.

¹⁷ Presumably Sir Joseph Barnby, who certainly wrote a hymn with that name. See *Hymn Tunes composed by Joseph Barnby*, Novello 1869, with enlarged editions 1889 and 1897, no. 219.

¹⁸ The music is identical in the 1904 Methodist Hymn-Book except that one note, the soprano B flat on p. 2, line 1 bar 1 of the MT edition is changed to a G. The change sounds so obviously right as to suggest that the B flat in the original edition was a misprint.

¹⁹ All numbers of *The Musical Times* from the beginning through to 2019 can be consulted here: <https://www.jstor.org/journal/musicaltimes>. Viewed 8.12.2023.

²⁰ Duncan Campbell, *Hymns and Hymn Makers*, A. & C. Black, 1898, p.152.

been deference to Dix's dislike that caused Sir Frederick Bridge to put *Orient* in the 1904 *Methodist Hymn Book* as the sole tune for "As with gladness". *Dix* is included in the book, but with other words.

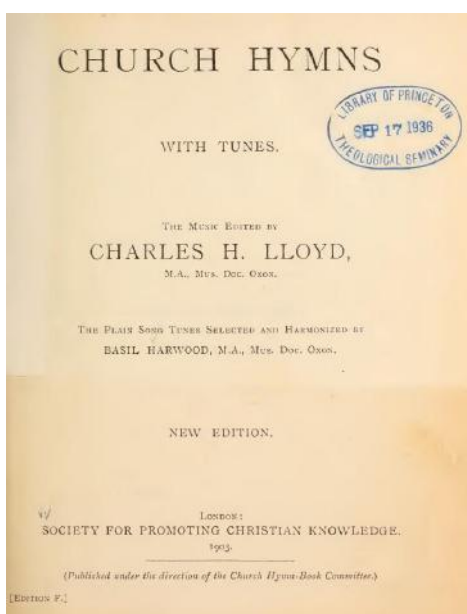
Another reason might have been that Monk, in adapting the Kocher tune, had topped and tailed it to fit the metre of *As with gladness*, as well as dropping a line altogether. Stanford did not treat Irish folksongs this way and perhaps felt that German chorales should not be hacked about either.

The final reason may be that, quite simply, it was not originally intended as a hymn but as a piece for unaccompanied SATB chorus. Throughout his career, Stanford regularly used hymn texts for anthems, even such well-known poems as *Blessed City*, *Heavenly Salem*, *Ye Choirs of New Jerusalem* and *While Shepherds watched their flocks by night*. His idea seems to have been to offer a new slant on well-loved words, without displacing the original hymn. Maybe he had the same idea here.

Orient, though an attractive tune with a pleasing lilt, did not take root. A disadvantage for congregations, deriving from the fact that it was not originally a hymn, is that the last line is varied in the final verse. This creates a more triumphant end, but was also needed to resolve the problem created by Stanford's having the first three syllables of each last line sung twice. This works in every verse except the last, where the four-syllable word "Alleluias" did not fit this scheme. Hence the variation. No difficulty for a choir reading the score, but confusing for a congregation. Better to keep it as a part song for SATB.

New hymns for a new century

By the beginning of the new century, work was proceeding apace for a thorough overhaul of the current hymn books



Church Hymns with Tunes, 1903

First to come out was *Church Hymns with Tunes*, a new edition of which appeared in 1903²¹, replacing the 1874 edition by Sullivan. Of the new or revised early 20th century hymn-books, it is the least known and discussed. We may suppose the new edition was not liked, since *Church Hymns* subsequently fell out of use. The preface is little more than list of acknowledgements. More information was offered by the blurb on the inner cover:

The present New and Revised Edition of CHURCH HYMNS has occupied the careful attention of a Committee appointed for the purpose for a period of over five years. ... The result of their labours is not merely a New Edition of the old Church Hymns, but in reality a New Book. Some 250 Hymns included in the Old Edition have been omitted and about 320 others substituted in their place. ... The general superintendence of the musical portion has been entrusted

to Dr. C. H. Lloyd, Precentor and Musical Instructor of Eton College. ... A special feature has been made of Plain Song Tunes, some sixty of which, selected and harmonised by Dr. Basil Harwood, of Christ Church, Oxford, have been included.

²¹ Published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

The reviewer in *The Musical Times*²² was neutral, limiting his comments mainly to practical issues. He noted the presence of twenty-seven new tunes by twelve named composers, including Stanford, and two anonymous ones. Over these, he was cautious:

Time alone will decide how many of these twenty-seven contributions to the Church's song will survive. It is not the gift of every composer to write a good hymn-tune, one that shall be in truth as "wings of song" upon which the combined praises of congregated worshippers may be upward borne, therefore we may be excused for passing detailed criticism on the new matter here set before us; but ... we may point to a setting by Dr. Lloyd of Christina Rossetti's Hymn beginning "None other Lamb, none other Name" (no. 479), and the two tunes by anonymous composers (nos. 14 and 87) as those that are likely to become favourites.

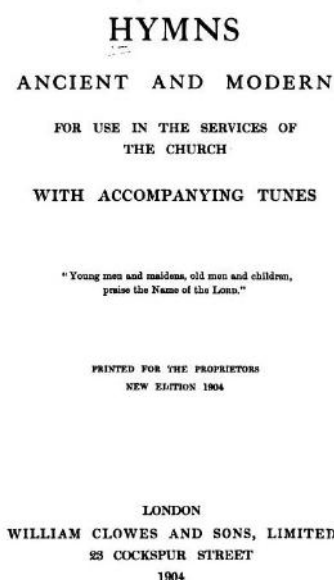
Earlier, the critic had welcomed the new hymns for children, singling out T. F. Dunhill's setting of "Sweetly sang the angels" (no. 636) as "a strain which the children will love to sing". Cautious in his comments, the reviewer's choices suggest he valued caution in composers too. Stanford's single contribution, *Beacon* (no. 581), a setting of "True Light, that lightest all in heaven and earth" by Godfrey Thring, brings a breath from a wider world. Though there is no suggestion that the editors' particular interest in plainchant was expected to influence the contemporary composers invited to contribute, Stanford's tune is strongly modal in its harmonies, avoiding real modulations and with only a single accidental, shortly before the end. Modal harmonies of this kind do not greatly appeal to congregations, now or in 1903, but this hymn could sound extremely beautiful if sung *a cappella* with carefully graded dynamics and not more than three verses. A choir preparing a CD recital of Stanford and looking for something unusual might find it rewarding.

Church Hymns seems not to have been on the radar of Hudson and his colleagues. *Beacon* is not listed in his catalogue, nor in that of Dibble or any other worklist I have seen.

Hymns Ancient and Modern, 1904

The 1904 edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* drew such fire that after two years a further "new edition" substantially reverted to the 1889 hymnal. A detailed thesis by Richard William Wilkinson covers the supposed debacle and subsequent attempts to make good²³.

The Chairman from 1896 of the Music Committee undertaking the revision was Walter Howard Frere (1863-1938), later (1923-1935) Bishop of Truro. This, it seems, was the root of the problem. Frere had little interest in ecclesiastical music more recent than plainchant and not much liking for hymns at all²⁴. Nevertheless, he did his best to assemble a good team. In a letter dated 12 November 1895, he recorded that "I gathered from [Stanford] that he would be willing to receive an offer of a place on the committee and would be very keen to work upon it if it was really composed of the very best men"²⁵. The musical committee consisted of Sir Walter Parratt, Bertram Luard-Selby, Stanford, Charles Steggall, Charles Wood and Henry Ellis Wooldridge. An attempt to enlist Parry, proposed at the first meeting on 21 January 1896 by



²² February 1, 1904, pp. 102-3

²³ Richard William Wilkinson, *A History of Hymns Ancient and Modern*, University of Hull, 1985, PhD thesis. <https://hull-repository.worktribe.com/output/4215354/a-history-of-hymns-ancient-and-modern>, retrieved 10.12.2023.

²⁴ Wilkinson, *ibid*, p. 54.

²⁵ Letter to G. C. White, the Chairman, quoted in Wilkinson, *ibid*, p. 56.

Stanford and Parratt, was unsuccessful but he must have done some work for them since he was paid eight guineas according to a list dated 10 April 1897²⁶.

Some of the resolutions specifically proposed by Stanford at the first meeting are of interest for the light they throw on his approach to the work.

- ... it is desirable that the plainsong melodies should constitute a separate section of the musical edition (proposed with Parratt and unanimously accepted).
- ... the committee should consider specimen founts of type both of plainsong and of modern notation (also proposed with Parratt).
- ... in as much as the knowledge of its source of a tune is a valuable guide to its proper rendering, it is desirable that such source should be indicated in the music edition at the head of the tune (this again proposed with Parratt, and passed unanimously. In previous editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, it was necessary to consult the index to know the composer or source of the tune. Despite the resolution, this policy was not changed for the 1904 hymnal)²⁷.

It was also resolved that “In the case of composers of tunes who are alive no alteration can be made without their consent. In the case of deceased composers the fact of alterations should be indicated”. Though not a specifically Stanfordian proposal, it may cast light on his attitude Kocher’s *Dix*, as altered by Monk for the first edition of the hymnal.

The previously mentioned letter by Frere of 12 November 1895 shows that Stanford had also raised the question of payment, proposing a guinea an hour for committee work with “the other work of reharmonising, looking up the old authorities to be assessed separately.”

The theological discussions over the texts need not concern us here. Representations over the choice of tunes, and especially the omission of tunes perceived as old favourites, were typically made by Walsham How (1823-1897), Bishop of Wakefield, author of many hymn texts, including “For all the Saints”. In a letter of 12 June 1897, he confessed to being “startled at a first glance at many of the proposed omissions, which are among the chief favourites of the Church, sung with delight everywhere.” After listing eight tunes in particular, he concluded “I hope yet that the book may be saved from the tremendous disaster which the proposed omissions seem certain to inflict”²⁸. Most of those listed by the Bishop were retained, usually alongside an alternative tune. Time seems to have sided with the committee and only two of the Bishop’s favourites are much sung today. One is Dykes’ sturdy *Alford*, but the most interesting one for the present discussion is *St. Clement*. In the end it remained, but as an alternative to Stanford’s *Joldwynds*. The Bishop’s letter provoked a particularly high-handed response from Frere (to the chairman White, not directly to the Bishop):

We hope the book is for our sons and grandsons and we ought to be able to hand on to them something better than what we younger ones were ourselves brought up on. In other words, we have to consider more what they ought to get to like, than what we have come to like. [This principle would be unassailable if there really was a definitive measure of what people ought to like, but none has yet been found]. ... It is quite true that people like waltz tunes: but does the Bishop hold that that is a serious reason for providing them? – e.g. 477 [St. Clement]²⁹.

²⁶ Wilkinson, *ibid*, pp. 58, 60, 61.

²⁷ Wilkinson, *ibid*, pp.58-59.

²⁸ Quoted in Wilkinson, *ibid*, pp. 61-62.

²⁹ Quoted in Wilkinson, *ibid*, pp. 62-63.

The Bishop died later the same year, so did not live to know that *St. Clement* had been safely retained – and is still going strong. Presumably he never saw *Joldwynds*, unless it was already written by 1897. The committee's work was supposed to be confidential, but so many people had been asked their opinions about various things that the cat was out of the bag long before publication in 1904, inducing threats from a number of church worthies that they would never use the new book.

Stanford's hymn tunes in *Hymns Ancient and Modern, 1904*

Stanford's contributions to the 1904 *Hymns Ancient and Modern* were (alphabetically):

- 498. Airedale (Love Divine, all loves excelling)
- 337. Alverstone (Praise to the Holiest in the height)
- 325. Blackrock (Glory to God, all the heavens are telling)
- 220. Engelberg (For all the Saints that from their labours rest)
- 50. Geronimo (Behold the Bridegroom draweth nigh)
- 520. Holland (O God of love, O King of peace)
- 28. Joldwynds (The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended)
- 303. Luard (Now the labourer's task is o'er) (written in 1891, see above)
- 182. Ockley (Hail, festal day, of never-dying fame)

Of these, the 1922 edition, described as "The edition of 1889 reset with the second supplement of 1916", dropped *Alverstone*, *Blackrock*, *Holland* and *Joldwynds*. It added:

- 138. *Fitzroy* (Christ is risen! He hath burst His bonds in twain!), copyrighted 1915
- 722. *St. Basil the Great* (We hail Thee now, O Jesu), originally in *The Hymnal Companion*, 1890
- 655. *St. Patrick's Breastplate*, arr. (655: I bind unto myself today), with *Gartan* for the eighth verse.

These make a mixed bag. *Geronimo* and *Holland*, like *St. Basil the Great*, are solid and serviceable in the German chorale tradition but fairly forgettable. I have already commented on *Joldwynds* and *Luard*. I would not quarrel with the decision to drop the former in 1916, yet *Joldwynds* lingered on elsewhere. It was added to the (Irish) *Church Hymnal* in 1919 as an alternative to *St. Clement* and was still there in 1936. More curious is its presence in *Songs of Praise*. The editors³⁰ evidently shared Frere's condemnation of *St. Clement* as a waltz and, for the original 1925 edition, provided an unappealing plainsong-derived tune. This must have raised eyebrows so for the revised and enlarged edition of 1931 they offered a second tune. This was not *St. Clement* but *Joldwynds*, which remained until at least 1971. Given that congregations have the wordbook not the tunes, we might wonder how many organists, by agreement with the vicar, played *St. Clement* anyway.

Airedale is much more interesting. Here Stanford mingles modal elements with harmonies that, though 19th century in one sense, create an archaic effect. The first phrase goes straight from the tonic B flat major to G major, which then proves to be the dominant of C minor before leading back to the original key, though with a sequence of chords that seem to hover more in F major and D minor but with flattened leading notes. The fourth phrase cadences in G minor, after which the second half of the tune has no accidentals at all. I apologise for the technicalities, but I feel that a congregation that understands nothing of dominants and leading notes may nevertheless feel disoriented by a tune that, without sounding revolutionary, never quite goes where tunes usually go. The melody, however, is attractive. It seems to me a good deal better than Stainer's *Love Divine*, which trudges up and down without apparent motivation, remained in the book as an alternative and is still liked by some today. It also seems to me preferable to either of the melodies offered in the first editions of the *English Hymnal* and *Songs of Praise*. Since the 1950s, however, Wesley's words

³⁰ Percy Dearmer, Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw.

have been widely sung to *Hyfrydol*³¹, a splendid tune that appeals to musicians and non-musicians alike. So too, perhaps, does *Beecher*, a firm favourite in America. *Airedale* could prove more attractive for listening than for congregational use and might be considered by a choir making a CD of Stanford's music.

The strengths of *Airedale* become evident when we look at *Blackrock*. This, too, mingles modal features with touches of more modern modulation. Here, though, the melody itself is insufficiently shapely to give a point to it all. You could sing this tune many times without ever remembering how it goes, apart from the punctuating phrase "Glory to God".

The composerly Stanford proved effective with what I will call "hymn-anthems". By this I do not mean anthems composed freely around a well-known hymn tune, such as those that conclude each of the *Bible Songs* op.113, or anthems that use the text of a familiar hymn. I mean hymns intended for congregational singing, but with varied accompaniments, melodies or scoring that could make them effective as anthems.

Alverstone is an extreme case. It begins with a verse sung in unison, with an independent, striding organ accompaniment. This is indicated for "Verses 1 and 7, or as a refrain throughout the hymn". For verses 2-6 there is a different tune in a different metre, sung in harmony, with a strongly modal feel. I doubt if the congregation would have the patience to sort out what they are supposed to be doing, yet the music is splendid. I see no future for it as a hymn, where the straightforward Dykes tune or the excellent *Richmond* would always be preferred. It could be an effective anthem, with a few judicious choices over how many verses to sing and how often to insert the refrain. The only problem is that the melody of the refrain descends at the end to a middle C. This is fine when the music is to continue, but does not sound very conclusive when the last time comes. Perhaps Stanford took it for granted an "Amen" would be sung to a traditional plagal cadence, with the voices going up an octave. If this is not done, the voices should go up at the end of the refrain, the last time round. The idea of a Stanford setting of "Praise to the Holiest" is surely appealing.

Ockley, an energetic Whitsuntide hymn, has a refrain sung in harmony and alternate verses, with an independent organ accompaniment, sung in unison by tenors and basses (1, 3, 5), and sopranos (2, 4, 6). It is a much simpler piece, all in the same metre and tempo – the two melodies seem continuations of each other, not completely different things. It should be more practical as a hymn than *Alverstone*, though less interesting as an anthem. The words are a new translation of Venantius' Latin hymn *Salve festa dies*, usually rendered as "Hail festal day! To endless ages known". *Ockley* seems preferable, with its fine drive, to either of the usual tunes³².

The hymn-anthem *par excellence* is surely *Engelberg*. The tune itself is easy to pick up and uplifting with its rising notes at the beginning of each phrase. Nothing to stop the congregation from joining in wholeheartedly throughout. The presence of a choir is nevertheless presumed, since from the beginning the organ has its own part and does not double the tune. After three unison verses with the same accompaniment, there is a verse in harmony, during which the organ would not necessarily play. Here, the melody passes from the altos to the tenors, returning to the sopranos for the "Alleluia". The fifth verse is sung in unison again, with the organ playing only a few simple but full chords. The texture is reduced for the sixth verse ("The golden evening lightens"), sung by sopranos only with a gentle organ accompaniment – no pedal note till nearly the end. Tenors and basses have the seventh verse ("But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day") while the organ makes a crescendo and everybody joins in for the last verse. An unusual feature is that the music is seamless since the verses do not end with a perfect cadence and then stop, but lead on to the next verse.

³¹ The extensive listings at https://hymnary.org/text/love_divine_all_love_excelling_joy_of_he show no earlier use of *Hyfrydol* for these words. Viewed 14.12.2023

³² See https://hymnary.org/text/hail_festal_day_to_endless_ages_known. Viewed 14.12.2023.

Only at the end are the harmonies adjusted to make a perfect cadence. After all the momentum generated, this is hardly enough and the music needs the final “Amen” – which also contains the highest note sung during the piece – to conclude satisfactorily. It would be interesting to know if Stanford was the first to use this device, which he repeated in *Fitzroy*. I have occasionally seen it in later hymns, such as Percy Buck’s *Gonfalon Royal* (1918), suggesting that the influence of *Engelberg* may have been far-reaching.

Engelberg was intended to supersede, as a setting of Bishop How’s *For all the Saints*”, Joseph Barnby’s mellifluous *Sarum*, a tune let down by its apathetic final “Alleluias”. Stanford would seem to have been proud of it, but disaster struck only two years later when Vaughan Williams published, in the first place anonymously in the *English Hymnal*, his famous tune *Sine Nomine*. Stanford continued to believe in *Engelberg*. He contributed the last two stanzas, as an independent piece, to “King Albert’s Book”, a collection of tributes following the German invasion of Belgium first published by the *Daily Telegraph* in 1914. He then used it as the basis for his fifth Organ Sonata, op. 159 (1918). *Engelberg* did have its admirers. I have in front of me the booklet for a “Festival of English Church Music” held at Crystal Palace on 19 June 1936. Among the hymns was “Stanford’s splendid setting of ‘For all the Saints’.” All the same, *Engelberg* pretty well disappeared, while acquiring an underground reputation as the Stanford hymn that would still be with us if Vaughan Williams had not written *Sine Nomine*.

The answer, obviously, was to sing it to different words. I do not know who was the first to think of it, but the most successful was surely Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000), who published his hymn *When in our music God is glorified* in 1971, to be sung to *Engelberg*. This was an inspired choice. Hymns that specifically treat the role of music in worship are few, and Stanford’s majestic, spirit-raising tune matches it perfectly. Nevertheless, the good news about the tune spiralled and other hymnals offered their ideas. On one estimate, it has been published with twelve texts (apart from *For all the Saints*) in 138 hymnals³³. If you make a search on You Tube, you will find innumerable versions, almost all from American churches. You will find an assortment of arrangements and a number of organists have offered their own improvisations on the theme. What I did not find anywhere, even on a disc dedicated to Stanford³⁴, is the hymn as it was actually written. Not necessarily with the original words, but with all the varied scorings and accompaniments and the final “Amen” – a select few have at least realized this is needed to complete it. Several have the organ starting on the second beat with the tune, destroying that sense, so typical of Stanford, that the tune rises out of the first chord. To have all Stanford’s varied settings, though, you would need at least six verses. *When in our music* has five but maybe for a recording, at least, the first could be sung again at the end so we get all Stanford’s music.

That closes the chapter of the 1904 revision. The 1916 supplement, as mentioned above, resurrected, perhaps unnecessarily, *St. Basil the Great*, eliminated four and added a new tune, *Fitzroy*. It also added *St. Patrick’s Breastplate*, but I will deal with that later. *Fitzroy* was a setting of Archer T. Gurney’s Easter hymn *Christ is risen! Christ is risen! He hath burst his bonds in twain*. It was offered as an alternative to Sullivan’s *Resurrexit*, which has been the sole tune in almost every hymn-book before or since³⁵. Dearly though I love much Sullivan, it seems to me a pity that *Fitzroy* never caught on. It has the same sort of energy combined with breadth that should appeal to those who love *Engelberg* – does this type of hymn capture American congregations in particular? Nor should it present particular difficulties – it is sung in unison with an organ part that almost always doubles the tune. The organist will need to use the pedals, though, and the final “Amen” must be sung for a satisfactory ending. Maybe a choir planning to include the popular Easter anthem

³³ <https://hymnary.org/search?qu=engelberg>, viewed 14.12.2023.

³⁴ By Winchester College Chapel Choir/Malcom Archer, Convivium CR 027, recorded 2014.

³⁵ https://hymnary.org/text/christ_is_risen_christ_is_risen_he_hathb, viewed 14.12.2023.

Ye Choirs of New Jerusalem on a CD might consider adding this as a stirring pendant, thus creating an awareness that it exists.

Varied accompaniments

The story of the hymn-anthem is not quite complete. In 1913, a slim volume of *Varied Harmonies for organ Accompaniment (and Voices ad libitum) of certain tunes in Hymns Ancient and Modern* was issued by Clowes. Stanford's contributions were *St. Columba, O Filii et Filiae, St. Anne, The Old Hundredth, The Old 104th* and *St. James*. He applied his considerable powers of invention to this apparently simple endeavour. The last verse of *St. Anne*, for example, presupposes an organ and organist of cathedral standard, as the pedal part thunders out a reference to Bach's so-called *St. Anne* fugue. For congregational hymn singing, some of these variations might be distracting. Sung as anthems, they would be frustrating for the congregation, which would want to add their voices to a tune they know well. On a CD, whether dedicated to Stanford or to hymns generally, these pieces could come into their own, allowing the passive listener to appreciate the mastery of these chaconne-like inventions.

St. Columba in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, the *English Hymnal* and elsewhere

The 1913 *Varied Harmonies* volume raises a question about the arrangement of *St. Columba* in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. For all the five tunes treated by Stanford one verse, usually the first, is reproduced with the harmonisation as in the hymn-book, and, in the case of the other four, is described as such, the varied verses being named as the work of Stanford. *St. Columba* also starts with the tune as in the hymn-book, but in this case Stanford is named as the harmoniser. Both the form of the tune and its harmonisation are notably different from the version in the 1906 *English Hymnal*, which is almost certainly by Stanford. Most notably, at the end of the second line, *Hymns Ancient and Modern* has a dominant chord where the *English Hymnal* has a tonic chord. It is not normally supposed that the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* version was also the work of Stanford.

The history of this melody, as researched and summarized by Chris Fenner³⁶, with a few additional discoveries of my own, is as follows:

- It first appeared in the (Irish) *Church Hymnal* of 1864, called simply "Hymn of the Ancient Irish Church" and with the words "Great Shepherd of Thy People here". It was slightly altered for the 1874 edition and assumed there the name of *St. Columba*. It has a simplified form compared with the version usually sung today. An arranger is not named but some slightly later hymnals, for example *Christian Chorals: for the Chapel and Fireside* (1885), attribute it to Robert P. Stewart, who had been the editor of the 1874 *Church Hymnal*.
- In 1877, simple piano arrangements were published by François Hoffman of *Ancient Music of Ireland from the Petrie Collection*. The tune is much as in modern hymnals – in particular, the triplet in the second line is present. It is described as a "Hymn (sung at the dedication of a church)" and no words are provided. The Petrie Collection itself (tunes only) was edited by Stanford and published in 1902-1905, so his work on this was contemporaneous with that on *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. The tune appears slightly differently there. In place of the triplet, there is a quaver plus two semiquavers, and the last note of the second and fourth lines is played/sung twice, a characteristic feature of Irish melodies. One that, if respected, renders it suitable for "The King of Love my Shepherd is", but not for the texts to which it was sung previously.
- The 1904 *Hymns Ancient and Modern* version seems a compromise between the 1864 and 1877 forms of the tune and would sound slightly odd if used today. The words were "As now the sun's

³⁶ <https://www.hymnologyarchive.com/the-king-of-love-my-shepherd-is>, viewed 15.12.2023.

descending rays". The only occasion where this arrangement has been attributed to Stanford is in the 1913 *Varied Harmonies* edition (see below).

- *St. Columba* was finally coupled with Henry W. Baker's hymn text "The King of Love my Shepherd is" in the 1906 first edition of the *English Hymnal*. The editors³⁷ were slightly apologetic about doing so, regretting³⁸ that copyright prevented them from including Dykes' *Dominus regit me*. They made an inspired choice and congregations have been happy to sing either tune ever since. This arrangement is described as the "original form" and the tune is as in Stanford's Petrie edition, except for preferring a triplet at the end of the second line to a quaver plus two semiquavers. I stated above that Stanford is described in the Preface as responsible for this arrangement, but in truth, the acknowledgement could be read two ways. It thanks "the following who have kindly allowed the inclusion of versions and harmonisations of traditional and other melodies which are their copyright". Stanford is included in the list for *St. Columba* and *St. Patrick's Breastplate*. In this same list, however, the Irish Literary Society are also thanked for these two tunes. The Irish Literary Society were certainly copyright holders, together with Stanford as editor, of the Petrie Collection as published in 1902-1905, but this could regard only the tune. So was Stanford thanked for the tune or for the harmonisation? This harmonisation of *St. Columba* has been reproduced unaltered in numerous hymn books, but the source consulted³⁹ gives only three where it is described as arranged by Stanford: *The Church and School Hymnal* (1926), *Rejoice in the Lord* (1985) and *The Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (1996). I can add to this list the 1933 *Methodist Hymn-Book* where the text is not Baker's hymn but George Herbert's *The God of Love my Shepherd is*". This has a metre that requires the elimination of the repeated notes at the end of the second and fourth lines. Importantly, the 1926 *Church and School Hymnal* not only says "arr. by C.V. Stanford", it also says "By permission of the Executors of Sir C. V. Stanford" (see opposite). This would seem to silence any doubts, but this same hymn-book got into a muddle, reported below, over their attribution of *St. Patrick's Breatplate*.
- *St. Columba* was included in the 1925 *Songs of Praise*. The sole change compared with the *English Hymnal* version is an E flat major chord at the end of the first line instead of a C minor chord. The arrangement is not attributed, so the alteration could have been made by any of the three editors

³⁷ The Musical Editor was Vaughan Williams. More generally, the Preface was signed³⁷ by W. J. Birkbeck, Percy Dearmer, A. Hanbury Tracy, T. A. Lacey, D. C. Lathbury and Athelston Riley.

³⁸ Preface pp. x-xi.

³⁹ https://hymnary.org/tune/st_columba_irish, viewed 15.12.2023.

- Percy Dearmer, Vaughan Williams or Martin Shaw. The acknowledgments include among “those who have allowed tunes [here we go again] which are their copyright to be included” Geraldine M. Stanford (the composer’s daughter) for *St. Columba* and *St. Patrick’s Breastplate*. So once again, Stanford’s copyright is acknowledged only for the tune. The *Songs of Praise* version, with the altered chord, has been used in many hymnals but none I have seen attribute it to Stanford.
- In 1907, Stanford incorporated this theme, describing it simply as “an old Irish church melody”, in the last of his *Six Preludes and Postludes* for organ, op. 101. A search for hints that might corroborate Stanford’s authorship of one or other of the arrangements is not very helpful. The first line ends with an E flat major chord as in *Songs of Praise* and also as in Robert Stewart’s (Irish) *Church Hymnal* version, not a C minor chord as in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and the *English Hymnal*. It has a dominant chord not a tonic chord at the end of the second line, as in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* but not in the *English Hymnal*. It has a chromatic bass line at the end of the third line previously found in Stewart’s harmonization, though the bass line is otherwise different from Stewart’s. If this tells us anything, it is that Stanford grew up with the Stewart version and it remained unconsciously a part of him.
 - A 1926 recording of *The King of Love my Shepherd is (St. Columba)* by the Choir of St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, conducted by Edmund Fellowes, names Stanford as the composer (!) and follows the *English Hymnal* version faithfully, though transposed a tone higher⁴⁰.



The conclusion is that we have a single source, but an authoritative one, attributing the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* version to Stanford. We have testimony from the not wholly reliable 1926 *Church and School Hymnal* and the 1933 *Methodist Hymn-Book* that Stanford made the *English Hymnal* arrangement. The 1926 recording stands as near-contemporary corroboration.

If Stanford made the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* arrangement, why is it not acknowledged there? The answer may lie in his query to Frere, quoted above, about fees for “reharmonisation” and “looking up old authorities”. In truth, any hymn that appears in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in a different form, or differently harmonised, with respect to previous hymn books, must by default have been revised by one of the members of the musical committee, considered part of the job rather than creative work to be acknowledged. I imagine it would be impossible to establish now the extent of Stanford’s interventions of this kind. When the time came for the *Varied Harmonies*, he perhaps decided to claim his own.

The Methodist Hymn-Book, 1904

The second hymnal to cause consternation in 1904 was the revised *Methodist Hymn-Book*. If it seems strange that the musical editorship went to Sir Frederick Bridge, organist of Westminster Cathedral and a pillar of the Anglican establishment, Bridge himself would have been the last to disagree.

It was rather surprising that, strict Churchman as I might well have been deemed to be, I should be approached by the Wesleyan body with a view to enlisting my services as musical editor of their tune-book, seeing that there were so many good musicians within the Wesleyan Communion. But I felt a

⁴⁰ Columbia A 5855.

lively interest in the work, arduous though it promised to be, and entertain some pardonable gratification that the Committee of Revision should have sought me to collaborate with them.

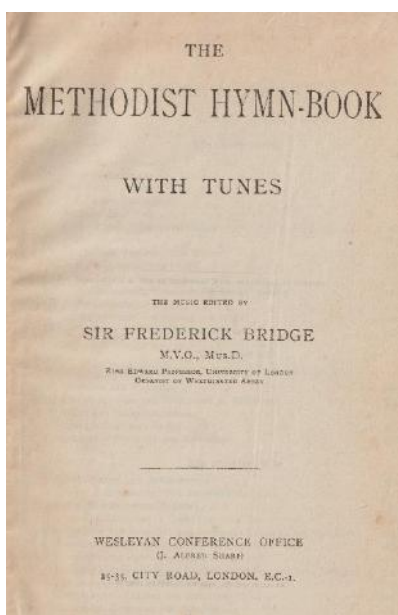
Among the several reasons he gave for accepting, the driving motive might have been a perceived personal slight:

Perhaps also I was a little “extra pleased” on account of having been left out of the Musical Committee which had been nominated to revise our own book of “Hymns Ancient and Modern”. I confess to having felt this exclusion, as I had contributed a very popular tune to the original edition (“The Sower went forth sowing”)⁴¹. ... As my own people would not accept my help in the revision of “Hymns Ancient and Modern”, I felt free to do what I could for the Wesleyans, following the example of St. Paul, who, when the Jews would not hear him, turned to the Gentiles.

He was not deaf to solid Methodist advice (or to Handelian precedent), commending

... the help afforded by my cook, who was a Wesleyan, and to whom I often appealed to ascertain from her special knowledge if a particular tune was popular. “Oh yes”, she once said ... “we sing that in our chapel very often”, and she piped a few bars of it up the lift, at the bottom of which he was standing. ... My cook was presented by the Committee with a special copy in recognition of her valuable services to the book and to me.

Bridge seemed well satisfied with his work and was



... gratified at finding that as a rule they [the Methodists] regarded the collection as a valuable possession⁴².

He treated himself handsomely, inserting twenty-nine tunes of his own (reduced to six in 1933). In reality, reaction seems to have been less favourable. Not many of the newly composed tunes survived in the 1933 *Methodist Hymn-Book*. Stanford's involvement was marginal. Bridge's own memoirs contain only passing references to his colleague, but Plunket Greene described Bridge as his "old 'enemy'⁴³" and recalls how Stanford once clipped his wings in public:

Bridge had elaborated a new way of teaching the rudiments of music by means of what he called 'Musical Gestures.' He turned up after luncheon one day in the smoking-room and fired it off (this is hardly a figure of speech) at his colleagues ... For instance, the semibreve was made by placing together the points of the curved forefinger and thumb of the right hand and holding them before the face ... He went on with this for

about a quarter of an hour and then only stopped from exhaustion. There was a long silence and then Stanford said in a very quiet voice:

'There's one ye've forgotten, Bridge.'

'What's that? What's that?' said Bridge, whirling round on him.

Stanford put his left thumb to his nose and spread out his ten fingers in a long slow snook,

⁴¹ Retained in the 1904 edition.

⁴² Sir Frederick Bridge, *A Westminster Pilgrim*, Novello/Hutchinson, no date but Preface dated December 1918. Pp. 207-211.

⁴³ Greene, *ibid*, p. 278.

and said:

‘Consecutive fifths, me boy’⁴⁴.

Stanford made two contributions to the *Methodist Hymn-Book: Orient*, an attempt to revive the 1894 carol, and a new tune, *Consolation*. Possibly Stanford had his own agenda with the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* committee over *Orient*, since *Dix* remained the sole tune for “As with gladness” in their 1904 revision. Bridge was more amenable, offering only *Orient* for this carol and shifting *Dix* elsewhere with a different text (“Father, Son and Holy Ghost”). Perhaps the Methodists enjoyed *Orient*, since it remained in the 1933 revision, though indicating *Dix*, now assigned the words “God of mercy, God of grace”, as an alternative tune.

Consolation was a setting of Jane Borthwick’s “Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow”. This hymn has been sung to several tunes, though the preponderant one seems to be Barnby’s *Edinburgh*⁴⁵. Bridge offered a choice between the Stanford and Barnicott’s *Warrenne no. 4*. The rather austere *Consolation* could, I think, grow upon one, and the beginning is most attractive. But if Bridge’s cook had found the Barnicott (or the Barnby) more melodious and easier to pick up, I suspect hers would have been a typical reaction. The hymn and its tunes were dropped in 1933, but *Consolation* (with these words) was included in *The Song Companion to the Scriptures* in 1911⁴⁶.

The English Hymnal, 1906

Stanford’s name does not appear in the composer index of this mould-breaking hymnal. As observed above, he was among those thanked “who have kindly allowed the inclusion of versions and harmonisations of traditional and other melodies which are their copyright”. These tunes being *St. Columba* and *St. Patrick’s Breastplate*. As also observed above, the Irish Literary Society was thanked for these and, in their case, the copyright regarded the tunes, both from the Petrie Collection, which they had published under Stanford’s editorship in 1902-1905, leaving a certain ambiguity as to whether Stanford is thanked for the “versions and harmonisations” or just for the melodies. So let me try to sort out the history of this other famous Irish hymn tune.

St. Patrick’s Breastplate, with Deirdre and Gartan

The words of this hymn are a translation made by Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander in 1889 of an ancient hymn attributed to St. Patrick. It was promptly set to music by the Irish composer Thomas R. Gonzalves Jozé and added to the (Irish) *Church Hymnal* in 1891⁴⁷. The poem is long and irregular, creating problems that Jozé resolved with a piece that could plausibly be sung as an anthem, but is unmanageable as a congregational hymn. The versions issued until some time after Stanford’s death are listed below. Those of principal importance are in bold type.

- **Petrie 1902.** Hudson⁴⁸ gives a date of 1902 for Stanford’s setting of the hymn to the now-famous tune, but he lists no published arrangement earlier than 1906. Stanford’s edition of the Petrie Collection, undertaken for the Irish Literary Society, came out in three volumes, copyrighted 1902-1905. The tune (without words or arrangement) is no. 1048, entitled *The Hymn of St. Bernard. Jesu dulcis memoria*. 1902 seems, therefore, to refer only to the copyright of the tune

⁴⁴ Greene, *ibid*, pp. 256-257.

⁴⁵ See https://hymnary.org/text/thou_knowest_lord_the_weariness_and_sorr, viewed 16.12.2023.

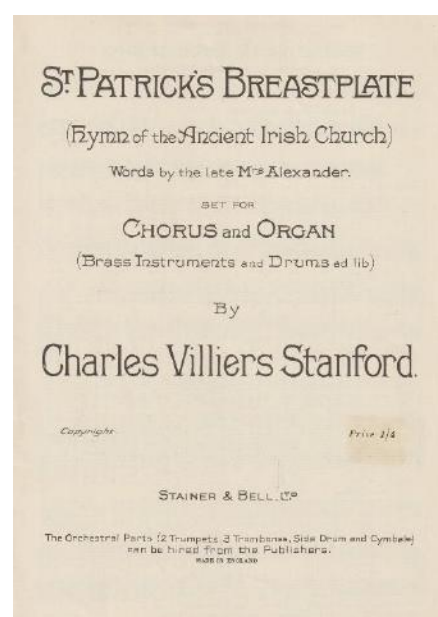
⁴⁶ Compiled by G. Campbell Morgan and published by Morgan and Scott. *Consolation* is the only Stanford tune included.

⁴⁷ Jozé’s setting can be seen, with many other useful notes and thoughts on this hymn and its tunes by Chris Fenner, at <https://www.hymnologyarchive.com/patricks-hymn>, viewed 16.12.2023.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, B 28.

itself. I find no evidence that an arrangement, or any use of the tune in connection with these words, appeared in 1902, but see under EH 1906⁴⁹.

- **EH 1906.** *St. Patrick's Breastplate* was included in the 1906 *English Hymnal*. This was its first appearance as a hymn. It is presented simply – verses 1-7 and 9 are sung in unison to the same organ accompaniment. Verse 8, which has a quite different metre (“Christ be with me, Christ within me”), is set to an Irish tune called *Deirdre*. The ambiguous phrase in the Preface, quoted above, may refer to *St. Patrick's Breastplate* only, since *Deirdre* is not in the Petrie Collection. As Fenner has pointed out, it is a free adaptation of *Lamentation of Dierdre for the Sons of Usneach*, published by Bunting in *The Ancient Music of Ireland* in 1840. No publication has unequivocally attributed the arrangement of *Deirdre* to Stanford and some recent hymnals⁵⁰ describe *St. Patrick* as arranged by Stanford in 1902 and *Deirdre* as harmonised by Vaughan Williams in 1906. Has modern research established that Stanford sent Vaughan Williams a harmonised setting of *St. Patrick* in 1902 and Vaughan Williams, as Musical Editor of the *English Hymnal*, inserted *Deirdre* himself? It is plausible, but I wish I could find the scholarly article that ferreted it out.
- **CVS 1913.** Stanford's full-scale hymn-anthem, dated 1912 on the manuscript⁵¹, was published by Stainer and Bell in 1913. Chorus and organ can be joined, ad lib., by two trumpets, three trombones, side drum and cymbals. Each verse is scored differently, with sections for sopranos and contraltos only, for tenors and basses only, and in harmony, during which the organ is sometimes silent. For “Christ be with me” he used a tune, generally known as *Gartan*, from the Petrie Collection. This is sung in harmony with organ support. *Gartan* is a short tune, so it is sung twice to accommodate the text, with harmonic variations the second time. The setting begins with a brief five-beat introduction, enabling the voices to enter without a formal prelude. The harmonies of the first verse are notably different from those of EH 1906, almost deliberately using major chords where the other uses minor and vice versa. The effect is somewhat bolder. CVS 1913 has been recorded complete by the Winchester Cathedral Choir under David Hill. It would be interesting to hear it with the brass and percussion. The MS score exists so, if parts have not survived, they could be made.
- **HAM 1916.** *St. Patrick's Breastplate* was added to *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in the Second Supplement of 1916⁵². Though it bears the notice “Copyright 1913 by Stainer and Bell Ltd.”, it is sufficiently different from CVS 1913 to count as a separate arrangement. There are no introductory notes for the organ and the first bar is as in EH 1906. Thereafter, the harmonic scheme of the first verse is as in CVS 1913, with small differences of organ layout. Verses 2, 4 and 7 are sung, respectively, by “men”, “trebles” and “full”, with an organ accompaniment not found anywhere in CVS 1913 (or EH 1906). Verses 3, 5 and 6 are sung



⁴⁹ This internet posting by the Llandudno Ministry Area claims to reproduce the first four bars of Stanford's 1902 harmonisation, but they do not state the source and it is identical to HAM 1916. <https://llandudno-parish.org.uk/wordpress/reflection/great-hymns/2234-2>. Viewed 17.12.2023.

⁵⁰ For example, *Glory to God: the Presbyterian Hymnal* (2013).

⁵¹ Hudson, *ibid*, B 16.

⁵² I have to confess that I have not found a copy of the 1916 Second Supplement. The 1922 edition, which is available at Internet Archive, says it is “the edition of 1889 reset with the 1916 supplement”. It says nothing of any new material, so I take it that anything found here that was not in the 1889 edition was included in the 1916 Second Supplement.

in harmony with organ. This begins as in the harmony verse of CVS 1913 but later departs from it. "Christ be with me" is sung to *Gartan*, in harmony and at first as in CVS 1913, but when the music is repeated, the variants in CVS 1913 are not used. The final verse is identical to that of CVS 1913, though there is a note that "the accompaniment for verse 2 may be used". The "Amen" is sung on unison Gs instead of in harmony as in CVS 1913, but the organ part is the same. This arrangement amounts to a recognition that CVS 1913 is too complicated for congregational use but enabled Stanford to issue a simpler version that was all his own work. Stainer and Bell do not seem to have published this version themselves. The copyright acknowledgement was presumably necessary since several parts were identical to CVS 1913. The fact that the first bar is identical to EH 1906 is proof of a sort that Stanford made the EH arrangement.

- Also in 1916, *The Hymnal of the [American] Protestant Episcopal Church* adopted EH 1906 unaltered, with no mention of the arranger(s). The only acknowledgement in the Preface was to the *English Hymnal*.
- HAM 1916 was incorporated in the (Irish) *Church Hymnal* in 1919. No changes were made substantially, but note values were halved and the organ layout was simplified. Stanford was named as the arranger and Stainer and Bell's copyright was acknowledged.
- SOP 1925. The first edition of *Songs of Praise* used an altered form of the melody. Since the alterations are at variance with the tune as in Petrie 1902, it has to be supposed that the editor, Vaughan Williams, knew some other source, but the changes must have been confusing to a congregation used to either EH 1906 or HAM 1916. The most recent version of *Songs of Praise* has reverted to the better-known form. The harmonisation mainly follows EH 1906. For "Christ be with me" a new Irish melody, *Morley*, is used, harmonised by C. Burke. As with *St. Columba*, the tune is acknowledged in the preface as the copyright of Geraldine M. Stanford.
- In 1926, the *Church and School Hymnal* included *St. Patrick* with just three verses, so without either *Deirdre* or *Gartan*. The harmonisation is that of EH 1906 and the arrangement is attributed to Stanford – the only time (that I have seen) that this arrangement was definitely ascribed to him before the 21st century. Paradoxically, Stainer and Bell are named as the copyright holders. It looks as if the two parties were talking at cross-purposes, Stainer and Bell granting permission to use the 1913 version for which they had rights, while the hymnal compilers were actually asking about EH 1906, which has nothing to do with Stainer and Bell. As near-contemporary evidence that Stanford made this arrangement, it is not very strong.
- In 1933, the revised *Methodist Hymn-Book* included a composite version. The verses sung to *St. Patrick's Breastplate* are as in HAM 1913, with Stainer and Bell's 1913 copyright acknowledged, but "Christ be with me" is sung to *Deirdre*, as in EH 1906.

In short, four phases:

1. Publication of the tune in the Petrie Collection in 1902.
2. Arrangement with *Deirdre* for "Christ be with me" in the *English Hymnal* 1906. It is not entirely proved that Stanford made this arrangement of *St. Patrick* and he almost certainly had nothing to do with *Deirdre*.
3. Elaborate hymn-anthem arrangement by Stanford with *Gartan* for "Christ be with me", made in 1912 and published by Stainer and Bell in 1913.
4. Simpler arrangement by Stanford with *Gartan*, based on the 1913 version but more suitable for congregational use, in the 1916 Supplement of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

I would be grateful if those who state that Stanford's *arrangement* (as opposed to *edition* of the tune) was made (or even published) in 1902, would produce an arrangement dated 1902, or tell me where to find it.

Likewise, those who suggest that the 1906 *English Hymnal* arrangement is by Vaughan Williams may be right (in which case Stanford made no arrangement before 1912), but I should like to know their proof.

Lastly, Stanford based no. 5 of his *Six Preludes and Postludes op. 101* (1907) on *Gartan* and used both *St. Patrick's Breastplate* and *Gartan* in the finale of his fourth Organ Sonata (*Celtica*) (1918).

Later hymns published separately

The war efforts inspired both Parry and Stanford to write pieces invoking God's protection for aviators. Parry's *A Hymn for Aviators* (1915) was published for voice and piano and sung by Clara Butt. A four-part version was also issued. Stanford's *Aviator's Hymn* (1917) was for unison voices and organ. Tenors and basses sing the first verse, sopranos the second and everybody joins in the third and last. There is an "Amen" in four-part harmony. The organ accompaniments are varied for each verse, but the melodic line remains unchanged so congregational use would be feasible. The tune is a fine, uplifting one. The text by Arthur Campbell Ainger would limit use to specific occasions – perhaps this piece would have a future with other words.

Lord, behold us was published posthumously by the Year Book Press in 1926. The words, written by Henry J. Bicknell in 1843, are intended as a beginning-of-term school hymn. The first three verses are sung in harmony, the fourth in unison with an independent organ part. Is there a place for such a hymn in the multi-ethnic schools of today? If so, Stanford's setting is solid and serviceable. If this sounds lukewarm, it does seem preferable, in its straightforward linearity, to the five others that have been tried⁵³. If nothing else, Stanford finds a satisfying solution to the short fifth line.

The tune-names



While the general congregation remember hymns by their first lines, musicians remember the tunes by their names. Many of these, sphinx-like, defy explanation – they evidently refer to some private occasion for which they were originally written. A composer's first published hymn tune often bears his name – *Stanford* honours this tradition. A few of Stanford's tunes, *Beacon*, *Consolation* and *Orient*, have names related to their words. *Luard* was written for the funeral service of H. R. Luard. *Fitzroy* sounds like another name, but there are too many possible candidates to guess at a connection. *Geronimo* is the Italian name for Jerome. Probably some reference to St. Jerome was intended. The rest are place-names. The Stanfordin links with Airedale (in Yorkshire), Alverstone (on the Isle of Wight) and Blackrock (a suburb of Dublin) are probably lost in time. One would dearly love to know why *Engelberg* is named after a Swiss mountain resort. Stanford travelled extensively on the European mainland up until the First World War so presumably had memories of this town. *Holland* is more likely a reference to Holland Street, where Stanford lived from 1894 to 1916, than to the Netherlands. *Ockley* recalls the village in Surrey where Stanford's marriage had taken place. *Joldwynds* also had marital resonances – Joldwynds was the home of Stanford's father-in-law, Henry Champion Wetton. However, in 1870, some years before Stanford met his wife-to-be Jennie in 1876, Henry Champion had died and the house was sold. The new owner, William Bowman, replaced it with a new one, built in Arts and Crafts style by Philip Webb and completed in 1874, so Stanford never saw his wife's former home. The Webb house was demolished in its turn in 1932 and replaced with a modernist construction by Oliver Hill.

⁵³ https://hymnary.org/text/lord_behold_us_with_thy_blessing, viewed 18.12.2023.

Final thoughts

If my hope was to discover that Stanford's hymns have been unjustly sidelined, it has not really been fulfilled. The only candidate to set alongside the now established *Engelberg* is the Easter hymn *Fitzroy* – and *Aviator's Hymn* if new words could be found. *The Saints of God* is worth adding to the *a cappella* repertoire. *Beacon* (especially), *Airedale* and *Consolation*, of the simpler hymns, *Alverstone* (especially) and *Ockley* of the hymn-anthems, and the *Varied Accompaniments* to well-known hymns, would be worth hearing on a recorded recital.

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